

News from the Northeast Nebraska Public Power District

June 2011

Operation Roundup coming in the next few months

Operation Roundup is a nationally recognized, voluntary program for utility companies to collect loose change for charitable giving. It is called 'Roundup' because electric bills are rounded up to the next whole dollar. It is very similar to the drop box at the drive up window at McDonald's where customers can choose to drop their change to support charity. Operation Roundup is strictly voluntary. In the next couple of months you will see messages on your bill or other communications that will inform customers that do not want to participate how they can 'opt-out' of the Round-up. Because participation is voluntary, you will have to let us know you want to opt out. Otherwise in about 90 days or so, all remaining monthly electric bills will be rounded up to the even dollar. All money collected will be donated in Dixon, Dakota, Thurston, Stanton, Pierce and Wayne Counties and can be used for any charitable cause. The Northeast Nebraska PPD (NeNPPD) will not control the funds, but will rather turn over the money to a separate Board comprised of local folks from the counties named above and let them allocate money to local causes and charities. The NeNPPD does not make charitable contributions from monies paid for electricity. This wouldn't be voluntary and NeNPPD policies don't support such giving as part of the price of electricity. This is why we are starting the Operation Roundup Program. Several utilities in Nebraska offer this program including NPPD, Cuming County PPD, Niobrara Valley EC, and Norris PPD to name a few. We will be including messages with coming bills so that everyone has ample opportunity to decide whether to participate or not.

NPPD announces wholesale power costs increase for 2012 of 6.5%

NPPD completed a financial review and has determined that the price of bulk power we purchase on behalf of our customers will increase in price in 2012. According to NPPD increases in the price of fuel and delivery of fuel account for 4.0% of the increase and increases in debt service create the need for remaining 2.5% of the rate increase. NPPD has information on the web at <http://www.nppd.com/rates/> if customers want to know more. Wholesale power expense represents nearly 70% of the total amount of electric bills for our customers.

Repairs to customer owned equipment

The District gets requests from time to time to do work on the 'customer side' of the meter. Often we are asked to repair a privately owned security light, a meter base, or wire from our meter to the house or farm. While we might like to accommodate our customers, our crews are not licensed electricians and this kind of work often requires an electrical inspection. Aside from the issue of the electrical license to do work, we believe that private electricians should do this work and our crews have plenty to do in maintaining our electric system. If you need an electrician to do a repair on your wiring, we may be able to help you find one that is equipped to do the work.

Why we might transfer past bills to another account?

Collecting past electric bills can involve many steps and conversations with several people. If you get a call from us about an electric bill that hasn't been paid, we hope you will help us by giving information to help get the bill paid by the correct person. There are some common sorts of situations where we transfer a past due bill to another account. These include:

- Sometimes our customers have situations like their car hits a pole and the bill for repair work isn't paid in a timely manner. If the repair bill exceeds our collection time, then we transfer the amount to the customer's electric bill.
- Some landlords want us to transfer their tenants' past due bills to their account to avoid disconnection of service to their rental property. Some landlords don't. If we don't know, then this is a time when we might be calling around to determine the best way to handle prior to disconnection for non-payment.

- Sometimes there are two separate services on one meter like a rental house and pasture pump. Maybe over the years this has worked well as an informal agreement between neighbors, but if the full bill isn't paid, then we will be collecting from either party that used energy.
- Sometimes a customer leaves our area owing us money. When they move back to get electric service we transfer the past due amount to the new service. This is true even if the service is in another name. Often to avoid detection, a customer with a past due amount will put the service in a relative's name to avoid paying the past bill. It can require quite a bit of communication to establish who is living where and if the person in default is getting service. Typically we try to first establish the facts and collect the bill even if it requires posting the past due bill to the new account. While we don't want to be unfair to the present account holder, we have to attempt to collect all past due bills to be fair to the thousands of customers that pay their monthly bill on time and who will absorb the cost of any uncollected amounts.

Together We Save – web based energy efficiency information

You can take a tour of your home and learn specific dollar savings for things like setting your thermostat 1 degree or so cooler in the winter. Adjust your life style patterns and thermostats on all energy using devices in this simulation to see what difference an hour a day can make or a degree less on your water heater can save. This is an easy to use and very powerful tool to translate specific actions into specific dollars of savings. Go to our web page at www.nnppd.com and click on the 'Touchstone Energy Savers' link. Once there, click the tab for 'efficiency' and get started evaluating your possible savings. While at the Touchstone Energy website, there is another way to save money from local merchants on things you might buy. Click the link for the Co-op Connections Card to view national and local merchants that offer discounts to customers of NeNPPD. It is worth the look.

Outdoor activities require safety around power lines

As you move outside this summer for farming, recreation, or home repairs remember to "look up and live". Electricity is silent, but always present in overhead lines. Please be careful with irrigation pipe, ladders and grain bin augers. Farm equipment has become large enough that a new tractor might hit a power line in the field where the old tractor easily cleared the line. If you need extra clearance call us. We want to help you avoid an accident. Contacts with power lines are devastating. Underground lines are also dangerous. Before you dig, don't assume there isn't a buried power line. Call 'Digger's Hotline' at 800-331-5666 to have buried lines located for safety. Always report downed power lines, we work 24 hours a day to keep our lines out of reach.

Employee updates

We welcome two summer interns now working with our line crews: Joel Olerich and Nick Hohenstein. They are working toward graduation from the Line Technician Programs at Northeast Community College and the Metro Community College respectively. We are pleased to share that Amanda Meusch was married to Tyler Schweers of Ponca in a ceremony in May. We are happy for Amanda who has worked at the District since January 2009.

The Board of Directors and Manager are:

Don Larsen, President	Paul Bodlak, Vice President	Tom Gustafson, Treasurer
Dan Ganseboom, Secretary	Lowell Birkley	Sy Kneifl
David Lebsock	Larry Silhacek	Mark Shults, Manager

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