

Perennial NEWS

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PERENNIAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Let There be Light

Perennial is working across the district to replace aging light structures.

Understanding Power Surges

What's the difference between a surge and a blink? Find out more!



Infrastructure Debate

By the time this edition of the *Perennial News* magazine reaches your mailbox, maybe President Biden and Congress will have reached an agreement on a plan to improve the nation's infrastructure. But while I was writing this article, the debate was ongoing, even though it at least appeared that a bipartisan deal could be reached, if you can believe it.

Now, I don't want to get into the debate of whether raising the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28% is the correct way to help pay for whatever ends up in an infrastructure bill. Or along with the replacement of crumbling roads and bridges, funding for childcare facilities, home care for the elderly, and credits for the purchase of electric vehicles should count as infrastructure. There are two sides to every argument, and getting caught up in such type of discussion in my position is a no-win proposition.

But what I can tell you without debate is we continue to make a significant amount of investment in your District's infrastructure. Building new power lines and replacing assets like poles, wires, transformers, and technology is very capital intensive. But it is something that we must do to provide you the reliable electric service that you expect and deserve.

At a recent board meeting, I reported to the directors that since 2013, which by the way was the last year that we had to

raise electric rates, we have increased the value of the electric system through the replacement and addition of assets by approximately \$2 million per year. In fact, over the last decade, the value of the district's electric system, or infrastructure, if you will, increased thirty-six percent. That is quite a bit of investment in a relatively short period of time, considering that the company has been in business for over eighty years.

Would we like to do more? Absolutely. We realize that some of the two thousand miles of line and associated equipment that is in the district has been in service for many years and will soon need to be replaced. And it would be wonderful to have an entirely new iron-clad electric system.

Replacing old and aging infrastructure while at the same time keeping the cost of it affordable is a balancing act and certainly a challenge.

But in addition to having infrastructure that is reliable, we must make sure that it is cost-effective.

Replacing old and aging infrastructure while at the same time keeping the cost of it affordable is a balancing act and certainly a challenge. However, I think we have done well at meeting this challenge with little to no impact on you. But I suppose that it is debatable.



Jamey Pankoke
General Manager

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Payton Gerken attends Youth Energy Leadership Camp

Perennial sponsored Payton Gerken of McCool Junction at the annual Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Youth Energy Leadership Camp which was held at the State 4-H camp in Halsey National Forest on July 19 – 23, 2021. Payton is the daughter of Steve and Sue Gerken. Payton attends McCool Junction high school where she will be a junior in the upcoming school year. The last couple years of high school Payton has excelled in extracurricular activities (cross country, speech, one act, basketball, band, as well as track) and been a leader in her activities and the community, for example Gerken is a National Honor Society member, the Captain of the Cheer



Payton Gerken represented Perennial at this year's Youth Energy Leadership Camp.

Squad, on the Student Council, a member of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), a squad member of the Hope Squad, along with being a big sister in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program. Before heading to camp Payton had mentioned that she couldn't wait to meet new people at camp. We are proud that Payton represented Perennial at the Nebraska Rural Electric Youth Energy Leadership Camp.

Youth Energy Leadership Camp is a fun filled week that taught the students how public power districts operate. The students toured Gerald Gentleman Station near Sutherland and the Kingsley Hydro at Lake McConaughy.

FREE AND EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

Here are 10 easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer:



1. Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day



2. Set your thermostat a few degrees higher



3. Take cooler showers (this feels better in the summer, anyway)



4. Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of your oven



5. Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors



6. Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage)



7. Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them)



8. Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weather stripping if needed)



9. Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house



10. SHUT THE FRONT DOOR (don't air condition the outdoors)

Safe Electricity.org® Learn more at:

Relighting Our District

All electric light sources have a common ancestor – Thomas Edison's incandescent bulb. Most of us think of the incandescent bulb as strictly residential in application, and in the beginning, it was all we had to work with. As a result, incandescent bulbs of various sizes were used for outdoor lighting. Unfortunately, incandescent bulbs have a relatively short life, and early versions had a relatively weak output. Still, any light on previously dark streets was an improvement.

As interest in energy conservation began to take hold, new bulbs surfaced, including high-pressure sodium (HPS) lamps, mercury vapor (MV), and compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs. All of those lighting options are outdated and inefficient, light-emitting diodes (LEDs) are the main form of electric light source today, and they are the most efficient.

These light sources have several advantages:

- LEDs use less energy. Replacing an HPS or MV light with an LED alternative delivers an immediate 50 to 70 percent increase in energy savings.
- The color of light produced is much more appealing.
- Light from an LED source is easily focused to eliminate light pollution. LEDs are designed to reduce back-lighting that spills behind the street light pole onto adjacent properties.
- LED sources have longer life spans.
- LED sources are much more durable since there are no filaments or electrodes to be damaged.
- LEDs still depreciate over time, but instead of burning out, they only get dimmer.

Beginning in 2014, Perennial installed LED streetlights one at a time as they burned out rather than doing mass installs. Then in 2018, Perennial started large installs in the villages and towns they served, switching the lighting from high-pressure sodium (HPS) and mercury vapor (MV) to light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs. This project will be completed this year.



Outdoor lighting is an essential aspect of modern life. Well-lit streets are safer for drivers and pedestrians, a deterrent to criminal activity, and add to the overall image of a town, neighborhood, or home. The quest for energy savings, improved light quality, and reduced maintenance costs has driven the evolution of outdoor lighting.

Perennial urges customers to report streetlight outages as they always have. Customers should call 402-362-3355 with the pole number and location to report the street light outage. These outage reports will continue to be handled as they always have.

Town LED Conversion By The Numbers

Town Name	Number of Street Lights Changed	Approximate kWh Saved Annually
Grafton	61	21,112
Ohiowa	60	23,004
Waco	63	22,864
Strang	37	14,958
Lushton	16	3,513
Benedict	57	31,939
McCool Junction	94	34,786
Henderson	179	48,171
Total	568	200,347

P E R E N N I A L EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Courtney Giesenhagen

Marketing and Communications Coordinator



Photo courtesy of
Christopher Weddings

5
YEARS

Have you ever wondered who is responsible for finding content for Perennial's magazine, Facebook page, advertising, and website? These are some of the duties for which Courtney

Giesenhagen is responsible. Other responsibilities include promoting energy efficiency, helping customers with high bill complaints, setting up load control texts notifications, serving as the grassroots coordinator for the district, and other duties around the office to help insure that Perennial's consumers receive excellent customer service.

When asked what she enjoys most about working for the District, Giesenhagen said, "I really enjoy meeting customers at events, as well as writing articles that require me to research District history."

Courtney grew up in Nelson, Nebraska, where she attended Lawrence/Nelson High School. Courtney went on to earn her Bachelors of Arts in Marketing from Hastings College. In addition to her duties at the District, Courtney serves as secretary of the statewide Customer Solutions Network, and she is also secretary of the Nebraska Women in Rural Electrification. In her free time, Giesenhagen enjoys spending time bow hunting, riding horses, as well as spending time with her husband, two dogs, and cat.

Thank you for five years of creativity and customer service, Courtney!

Wade Obermier

Line Technician



5
YEARS

To be a line technician, you must work in the rain, wind, sleet, snow, and heat during all hours of the day or night, as necessary, to get the power back on for customers. Often even working in less than ideal conditions during their regular workdays as well. But working

with high-voltage electric lines leaves absolutely no room for error. Mistakes from fatigue can be life-threatening in this job. Every day is a different set of challenges, and Wade Obermier enjoys these challenges. Wade is celebrating working at Perennial for five years in May.

Obermier attended the Utility Line program at Metropolitan Community Colloge (Metro) in Omaha, Nebraska. Wade graduated from McCool Junction High School in 2011.

After completing the program at Metro, he started his career at Perennial in August of 2016 as an apprentice line technician. Apprentice linemen must complete Perennial's

apprentice line program and perform satisfactorily in the field for several years before they can advance to a journeyman line technician. Today, Wade serves Perennial as an apprentice line technician but he will become a journeyman line technician later this year.

Obermier lives in York with his wife Crissa and their two dogs. After work, Wade enjoys hunting, fishing, kayaking and spending time with family and friends. Perennial is blessed to have employees like Obermier who work outdoors and take pride in serving the public and making sure everyone has safe and reliable electricity. Thank you for five years of hard work and dedication, Wade!

Understanding Power Surges and Blinks

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

What's a power surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle minor variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts--this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

Perennial encourages all customers to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you're experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

What's a power blink?

Power blinks are brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds, or other small animals contacting an energized power line, tree branches touching a power line or lightning, and other similar events. In fact,



when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme.

Any of the events noted previously can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these short power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

Regardless of the cause, Perennial crews will be on their way to inspect the service and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help too! If you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling Perennial at 402-362-3355 or 800-289-0288.

National Safe Digging Day

8.11

Nebraska 811
Know what's below.
811 before you dig.

Calendar of Events

- August 5-8** York County Fair
- August 27 - September 6** Public Power Booth Nebraska State Fair
- September 9 - 12** Yorkfest Celebration
- September 11** Heritage Day at Heritage Park Henderson
- September 14 - 16** Husker Harvest Days - Public Power Booth and Hot Line Demo
- September 17 - 19** McCool Junction Mustang Round Up

Perennial's office
will be closed on
September 6, 2021,
in observance of
Labor Day.



Illuminating Info about Watts

When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

