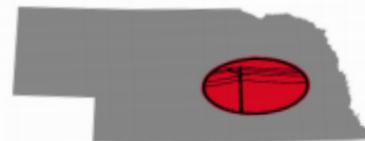

POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

‘The Livewire’

“Committed to enhancing the lives of our customers by providing safe, reliable and economical energy through excellence in customer service and innovation”



January 2022

2022 Rate Increase

By Phil Burke / General Manager

If you attended our customer meeting this fall you may remember me stating that there was a possibility that Polk County RPPD would have to raise rates in 2022 in order to keep our cash reserves within the guidelines that our financial policy requires. That statement has become true. You may also remember that I stated that we would do what we could to keep the increase below 4% and that statement has also become true. Beginning in January 2022 all PCRPPD rates will be adjusted for a total revenue increase of 3.3% to the District. The rate adjustment approved by our board in October is based on a cost-of-service study completed by our rate consultant which includes a rate design that calculates and assigns the true cost to serve each customer class or rate and the required revenue to stay within optimal financial targets. The resulting rate design adjusts each rate class so the total proceeds collected from all accounts will increase our revenue in an average year by 3.3%. This means that some rates will be affected differently based on the cost to provide service to that customer class. In the new rates, the average residential service will see a 3% increase, which monetarily is \$6.08 per month, while some seasonal rates will see a 4% increase. Some rates such as irrigation will see less than a 3% increase. Of course,

individual services will be affected according to usage patterns.

This is the first rate increase that PCRPPD has taken since 2013. In those eight years, we have been able to keep rates steady mostly due to the efforts that NPPD, our wholesale provider, has taken to keep wholesale rates low. But as you know other expenses have continued to increase. During that time the Consumer Price Index has increased by 8.4% overall not including the last few months. Material costs have increased as much as 28%. A wooden crossarm that cost \$28.00 in 2013 now costs \$48.15, a pole that cost \$213.00 in 2013 now costs \$314.00 and line wire that was \$.18 per foot in 2013 is now \$.28 per foot. All of these prices are before the most recent inflation sent prices even higher. Other expenses have increased as well including health insurance, employee wages, equipment costs & maintenance, along with the added cost of cyber security, billing software, and other essential back-office expenses.

I want to assure you that we do not make these decisions easily. We are truly your company and our board of directors are your neighbors, elected by you, and their rates will be affected just like yours. We know that money is tight in the current economy and keeping our costs low is important to you. We also know that



reliability and customer service are also important to you and that we must carefully balance all of those priorities. We are constantly considering the cost to upgrade and maintain lines versus the potential effects to reliability or the possibility of overloading lines if they are not upgraded or maintained. If you have questions or concerns about the new rates or want to know how your bill may be affected, please call us. As your power provider, we want to help you understand the rates and if possible help you lower your power costs. Our customer representatives can look at your average usage and estimate the future cost and may be able to suggest how you might be able to lower your usage and save on your bill. And as always please call with any other concerns that affect our service to you.

Dropbox Service Modified

By Wade Rahn

In November, we sent a survey out to customers identified as those using the PCRPPD dropboxes located in Clarks, Silver Creek, Shelby, and Osceola. The purpose of this survey was to evaluate the importance of this service to our customers as part of our business practices to understand the value vs. cost of this service to our customers.

We want to thank everyone for their responses to this survey. The majority of customers that responded indicated that this service was essential to them. These responses and comments were heard loud and clear, and that is what Public Power is about! Our customers are the District's owners, and your voice and opinion matter to us.

At the December PCRPPD Board Meeting, the survey results were presented, and after discussion, the decision was made to keep the service. To balance customer service and cost, we will be reducing the number of days per week that payments are collected.

Moving forward, we will collect payments from the dropboxes on Tuesday mornings every week. The exception to this will be during the week of the 10th, which is when our regular billing payments are due. For that week, we will collect payments on the morning of the 11th or the following business day should the 11th fall on a weekend or holiday. Payment deadlines for regular billings and approved arrangements are due in the office by the due date or agreed upon arrangement date. Please note that payments in the dropbox but not collected are not considered in our office. Should you put your payment in the dropbox after collection, your account will be subject to penalty or disconnection depending on the status of your account. Prior to placing your payment in the dropbox, we recommend contacting us directly if you are making a payment close to your deadline to verify the collection time. Payment collection will start as early as 6 AM. No special arrangements will be made to extend



your deadline until the following collection if you deposit your payment after collection.

As a reminder, we also offer other payment options such as online payments through Smarthub, automatically withdrawn payments, prepay metering, payments by phone using our IVR, along with the tried and true payments through the mail and payments in person at the office. These safe, timely, and secure options are available at no cost. If you would like more information give us at (402) 764-4381.

smart hub

SMART PAYMENTS

Mountain Top Electric
Report an Outage

News Facebook Twitter YouTube

ACCOUNT OVERVIEW
\$121.30 [Pay](#)
Bill due on 5/10/20 (42 days).
Updated: Mar 30, 2020 03:55:24 PM

USAGE OVERVIEW
Your usage is 12.9% higher than last year.

Year	Usage (kWh)
4/2020	825 kWh
4/2019	465 kWh

Service: Electric

Home Bill & Pay Usage Notifications More

**Save time.
Avoid service interruptions.
Eliminate late fees.**

SMART MANAGEMENT. SMART LIFE. SMARTHUB.



ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE



TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT

When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees to stay toasty and warm. However, turning to other (FREE!) ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills.



Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? Adjust your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting to save up to 10% annually.

Source: Department of Energy

HERE ARE WAYS TO HELP YOU STAY WARM WHEN IT IS COLD OUTSIDE:



- Bundle up by wearing layers and heavy socks
- Get your body moving and stay active
- Use blankets while sitting still
- Caulk windows and door frames that leak air
- Replace or update old or ineffective door seals
- Make sure your home's heating system is working properly
- Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly
- Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night
- Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside)
- Keep a fireplace damper closed when not in use
- Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer

If you use a portable space heater, use it safely and for short amounts of time. Using one for extended periods can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws a lot of power.

Learn more at:



Redistricting for 2022

By Wade Rahn

Every ten years, after completing the census, organizations such as ourselves and other public entities are tasked with redistricting the areas served.

At PCRPPD, we needed to redraw the Director's district lines to ensure that each of our three districts are balanced so that no area had +/- 5% than the others. Using Geographic Information System (GIS) data, our engineering firm RVW based in Columbus, NE, determined the proposed new District boundary lines. The proposed boundary was voted on and approved at the December 2021 Board Meeting. The last step to make these changes official is for the review and approval by the Power Review Board. As of writing this article in mid-December, the Power Review Board had not acted on this, but approval is expected by the close of 2021.

With the new lines drawn, Vernon Kuhnel, who previously represented District 3, will now represent District 2. This change in district representation does not impact his election term along with any other committees or positions he holds with regard to his position on the PCRPPD Board. No other Directors had a change in the district they represent.

The new district boundaries are shown on the map located at the bottom of this page. Please take a moment to identify which district you are now located in, along with who represents you. This is an important fundamental of Public Power with local control by the customers and who represents you.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy



POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

115 W 3rd Street
PO Box 465
Stromsburg NE 68666
(888) 242-5265 or (402) 764-4381
www.pcrppd.com

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Vernon Kuhnel - District 2

Vice President

Judy Rieken - District 3

Treasurer

Robert Lindburg - District 1

Directors

Gary Allison - District 2

Jeff Scow - District 2

Mardell Johnson - District 1

Mark Wyman - District 3

CEO/General Manager

Phil Burke

Executive Staff

Randy Reese - Operations Manager

Barb Fowler - Technical Systems Manager

Megan Klein - Finance Manager

Wade Rahn - Customer Service Director

Justin Sunday - Safety Director

Andy Roberts - Foreman

