



Polk County Rural Public Power District

*"Committed to enhancing the lives of our
customers by providing safe, reliable,
economical energy now and into the future."*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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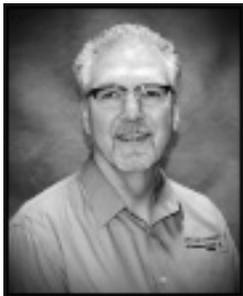
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Polk County RPPD Will Not Adjust Rates in 2016

In 2016, some Nebraskans may see increased electric prices but others will not. It depends on which locally owned utility generates your electricity, and the budget demands of the utility that delivers electricity to you.



General Manager, Phil Burke, reports that since our power supplier, NPPD, will have a minimal price increase for 2016, our district will not be making any adjustments. The Board of Directors of Polk County RPPD are finalizing the 2016 budget and have concluded that we can work within a balanced budget and will not be making any rate adjustments.

Although many Nebraska utilities generate some electricity, the majority of the state's power is generated by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), Omaha Public

Power District (OPPD), Lincoln Electric System (LES), City of Grand Island and City of Hastings.

In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers generates electricity at the Gavins Point Hydroelectric Plant, located in Cedar County, Nebraska.

NPPD supplies power at wholesale and retail to customers in 86 of the state's 93 counties.

Price increases have been averted by NPPD's ongoing efficiency improvements and cost-reduction efforts which do not compromise the district's safety or reliability.

"NPPD's staff has done an excellent job in scrubbing budgets and reducing costs," reports CEO, Pat Pope. "In the past, cost pressures have forced us to raise rates. Today, we are in a period where rigorous efforts to eliminate unnecessary expenses and slightly reduced cost pressures are giving NPPD an opportunity to avoid a rate increase."

Each utility's capital obligations and operating budgets are different, which is why budget and price plans

vary per system.

Nebraska's utilities work hard to avoid price increases. Regulation is one force that is affecting, and will continue to affect, electric rates.

Aside from regulatory pressures, however, the state's utilities are stepping up their communications with customers about improvements they can make to lower their overall electric usage, and thus their monthly electric bill. Some customers have been able to offset the rising price of electricity by finding ways to eliminate waste and use electricity more efficiently.

Several Nebraska utilities offer direct incentives for participation in the EnergyWise™ program.

Working together, Nebraska's utilities and their customers can keep electric costs low. In Nebraska, electricity costs at least 10% less than in Colorado, Kansas and Minnesota. Residents of some states, like Florida, New York and California, pay 50% more for their power than Nebraskans.

WE ARE PUBLIC POWER



Account Management at Your Fingertips With SmartHub™

Polk County RPPD recently implemented SmartHub™ which is a powerful, new mobile application that will transform the dynamics of how we do business.

SmartHub™ lets you manage all aspects of your account information on-line or with your mobile device. Creating a SmartHub™ account allows you to make secured payments, enter meter readings, review usage patterns relevant to temperature, con-



tact customer service and before long will allow you to report and monitor outages.

To download the application to your mobile device go to Playstore, Apps and search Smarthub™. You will see the SmartHub™ logo as shown above in either green or purple. This download will indicate it is from National Information Solutions Cooperative. This is the correct App you would download. Please register the first time you use the application. When you log into the site it will ask for your service provider. You will want to scroll down until you find Polk County RPPD. Once you do, log in with your email and password. If you are currently using our e-bill feature, you may use the same email and login for SmartHub™. This new application replaces the current, legacy e-bill system you have been accustomed to but will have a different look. Once you are logged in you may begin using the application. If you have questions, please contact us at 402/764-4381.

Public Power has existed for more than a century, delivering low-cost, reliable electricity in an environmentally responsible fashion. Public Power systems, deeply rooted in the history of the United States, are an expression of the American ideal of neighbor helping neighbor - local people working together to meet their local needs. More than 2,000 cities and towns throughout the United States own and operate electric distribution systems and provide many benefits to the 47 million Americans they serve, including:

* Local control/local decision-

making, citizen-owners have direct say in how their utility is managed.

* Cost consciousness - Public Power is not-for-profit, and spending decisions are made with the community in mind.

* Economic development - because Public Power is reliable and low-cost, commercial and industrial companies like to locate and operate in these communities. Also, Public Power revenues stay within the local community and help to boost the local economy.

We are Public Power! Visit PublicPower.org to learn more.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

ATTENTION-Rural Customers The AMR (Automated Meter Reading) meter changes have been completed. PLEASE continue to read your meter and send it into the office by the 10th of each month until further notice.



It's a Powerful Time for Thankfulness

By Erin Dickey



In just a few weeks, families will gather together for a time of thanksgiving and celebration. The cool, brisk air outside will be enjoyed by a game of football between cousins and the warm kitchen will warm-up with love, good smells and over-due hugs from out-of-state relatives. Stories of the past year, pictures from summer activities and compliments on how their food looks will be exchanged.

The hustle and bustle around holiday time can be overwhelming and exciting at the same time. Shopping, planning and preparing for a day of celebration can take weeks. Classic foods like green bean casserole, mashed potatoes and gravy, turkey, ham, meatballs, collard greens, rolls and Jello salads begin to fill counters and tables. Tables are decorated with fall decorations and covered in table clothes in browns, tans, greens and orange. Dishes and utensils that make their appearance twice a year have been shined and placed strategically across the tables.

Dressed in nice jeans and button-up shirts men wait anxiously to enjoy the foods that turn the air into the 'aroma of holidays.' Topics such as farming, football and the ever-changing weather of Nebraska keep them entertained while the Dallas Cowboys play on a TV screen in the background.

Pies and other desserts claim their spot on the dessert table with the cling wrap still protecting them from 'taste-testing' fingers and impatient

grandpas. Cool-whip is crammed where it can fit in the over-stuffed fridge with its plastic ring holding it tight.

It's 12:20 and everyone is there but one late cousin, who will most likely show-up at 12:29 with seconds to spare before the family planned to eat. Everyone stands around for those few awkward minutes lining the kitchen making small-talk. Kids are kept corralled outside until the last possible minute to which everyone arrived.

Soon it is time for everyone to stand; "Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Aaaaaamen." As a child, I always looked forward to this song because I knew it was soon time to eat. Over the years I've grown to enjoy the song for it's ability to be sung in perfect unison by an imperfect family that has come together to celebrate and give thanks.

With the close of grandma's long drawn out "Amen" kids are directed to line-up first and everyone shuffles out of the way. Parents help smaller children and remind them they must try a bite of everything and that three rolls is two too many. Butter spread on rolls and the occasional finger food quickly disappears from plates. The conversations are a bit slower and more intentional while the requests for dessert are already being pleaded by small children.

The holidays are a time where planning, love and energy must be poured out in many different ways. Energy from tired feet and sore backs are no doubt the driving force for a successful holiday, but one other power source must not be forgotten either.

During the holidays the reliability of a stove, dishwasher, oven, microwave, refrigerator, mixer, blender,

deep freeze and many other appliances are crucial to the success of a timely and tasty meal. Electricity, the quiet power that is often taken-for-granted for allowing families to gather together, pants to get a bit tighter and smiles much brighter. When thinking back on everything you are thankful for don't forget to include electricity and the people who bring it to you this holiday season.

To help save on the energy used over the holiday season consider some of these tips.

- Keep the oven door closed. Opening the oven door can lower the temperature by as much as 25 degrees.
- Use the microwave when you can. Microwaves use up to 50% less energy than a traditional oven.
- Keep burners clean and use the appropriate size burner to heat up pans. A dirty burner that is



too big for the pan sitting on it can waste as much as 40% of energy as a clean burner.

- Allow air to circulate in the refrigerator and freezer. Keep items spaced to allow the cool air to circulate and keep things cool and running efficiently.
- You may turn the thermostat down. The extra baking, cooking and bodies in a home can heat it up quickly allowing the heating system to cycle less.

Keep Heated and Cooled Air Where it Should Be - Inside Your Home

By Tom Steenson ~ NEAN, Nebraska Energy Alliance Network

While you might expect "R-value" to be the level of appreciation a pirate has for buried treasure, with winter coming, you might want to consider your own "R-value". The "R" refers to the resistance of heat flow and, in particular, is associated with the insulation in your home.

Insulation acts like a blanket on your home. When properly installed, it keeps the heat inside your home during winter, and the cool air inside during the summer. On average, about half of the energy used in Nebraska homes is used to keep the home warm or cool. Unfortunately, many homes either have insufficient or improperly installed insulation.

A recent study by the Harvard School of Public Health reports, if your home is as little as five to 10 years old, you likely have one of the 46 million under-insulated homes in the U.S. The good news is that adding insulation is often one of the easiest and lowest cost options for improving the energy efficiency of your home.

All insulation has an R-value - the higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. The R-value will vary depending on the type of insulation, its thickness, and its density. You can increase your R-value by adding insulation, even if there is already insulation in a particular area.

Your new R-value is calculated by adding the R-value of the new insulation to the R-value of the existing insulation.

As mentioned, there are many types of insulation. Insulation batts and blankets are made of fiberglass or mineral wool and are most commonly used in new construction or unconfined areas, like unfinished attics, roofs, and under floors. Batts and blankets often have an R-value of 2.9 to 4.0 per inch of thickness.

Blown-in loose fill insulation is one of the easiest forms to install. Commonly made of cellulose, glass fiber, mineral wool, perlite or vermiculite, it can be blown or spread into areas needing insulation. Equipment for blowing insulation into walls or attics can be rented, or contractors with their own equipment can be hired to do the job. Loose fill insulation usually has an R-value of 2.2 to 3.8 per inch of thickness.

Rigid boards are plastic foams or fibrous materials pressed or extruded into board-like forms. Common materials include polystyrene, urethane or glass fiber. Polystyrene and urethane have superior insulating qualities with R-values of 3.2 to 5.0 per inch of thickness.

Foam insulation, usually urethane, can be injected into wall cavities or

sprayed onto the roof or floors. Once applied, it expands and sets in about a minute. After it sets, it shrinks slowly for several weeks. Properly applied, shrinkage is less than five percent. Like rigid boards, foam insulation has the advantage of a high R-Value per inch.

The Nebraska Energy Office recommends the following R-values in the following home areas:

- * Attic - R-45 to R-60
- * Exterior walls - R-20 to R-30
- * Floors over unheated spaces - R-30
- * Basement walls and concrete slabs - R-10

Obviously, attics are places where it can really pay to have the right amount of insulation. If your home has six inches or less, and you use primarily electricity to heat it, there is an EnergyWise™ program to help you if you add an R-value of at least 19 or six inches of blown-in insulation. By participating in the residential EnergyWise™ attic insulation program, customers are eligible for an incentive of \$0.15 per square foot insulated with a maximum incentive amount of \$300 per existing residential dwelling. New construction and/or additions do not qualify.

Contact Polk County RPPD so we can help you make the most of your energy dollar by cutting the cost of heating and cooling your home.

ATTENTION FARMERS: The next time your exterior lighting is in need of repairs, don't forget to ask about our Caretaker™ 12 LED aerial light. You will be eligible for a \$50.00 direct incentive. Call 402/764-4381 for details today.

