

# North Central's News

Delivering a difference to parts of Knox, Antelope, Pierce, and Holt Counties Since 1945



*Thoughts and Comments from General Manager, Keith E. Harvey*

## Electricity - The life-style sustaining genie and why it will continue to get more expensive

Imagine a world without electricity – no refrigeration, no cell phones, no television, no internet, no GPS, no lights, no running water in the house, no sanitation, no MRI or X-Ray machines, no... wait a minute – Yuck – let's just say no life as we know it. More than anything in the world today our standard of living is directly dependent on electricity. It doesn't matter how it is generated as long as it is available in ample supply and at a cost that allows everyone access to it. The type of generation does have an effect on the price to the consumer as does the complexity of the distribution system. Electric-

ity coming out of a generator is of no use to a final consumer until it can be transmitted and transformed into the proper voltage at the proper location at the proper frequency and at the exact proper time. This is no simple or inexpensive task to accomplish. It takes a lot of people with enormous expertise and dedication working with systems and equipment so sophisticated that they defy logic to the layman – just to deliver a kilowatt of electricity to the last house on the longest stretch of electric line so that the consumer there can bake a cake for a granddaughter's 1st birthday. So how much is too much to pay for this amazing stuff? Well if a bottle of water is worth a \$1.69 and a 12-pack of pop is \$4.00 – is it worth a dollar's

worth of electricity to keep them cold for a day (along with all of the food in the fridge)?

Electricity is so prevalent in our lives that we really don't take time to appreciate what it does for us until there is an outage that puts us back in the dark ages for a few minutes or even hours or horribly for days. We simply do not function well without electricity and with computers and other sensitive equipment we cannot even tolerate blinks where the power is off for a fraction of a second. Now is there anyone out there that believes that it is either easy or inexpensive to reduce blinks from an electric system with 1,600 miles of line and uncounted trees and animals doing their

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## Hannah Zimmerer to attend 2012 Washington D.C. Youth Tour

Hannah Zimmerer, daughter of Curt and Sherri Zimmerer of Verdigre has been selected to attend the 2012 Washington D.C. Youth Tour.

This tour is a once in a lifetime opportunity that will allow her to be able to visit some of the national monuments, historical museums, and other places of interest in Washington D.C. She will also have the opportunity to meet our State's representative, learn about rural electrification and the way the nation's government functions.

To be eligible to be selected for this honor students must have first been selected by North Central's board of directors to attend the 2011 Nebraska Rural Electric Association's Youth Energy Camp. Then they are invited to prepare and present a report to North Central's board of directors on why they should be selected to represent North Central PPD at the National level.

Five of the six students who attended this year's camp competed for the opportunity to represent our

District at the National level.

Hannah will attend this tour along with students from all over the country. Students who participate in this tour will have the opportunity to build leadership skills so that students may make a difference in their rural communities.

Hannah is a senior at Creighton Public School and is active in Drama, Music, Volleyball, Track and Softball.

# Electricity

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best to cause problems with that same system? Also, I'm sure that most of you know that some of this system is over 60 years old and that means that replacements and maintenance are increasing at costs that are much greater than were incurred when these items were installed so many years ago. And finally we continue to add substations and increase conductor size in order to have sufficient capacity to take care of the increasing use of electricity by our customers. Then of course there is the incessant release of new and more costly regulations out of Washington – but that's a whole other story.

In order to put into perspective the increasing cost of electricity in Nebraska and to each and every one of you we should take a look at what is happening across the U.S. The Baltimore Gas & Electric Company of Baltimore, MD is requesting a 72% rate increase to cover increased costs over several years. In the Mile High City of Denver, CO, Xcel Energy has instituted a 21.4% rate increase for 2011. In 2009 Honolulu, Hawaii residents were hit with a 24.8% increase and in 2010 has residential rates that average 27.83¢/kWh or almost three times as much as North Central Customers average cost. In North Dakota some customers are getting to help pay \$7.6 million to subsidize wind farms in Montana – bet that sure makes them happy campers. Montana mandates a renewable energy standard and people in North Dakota served by the same utility as those in Montana get to pay for it. This is a great country – no? As a matter of fact just ask the power districts in western Nebraska about their rates since the Colorado legislature mandated a very rigorous renewable energy standard. Wyoming with all of its natural resources has or will soon implement a 21.9% retail rate

increase for residential customers and 19.5% for commercial customers. In Illinois the governor just vetoed a 10-year, \$3 billion rate increase to upgrade their systems to a “Smart Grid” – smart, maybe – inexpensive, never. Michigan wants a 22% rate increase; the Massachusetts Attorney General wants to freeze rates and return \$300 million in credits before approving a merger of utilities; Houston rates will go up \$2.20 per month for 14 years to recover \$4 billion in stranded investments; San Diego Gas & Light wants \$1.1 billion just to replace bad poles and the list goes on and on and on. Also, NPPD wants a 6.5% wholesale rate increase January 1, 2012 to cover the higher price of coal and associated transportation costs as well as increased debt service payments on bonds used to upgrade and repair their system. This rate increase along with increased demand charges that were experienced this year due to the extremely hot weather will translate into a need for an additional \$500,000 just to cover North Central's anticipated 2012 power bill. As you all know North Central has other costs besides just the power bill although it is about 60% of our total annual expenses. At this point I am not sure of the magnitude of the 2012 retail rate increase that will be needed by North Central but I can guarantee that it will not be any larger than absolutely necessary and will not include any additional money over 2011 for employee costs. It will be for increased power costs and higher cost materials particularly for any containing copper or steel.

In the long run North Central's rates will be under extreme upward pressure due to increases in wholesale power as well as material and maintenance costs associated with keeping your power supply adequate and high quality. The real wildcard here is how much the EPA and other governmental regulatory bodies are going to increase the cost of fossil fuel genera-

tion with a myriad of new “greenhouse gas”, “clean water” and “clean air” regulations. Whatever the scenario I feel relatively confident that electric rates are going to continue to increase at a rate that is anything but pleasant but that Nebraskans will still have some of the lowest rates in the country. The days of “affordable” electricity or for that matter any energy source are probably rapidly coming to an end. However, for all it does for the average person, electricity will still remain a value almost without parallel. There just may come a day when the average electric consumer will need to become a whole lot more educated on his or her electric consumption and make some thoughtful choices as to how to use it more judiciously.

Please think, work and play safe as the harvest season is in full swing and minds tend to be busy with numerous other tasks. Remember it only takes one second of carelessness to alter the lives of a lot of people forever. Have a great Halloween and if you happen to see the “Great Pumpkin” tip your hat to good old Charlie Brown. And as you work and play we'll help you by keeping the darkness away until you're ready for night.



**Energy Efficiency**

*Tip of the Month*

When buying a new appliance, check the black and yellow Energy Guide label. This label provides an estimate of the product's energy consumption and efficiency. It also shows the highest and lowest energy efficiency estimated of similar models. Most major appliances – such as refrigerators, dishwashers, and clothes dryers – are required to have these labels.

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy*



Linda Sokol, Energy Advisor

## Take advantage of the 2011 EnergyWise Programs

In 2012 there will be some changes to the EnergyWise Program we currently have available for our customers. With only a few months left in 2011 I thought I would remind everyone of the 2011 EnergyWise Programs we have available. I would like to encourage customers to review the following programs and contact me at 402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060 for more details.

### Residential Programs include:

- High-Efficiency Heat Pumps – Loan or Incentive
- Refrigerator Recycling
- Low Flow Showerheads
- Water Heater Blankets
- Window Air conditioners
- Cooling System Tune-Up
- Attic Insulation

### Commercial/Industrial Programs include:

- Lighting
- Motors
- Drives
- HVAC

### Agricultural Programs include:

- Lighting
- Irrigation

*From our homes to yours . . .*

## Tried & Tasted Delicacies

### Husker Hamburger Dip

- 1 lb. hamburger
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 can Rotel tomatoes, drained
- 1 can hot chili beans, do not drain
- 1 can kidney beans, drained
- 1 large can green chilies
- 2 small blocks of Mexican Velveeta, cut into chunks

Brown hamburger and onion. Drain off fat. While hamburger is browning put the remaining ingredients into a crock pot. Add browned hamburger mixture to crock pot and stir. Put lid on and let heat for 2 hours on high stirring often.

Once it is heated, turn to low and remove lid.

“Great with any kind of chips.”

## The Bargain Barn

**For Sale:** Nebraska Rural TV office liquidation sale -- 4 drawer filing cabinet; 2 drawer filing cabinet; HP LaserJet 4200 printer; Brother typewriter; electric stand-up heater; DIRECWAY satellite system; 30” DIRECTV satellite dish for camper or cabin; miscellaneous DIRECTV receivers and remotes; 3 ring binders; stackable office trays, 11x14 reams of white paper, 6 Pkg. of HP Soft Gloss Laser Paper 8 1/2x11, CD and DVD Disk mailer - qty 90, Business Card paper - 4 pkgs (700 cards); 8x10 card board mailers, 8x10 padded envelope mailers. Please call 402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060 and ask for Linda Sokol and make an offer on any of the items.

**For Sale:** Office desk from old Niobrara Bank - \$100 or OBO; Childs

school desk - seat and desk - \$10; pull type Golf Caddy with bag and clubs - \$40 or OBO. Please call 1-520-425-6619.

**For Sale:** Troy Built Pony, 5HP Briggs engine rear tine tiller - \$200. Please call 402-893-2251 in the evenings.

**For Sale:** International “H” tractor, new tires and new paint - \$1050; 1910 horse buggy ready to go - \$950. Please call 402-847-3274.

**For Sale:** Used 300 gallon diesel fuel tank - \$250. Please call 402-668-2897.

**For Sale:** Ladies Road Master bike - \$25; Combination windows, various sizes in excellent condition. Please call 402-668-2820.

**For Sale:** Like new Kitchen Place oak kitchen cabinets. Can see in place. You remove. Please call 402-358-3789.

**For Sale:** Longhorn roping saddle - 15”

seat - \$350. Please call 402-316-6239.

**Wanted:** Small animal surgery table. Please call 402-316-6239.

**Giveaway:** Upright piano, plays fine, but needs tuned. Please call 402-668-7358.

Do you have something to sell or are you looking for something in particular? You can call, send or email ([bargain.barn@ncppd.net](mailto:bargain.barn@ncppd.net)) your description of what’s for sale or what you are looking for into our office. We will run the ad in the Bargain Barn section free for one month. Please include name and telephone number. No commercial ads will be accepted, personal items only.



1409 Main St • PO Box 90 • Creighton, NE 68729-0090  
 www.ncppd.com • E-Mail: ncentral@ncppd.net  
 Customer Service: 402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060  
 Reporting Power Outage: 888-358-5112

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*Delivering a Difference*

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

North Central Public Power District is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Electrification Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Keith E. Harvey, General Manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Stop 1510, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250-1510; or the Director, Office of Civil Rights, room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410; or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

## Meter Reading Reminder for Rural Customers

Meter readings for rural residential and commercial services should be submitted into North Central's office between **October 20 and 28, 2011**

Meter Readings can be submitted by:

- Phone - **402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060**
- Electronically - **www.ncppd.com** or Email - **ncentral@ncppd.net**

**Accounts without a meter reading at end of month billing will be subject to the \$20 Estimated Meter Reading Fee**

**RURAL CONSUMERS** please read your meter between the 20th and the 28th. If you are calling your meter reading(s) into our office use our local or toll free "800" telephone number. If you call after our normal business hours 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, you may leave your reading on our answering service. To submit your meter reading electronically log onto our web site at [www.ncppd.com](http://www.ncppd.com) and click Submit Your Meter Readings. You can also email your meter readings into our office by using the following email address - [ncentral@ncppd.net](mailto:ncentral@ncppd.net). If you are unable to call your meter reading(s) into our office, you can mail your readings into our office by the date listed above.

Town meters are read by North Central PPD personnel.