

CUSTER

PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

With Area Service Centers in Sargent,
Callaway, Stapleton and Thedford

Currents

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Photo Credits - Celeste Rogers

Newsletter of the

Custer Public Power District

Serving Custer, Loup, Blaine, Thomas, Hooker, McPherson, Logan, and parts of Sherman, Garfield, Brown, Cherry, Lincoln, and Dawson Counties

Custer Public Power District Newsletter is published bimonthly by:

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From the GENERAL MANAGER'S desk



Here we are in a new year. It is always fun to start a new year. The new year brings New Year's resolutions and a new beginning.

The year 2023 marks the fourth year without an increase in revenue from Custer Public Power District. That does not mean some of the rates will not or did not increase - some rates will change a little in the rate structure. From Custer PPD's standpoint, revenue does not need to increase.

The tricky part of 2023 is that you may feel like rates are increasing. Custer PPD and its customers have enjoyed several years of credits from NPPD that Custer PPD has passed along to our customers. While this was represented in 2022 with about \$1,800,000 given back to Custer PPD's customers, that amount will be decreasing.

For several years NPPD has done very

well in the market and even in adverse situations. Custer PPD has seen a decrease in our wholesale power costs in the form of a power cost adjustment (PCA). The Board of Directors at Custer PPD decided that the PCA should be given back to the customers, which Custer PPD has done.

The most recent year has been a great year for NPPD, and Custer PPD is hoping that 2023 will be a great year but being great means normal operations. Custer PPD appreciates normal operations and NPPD is doing all they can to keep costs in line. What Custer PPD has received back in the form of a PCA has been from "abnormally" great sales in the market.

While the rates we charge you have not changed to bring in more revenue for Custer PPD, the checks you write will be a little bit more. They will be a bit more because the PCA credit we have seen in

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Board Meetings

The regular monthly meeting of the Custer Public Power District Board of Directors is on the last Thursday of each month, beginning at 10:00 a.m.(CT) in the main office in Broken Bow at 625 E South E on HWY 2.

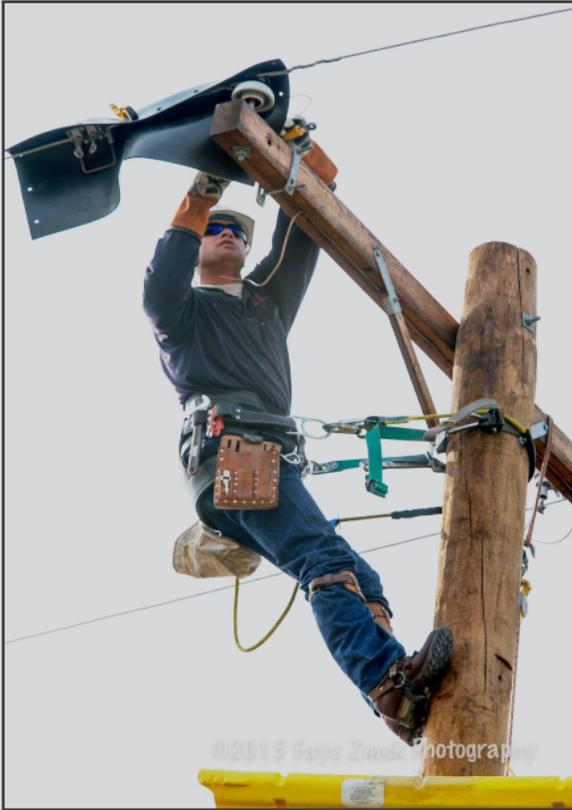
An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours.

In the event of matters of an emergency nature or conflicts with other meeting dates, the Board of Directors will set changes. Any change in the monthly meeting date will be posted in the legal notice at the main headquarters building at Broken Bow and at each of the District's area service centers located in Callaway, Sargent, Stapleton and Theadford, Nebraska.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Custer Public Power District is Seeking Applicants for the **CUSTER PPD UTILITY LINE SCHOLARSHIP**

The Custer PPD Scholarship Fund is administered by the Board of Directors and the Staff of Custer PPD.



Requirements for the Scholarship:

- * High School Graduate
- * Parents or Guardians are **Customers of Custer Public Power District**

Applications for the Utility Line Scholarship are available on the Custer PPD's website at www.custerpower.com or by contacting Tarin Burrows at 308.872.2451 and can be picked up at the Custer PPD office in Broken Bow.

The deadline for submitting your application is March 1, 2023.



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the past from NPPD has decreased and is starting to go away. It will feel like you are paying more, and you will be, not because Custer PPD raised rates but because there is less of a PCA credit to give back.

As we move into the new year, one of my concerns is the perception that Custer PPD has increased revenue through rates. In the same breath, the Board of Directors is allowing our rate consultant to adjust our rate structure to keep up with how the industry is changing. If

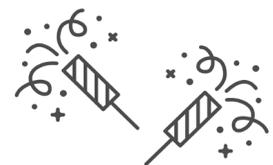
you see any changes, that is the reason why and not due to Custer PPD needing additional revenue.

You have probably noticed that I have said the same thing several different ways trying to make a point. Custer PPD does not need to increase revenue. The PCA credit we have received from NPPD is decreasing and will be going away. Not receiving the PCA credit will affect our customers with an increase in their statements.

Even though the PCA has decreased and

is going away, 2023 still looks bright.

I hope 2023 is a tremendous year for everybody.



Smart Tips for Using Space Heaters and Electric Blankets

When cold weather sets in, covert battles over thermostat settings take place at many homes and businesses. Some people just can't seem to get warm, while others feel that they're suffocating from the heat. Not everyone experiences the same level of comfort at the same temperature. As a result, many people turn to space heaters or electric blankets for added warmth. Safe Electricity reminds those who use space heaters and electric blankets to keep safety considerations in mind and use these devices with caution.

"While space heaters and electric blankets can provide needed warmth and comfort, they can also be deadly if they are not used with care," cautions Amber Sabin, Safe Electricity Advisory Board member.

When buying a space heater or electric blanket, check for approved safety certification marks to verify that the product has been tested for safety. Look for a space heaters and electric blankets with safety features, including an automatic shut off. Be very cautious about buying used space heaters or electric blankets. They may not have up-to-date safety mechanisms. Your safety is worth the investment in a new heater or blanket.

To help you have both a warm and safe winter, Safe Electricity shares the following tips for using space heaters and electric blankets:

- ◆ Review and follow all manufacturer directions.
- ◆ Plug space heaters and electric blankets directly into outlets; avoid using an extension cord.
- ◆ Always remember to turn off space heaters and electric blankets when not in use. Never leave one of these devices on unattended or after going to bed.



- ◆ Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices, such as space heaters. Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper, and other flammables.

- ◆ Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface — NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.

- ◆ Be aware of pets and children near heating appliances. Pets should never be allowed to sleep on top of electric blankets.

- ◆ Keep space heaters and electric blankets away from water. If they become wet, do not turn them on to dry.

- ◆ Regularly examine cords to make sure there is no cracking or fraying. Do not use damaged appliances. Also inspect your electric blanket to ensure that it is not worn or damaged. It should not have any charred or dark areas. Replace old or damaged blankets.

- ◆ Store your electric blanket in a manner which avoids creasing. If it cannot be stored flat, loosely fold or roll the blanket in a cool, dry closet.



To help you and your family stay safe, also be sure to check smoke detectors every month, and replace batteries twice a year. *"Also, develop and practice an escape plan. A good plan is known by all household members and includes an outside meeting location away from danger of the fire,"* adds Sabin.

When it comes time to get rid of an old or damaged space heater or electric blanket, do not dispose of your electrical appliances with your general waste. Check with your local recycling facility to see if they accept space heaters and electric blankets.

To learn more on how to avoid electrical hazards, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Where did 2022 go?

Everyone at Custer Public Power District agrees that 2022 went way too fast. Our year was filled with losses of retired co-workers, celebrations of weddings and new babies, promotions, job re-alignments, work place awards and celebrations.

At the annual Employee Appreciation Party, Custer Public Power District recognized employees for their years of service. This year's recognized employees were:

- Ron Baillie (retired 2022) 41 years
- James Gibson (Storeroom Clerk) 35 years
- April Gross (Customer Service Manager) 20 years
- Spencer Burk (Lead Lineman - Thedford) 15 years
- Angie Flynn (Customer Service Team Lead) 10 years
- Tarin Burrows (Executive Assistant) 10 years
- Alexandra Hart (Accounting Manager) 5 years

New employees that joined the Custer Power family were:

- Shelly Apperson, Customer Service Representative
- Jordan Lemburg, Apprentice Lineman
- Weston Kunkee, Apprentice Lineman

In October, Shane Sallach Lead Lineman for Callaway excepted the Maintenance Foreman position. Chancy Boeser will be filling Shane's position as the Lead Lineman at Callaway. This left a Staking Technician position open in December with a new employee hopefully joining the Custer Power team during the holidays.

Custer Public Power District wants to tell our retired and current employees, and their families...Thank You! Without their dedication to their jobs and to the customers/owners, Custer Public Power District would not be able to provide the reliable power that our customers/owners expect. When your electricity goes out, Custer Power employees are there for you.

May your lights shine bright in 2023!



Blizzard Warning

Severe winter weather is expected within the next **12 to 36 hours** or is occurring -- including whiteout conditions.

Do not travel.

take action.

Winter Storm Warning

Dangerous winter weather is expected within the next **12 to 36 hours** or is occurring. **Considerable travel problems** are expected.

take action.

Winter Weather Advisory

Potentially dangerous winter weather is expected within the next **12 to 36 hours** or is occurring. **Travel difficulties** are expected.

be aware.



RECIPES

Crockpot Cheeseburger Soup

Courtesy of Slow Cooker Gourmet - slowcookergourmet.net

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 1/2 cups up to 2 cups chicken broth (to desired thickness)
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 teaspoons of your favorite burger seasoning (McCormick's Pub Burger)
- 8 oz shredded Colby jack cheese
- 2 oz cream cheese
- 1/4 cup Fat free half and half
- 1 package frozen tater tots (crowns or regular)

DIRECTIONS:

- Cook ground beef until no longer pink
- Drain as needed and add to slow cooker
- Mix flour with 1/4 cup of the broth until smooth and add to slow cooker
- Add remaining broth along with diced carrots and celery, seasoning, cheese, cream cheese and half and half
- Cover and cook on high for 3-4 hours or low for 6-8
- Stir to combine well until cheeses are smooth
- Cook tater tots according to package directions
- Top soup with additional cheese if desired and tater tots



Deep Fried Corn Meal Sticks (Sorullitos de Maiz) with Dipping Sauce

Courtesy of allrecipes.com

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups water
- 3 tablespoons white sugar, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups cornmeal, or as needed
- 3 cups vegetable oil for frying
- vegetable oil for preparation of corn meal sticks

DIPPING SAUCE:

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise, or to taste
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 1 pinch garlic salt, or to taste (Optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Bring water to a boil in a saucepan and stir in sugar, butter, and salt until sugar has dissolved. Turn heat to low and whisk in 1 cup of cornmeal until smooth. Stir in remaining 1/2 cup cornmeal to make a very thick, workable dough.

Heat 3 cups vegetable oil in a deep-fryer or large saucepan to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease your hands well with 2 teaspoons of oil and scoop about 3 tablespoons of cornmeal dough; roll the dough into a ball, then shape into a 3-inch long stick about 1/2 inch wide. Repeat with remaining dough, oiling your hands as needed. Deep-fry the cornmeal sticks until golden brown, working in batches of 3 or 4 at a time. Drain fried cornmeal sticks on paper towels and keep warm.

Mix mayonnaise, ketchup, and garlic salt in a bowl until well combined; serve cornmeal sticks with the sauce for dipping.



Photo by Milly Suazo-Martinez

Five Ways to Fight the Winter Chill and Save Energy

By Abby Berry

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Custer Public Power District is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. Mind the thermostat. This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees;



Photo Credits M. Mazer



Photo Credits Matthew Henry

there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.

2. Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3. Use window coverings wisely. Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

4. Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game

consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

5. Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at [phone number] or take advantage of our free home energy audits. Custer Public Power District's energy experts can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at www.custerpower.com for additional energy-saving tips.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT

The office and area service centers
will be closed on January 2, 2023.

For after hour emergencies,
call 1-888-749-2453.



P.O. Box 10
Broken Bow, NE 68822

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SAFETY TIP

A photograph showing a rural landscape covered in snow. In the foreground, several power lines have snapped and are hanging in loops over a path. A utility pole is visible in the background, and a white fence runs across the middle ground. The sky is overcast and grey.

**STAY AWAY
FROM DOWNED
POWER LINES.**

- Downed power lines can energize the ground up to 35 ft. away - so keep your distance.
- Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.
- If you see a downed line, notify the local authorities immediately.
- Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item - this will not prevent injury or death!

Source: ESFI.org