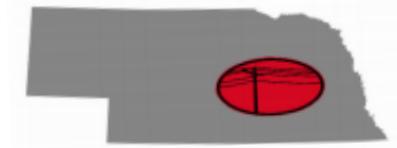


# POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

‘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 2024

## PROGRAM CHANGES

### 1 Heat Pump

15 SEER incentive is no longer eligible.

### 2 Agriculture Program

Prescriptive Irrigation

- \$500 for replacement of nozzles, sprayers, sprinkler heads, and regulators

Irrigation Moisture Sensors

- \$300 for installing a moisture sensor with an irrigation management program

Corner Pivot VFD

- \$18/hp

Automated Grain Aeration

- \$.011 per bushel of bin capacity

Hog Heat Mats

- \$40 or \$80 per mat (depending on size)

Pump Testing

- Up to \$350 for efficiency test conducted on electric irrigation pumps

### 3 Lawn & Garden

20% incentive on any electric chainsaws, tillers, snow blowers, or lawn mowers limited to \$1,500 per incentive.

# 2024

## ENERGYWISE<sup>SM</sup>

Use less. Spend less. Do more.

## UNCHANGED PROGRAMS

- Attic Insulation
- Cooling System Tune-Up High Efficiency
- Heat Pump Heat Pump Water Heater
- Induction Cooking
- Lawn and Garden
- Smart Thermostat
- Prescriptive Lighting
- Commercial HVAC
- Custom Lighting
- HVAC System Optimization
- Variable Frequency Drive
- Agriculture Program
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, Pre-Wiring and Commercial Conduit
- Industrial Process

# Watt Matters

By Barb Fowler - General Manager

Sometimes, you may wonder what the heck all the line items on your power bill are. One of the main tenants of Public Power is our rates are based on cost, not securing profit margins to be given as bonuses for the board of directors or employees. For each customer class, rates are calculated on what it costs to provide power plus a small rate of return to fund any debt interest and inflationary increases on assets for normal system maintenance and replacement. Costs are then broken down into three categories: power supply, distribution, and customer-related.

Why would we need debt? Some of our large pieces of equipment, a substation transformer, for example, or large capital projects, like transmission, are quite expensive but have a long use life expectancy. If we paid for them in cash, we'd have to increase rates dramatically, but if we

borrow funds, we can spread that debt over the life of the equipment or plant. This ensures current and future customers are paying their fair share of the use of the system.

Let's break it down.

## Energy Charge:

- Power supply energy and capacity costs
- Based on customer class contribution to power supply
- Varies with total usage

## Customer Charge:

- Fixed costs associated with what it costs to deliver just 1 kWh to the customer
- 30-50% of distribution costs
- Wires, poles, transformers, meters

## Demand Charge:

- Costs tied to the maximum rate of power usage based on individual customer
- 50-70% of distribution costs

## Gross Revenue Tax

- Statutory requirement, paid to County

## Lease Agreement:

- Electric system lease charges set by the city/village
- City/Village owns the electric system, PCRPPD assumes all operational responsibility and risk
- Collected and remitted quarterly to the city/village

## Sales Tax and Town Tax:

- Nebraska State sales tax and city/village sales tax

When reviewing your power bill, keep in mind these line item descriptions. While there are many factors that go into the cost of service studies and rate setting, we are committed to remaining transparent about what you are paying for. If you have any questions or would like a deeper dive into rate setting, give us a call.

# Rieken Receives Board Certifications

By Wade Rahn

Judy Rieken recently received the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric utility directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a solid knowledge of the industry and business model. PCRPPD has a commitment to work through both the Nebraska Rural Electric Associations and the NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their district customers.

## Credentialed Cooperative Director

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses:

- Director Duties and Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Board Operations and Process
- Strategic Planning
- Financial Decision Making

## Board Leadership Certificate

The NRECA Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD). Directors who have attained the BLC have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.



# How reliable should your power to be?

By Wade Rahn

Recently, I have attended several meetings, and the messages have all had a similar theme regarding the future reliability of the electric industry. The key to the previous sentence is what is the definition of reliable, and frankly, this is open to interpretation. What is your definition? Out of the 525,600 minutes in a calendar year, how many minutes on average is it acceptable to you to be without power? To some, that answer may be zero, and others understand that there are times you will lose power because of weather events, upgrades to the grid, and for repairs to be made safely. Now, with that in mind, how many more minutes per year, if any, are acceptable to be without power as a result of what decision-makers at a national level are deciding on your behalf, what activist group agendas are pushing for, and new regulations that threaten our baseload generation?

Here at PCRPPD, we take reliability very seriously, and our goal is to have the power on to our customers 100% of the time. No matter how badly we would like to achieve this goal, we understand there are times that, regardless of our diligence in ensuring our system is in top shape, the power will go off due to Mother Nature, car accidents, and wildlife. That is not to say we don't strengthen the vulnerable areas to weather the storm. Still, for example, in an ice storm that coats the power lines with an inch of ice, power outages will happen and, unfortunately, are unavoidable.

One thing that we don't do at PCRPPD is generate power, and that

is where our friends at Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) step in and do a fantastic job providing us with some of the least expensive electricity in the nation with unmatched reliability. They do this with a mix of generators powered by coal, nuclear, natural gas, wind, and solar, all of which currently make up enough generation to cover the needs of all Nebraskans they serve. Additionally, they very seriously take measures to ensure that the power plants are stewards of the environment, which some activist groups will claim is untrue, and they will spread propaganda to mislead the public. On top of this, Federal Regulators such as the EPA have proposed new regulations that have taken aim at fossil fuel Power Plants. These proposed regulations are banking on unproven and not yet commercially available technologies, which will be extremely costly and will likely cause some generators across the nation to be shut down as they cannot cost-effectively be retrofitted to comply.

Now, you may be thinking this is just the view from Nebraska, but in a recent article written by Jim Matheson, the CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), titled "Fighting for Reliable Energy," he said, "The EPA recently unveiled a new proposal, that once again targets the nation's power plants. It will further strain America's electric grid and undermine decades of work to reliably keep the lights on for people across the nation. This proposal is the wrong plan at a critical time for our nation's energy future. It is unrealistic

and unachievable and will reduce key always-available generating resources (both coal and natural gas) at a time when the country's demand for electricity is skyrocketing." Jim's words should carry much weight as the NRECA is a national organization representing Public Power Districts and Electric Cooperatives across the nation. With the nationwide membership, there isn't a lean politically left or right, just the truth.

For the record, I am not trying to be Chicken Little saying that the sky is falling because it isn't, but continuing on the same path, it will start getting bumpy and more expensive. In the future, going down this path, we could see rolling blackouts, much like we experienced in February of 2021, of 30 minutes to an hour, with the cause of your power being off due to the lack of available generation due to nothing other than energy policy. At this point, you may be asking yourself, "If PCRPPD, NPPD, and the NRECA are fighting the fight to keep our power the most reliable, do I need to do anything?" The answer is simple: there may be times in the future when we will need voices, and lots of them, to advocate that cost-effective, reliable power is essential. If and when that time comes, we will let you know and ask that you stand up for what you believe, make phone calls, write letters, and/or send emails to the decision maker, letting them know where you stand.

Now let me ask again: Out of the 525,600 minutes in a calendar year, how many minutes on average is it acceptable to you to be without power?



**Voices for  
Cooperative  
Power**

**VCP members are staying informed and taking action on policy decisions that will shape our access to affordable, reliable local energy for decades to come.**

# Safety Tip

Start discussions about electrical equipment and safety when children are young. When babyproofing your home, don't forget about potential electrical hazards. Learn child safety tips at [SafeElectricity.org](https://SafeElectricity.org).



**Safe**  
Electricity.org®

## POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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### Board President

Vernon Kuhnelt - District 2

Term Expires  
2024

### Vice President

Jeff Scow - District 2

2024

### Treasurer

Robert Lindburg - District 1

2028

### Secretary

Mark Wyman - District 3

2026

### Directors

Bill Kropatsch - District 2

2028

Judy Rieken - District 3

2026

Ryan Twogood - District 1

2024

### General Manager

Barb Fowler

### Staff

Randy Reese-Operations Manager  
Megan Klein-Finance Manager  
Wade Rahn-Customer Service/IT Manager  
Justin Sunday-Engineering/Safety Manager  
Andy Roberts-Foreman  
DJ Crowell-Purchasing & Warehouse Coordinator

