

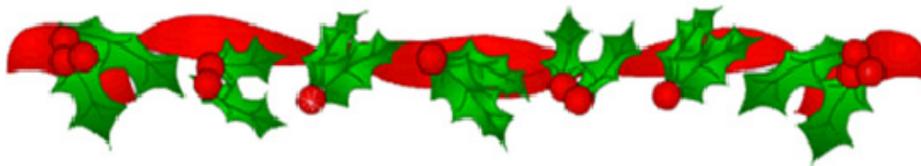
# Polk County Power *'The Livewire'*



PO Box 465 Stromsburg NE 68666

December 2017

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*Polk County RPPD Directors and Employees Wish  
Everyone a Happy and Joyous Holiday Season!*

*Greetings from Directors: Gary Allison, James D. Carlson, Mardell Johnson, Greg Kuhnel, Vernon Kuhnel, Bob Lindburg, Gene Urkoski and Legal Counsel, Jim Papik. The employees who keep your power flowing include: Jodie Alvis, Mickey Berggren, Megan Brooke, Phil Burke, Ryan Carlson, DJ Crowell, Dawn Dudgeon, Barb Fowler, Grace Gerrard, Yancy Krol, Scott Lindburg, Cindi Perdue, Michel Peterson, Randy Reese, Judy Rieken, Andy Roberts, Tony Schnell, Josh Suckstorf, Justin Sunday, Tim Teegerstrom, Jeff Waller and Trevor Willhoft.*

*Our office will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.*





**f** Please find Polk County RPPD on Facebook. Watch for outage updates and so much more on Facebook and our website at [www.pcrppd.com](http://www.pcrppd.com). To join us on Facebook, log onto your FB account, search for Polk County Rural Public Power District and begin to follow posts and updates relevant to our business.

## Are You a Snowbird?

### Consider 'On-Line Bill Payment' Options

Are you moving to a warmer location for the winter months or leaving home for an extended period of time? If so, please contact us with your new phone number and mailing address so your electric bills will be forwarded in a timely manner.

Better yet consider using any of our convenient, secure automated payment options. Nearly 500 customers currently pay by bank-draft, while 410 have gone paperless as e-bill customers. Several others prefer using the recurring credit card payment plan. If you are interested in any of our automated, secure payment options, please don't wait! Call our office at 402/764-4381 for further information.

# Nebraska Attorney General Warning on Holiday Scams, Identity Theft

## *America's Worst Charities~Center for Investigative Reporting*

The Center for Investigative Reporting identified the 50 worst charities in America, organizations that purport to help the needy, but devote pennies on the dollar to worthy causes. Unfortunately, many of the top 50 are proclaimed children's charities. These tips can help you make an informed decision when the phone rings for charity.

### **Key questions to ask the caller:**

- What is the full name of the charity?
- Do you work for a paid fund-raiser?
- How much of my donation actually goes to charity?
- Will any local programs directly benefit? If so, how?
- What is the website address of the charity?

### **Key facts to know:**

- The best charities spend no more than 35 cents of every dollar raised on fundraising costs.
- America's worst charities spend more than 80 cents of every dollar on fundraising.
- Charities that use telemarketing firms and fundraising are far more likely to receive only a fraction of the money raised.

Anyone can become a victim of identity theft. Unfortunately, many victims do not even know they are victims until their credit is destroyed. The effects of identity theft can be devastating, and that is why it is important that you understand how to detect identity theft and repair your credit.

If you become a victim of identity theft, contact the attorney general's office as soon as possible to minimize the damage done to your name. They will guide you through the process and steps and offer printed guides to help you.

ID theft is one of the fastest growing white-collar crimes in the U.S. The AG's office has a lot of helpful information on various topics. You may reach their office by calling 402/471-2682 or by going to the website at [ago.nebraska.gov](http://ago.nebraska.gov). For additional and helpful information you may contact: Consumer Protection Division: 402/471-2682, Consumer Protection Hotline: 888/727-6432 or Senior Outreach Hotline at 888/287-0778.

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## Seasonal Services Billed December and January

Seasonal type services may include cabins, stock wells and fences, grain drying and aeration, or farm shops. All rate schedules for seasonal service accounts are billed for the 2017 energy use on December 20th. These account balances are due upon receipt and delinquent as of January 10th, 2018. In January we will bill for the 2018 annual minimum. This bill is due upon receipt and delinquent on February 10th. Upon receipt of either of these bills, please contact our office at 402-764-4381 if you have any questions.

# Megan Brooke hired as new Finance Manager at Polk County RPPD



Polk County RPPD has hired Megan Brooke as the district's new Finance Manager. Brooke, a Cross County graduate and local gal is ecstatic to 'come back home' to be closer to family and friends.

Megan was warmly welcomed to the organization on October 16th with a beautiful fall mum and her favorite, a cup of hot, green tea!

After high school graduation, Megan attend the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an Accounting major and Finance minor. After graduating college, she moved to Wichita, KS for an internship with Koch Industries, which turned into a full-time job. Megan held various accounting roles with Koch over the next 3 1/2 years. While

working full time she continued her education and completed a Masters of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in Management through Newman University in Wichita, KS. A short time after that Megan moved back to Nebraska where she worked with finance and accounting for Crete Carrier Corporation and later Pillen Family Farms.

Brooke said, "I was ecstatic when this amazing opportunity with Polk County RPPD stumbled across my path and I jumped at the opportunity to get back to my hometown roots." In her spare time Megan enjoys baking/cooking, staying active in volleyball and softball leagues, and going to country concerts and Husker events.

The District is so excited to have a local gal of this caliber coming 'back home' to fulfill this position upon current Finance Manager, Grace Gerrard's retirement.

"I am very honored and excited to serve as the new Finance Manager for the District. I am ready to dive in and learn all about the business, from the accounting/finance side to what the linemen do on a day-to-day basis. I have appreciated the team's welcoming attitudes and look forward to helping the accounting department continue to grow and strengthen for years to come," Brooke added.

Congratulations and welcome Megan Brooke to the Polk County Rural Public Power District family!



*Megan was warmly greeted with goodies! She said, "I felt very welcomed coming into a nicely decorated office and everyone being so kind. It was not only my first day on the job, but was Boss's Day. The girls treated me with a surprise-green tea for my first ever Boss's Day gift."*

## Energy efficiency and the modern family

*By Anne Prince ~ Correspondent for issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

If you are struck by the amount of screens, remotes, gaming controls, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. The typical American family is well-connected and owns a variety of electronic devices. According to the Pew Research Center, 95 percent of U.S. families have a cell phone and 77 percent of Americans own a smart phone. Nearly 80 percent of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately

half own tablets.

Consuming electronics coupled with the growing array of smart home appliances and technology have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on our many devices has new implications for home energy and efficiency. **Using smart technology to manage energy savings**

How can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before? The answer may lie

with some of those same electronic devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy savings is a touchscreen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.

From the convenience of your mobile device, smart technologies can maximize your ability to manage electricity use across several platforms: controlling your thermostat, appli-

*Continued on page 4*

# Modern family *continued from page 3*

ances, water heater, home electronics and other devices. One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat. Using your mobile device, you can view and edit your thermostat schedule, monitor how much energy is used and make adjustments accordingly.

For example, program your thermostat for weekday and weekend schedules so you are not wasting energy when no one is home. Check and adjust the program periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing Energy Star certified appliances. Many new appliances include smart-technology features, such as refrigerators that can tell you when maintenance is required or when a door is left open. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want the load to start. This means you can program your task for off-peak energy hours, a smart choice if your electric rate is

based on rate of use.

## "Old school" energy savings for new devices

Of course there are the time-tested "old school" methods of energy efficiency that can be applied to the myriad of household electronic devices and screens. Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious "vampire power" users, meaning they drain energy and money when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or place on a timer.

While modern life involves greater dependence on technology, your best resource for saving energy and money remains at your local power district.

Regardless of your level of technical expertise with electronic devices, Polk County RPPD can provide guidance on energy savings based on your account information, energy use and offer incentives for improving efficiency.

## Operating costs for portable electric heaters

A watt is a watt no matter what! If you purchase a portable electric heater, it is generally rated at 1,500 watts per element.

The operating costs = Watts X hours X cost per kWh/1,000. Thus if you run a 1,500 watt rated element for one steady hour without cycling at 10¢ your cost would be:  $1,500 \times 1 \times \$0.10 / 1,000 = \$0.15$ . If the heater ran steady every evening for four hours for a solid month, it would cost \$18.00. If the same heater ran the entire month (30 days) non stop it would cost \$108.00. It would be safe to say that when you turn the thermostat on your fossil fuel heating system down you are definitely saving on your fuel bill, however do not expect to run a 1,500 watt heater at no cost. You will see an increase in your electric bill. Just do the math and you'll know approximately how much it will cost you to run your heaters.

Also, don't be taken by solicitors or manufacturers who sell you heaters claiming to cut your utility bill in half. A watt is a watt and they add up!

Did you know that electric space heaters are responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

- When purchasing and installing a space heater, follow these guidelines:
- Only purchase new model heaters that have all of the current safety features and are cool to the touch.
- Make sure the heater carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label.
- Choose a thermostatically controlled heater, because they avoid the energy waste of overheating a room.
- Select a heater of the proper size for the room you wish to heat. Do not purchase oversized heaters.
- Locate the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic. Be especially careful to keep children and pets away from heat sources.

## Important Notice

Due to regulations we will no longer make automated phone calls, send emails or text messages without your written consent. We recently sent out another mailing regarding compliance of the TCPA (Telephone Communication Protection Act) and are asking that you complete and return the forms as soon as possible. The regulation is phone number specific, so if you received a form for more than yourself (ex: spouse), please complete a form for each number for which you want automated messages delivered to.

If you do not want to be notified for any reason by automation, please write that on your form and return it to the office.

If you do not complete and return forms:

1. You will not be notified of planned outages.
2. You will not be notified of any pertinent billing information which includes past due bills.
3. You will not be notified of emergency outages or other pertinent business information.