

Perennial NEWS

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PERENNIAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Power outage food safety

How to keep your food safe during an outage.

Factors that impact your electric bill

Learn about what impacts your bill and what factors you can control.



Pole Restoration in the District

We are perpetually replacing and restoring poles to keep our local electric system reliable and resilient. Every year we review bids for contracted pole inspection seeking the best performance to cost ratio. Pole inspection crews will work for a month inspecting poles, testing ground wire resistance, and treating poles to prevent further decay. Once the inspection is complete and results are reported, our Engineering Technicians, Jim Rumery, and Chad Hoebelheinrich, will determine how to fix poles rejected from the inspection.

Generally, if the pole exhibits decay at the top or if the crossarm is beginning to decay they will prepare a staking sheet detailing the replacement of the pole. In the past year, 66 poles were rejected out of 4,040 inspected, a slightly lower reject rate than in previous years. Once a pole has lost 33 percent of its original strength it is rejected. Perennial crews have already replaced the poles that could not be restored from the 2022 inspection. If the pole top and crossarm are not decayed and all other hardware is secure they will prepare a staking sheet for pole restoration.

Restoring a pole back to its required strength is done by reinforcing the area of decay with a heavy-duty galvanized steel support. Jeff Burk, Manager of Purchasing and Warehousing, sourced the steel supports locally from Laminated Wood Systems Inc. (LWS) in Seward.

The supports are marketed as "Pole Enforcers" and have been in production since 1995.

One might ask, why not replace the pole with a new pole? First, we need to keep the public safe while delivering reliable electric power. Restoring the existing pole has been a time proven solution to keep the energized conductors safely above or away from equipment, structures, and people. In addition, the Pole Enforcers are designed to meet the strength requirements of the National Electric Safety Code for Grade B Construction under Heavy Loading weather conditions. This means once the installation is complete, the pole has the required strength to withstand $\frac{1}{2}$ " of radial ice on supported conductors with a 40-mph wind across the conductor, pole, and equipment with no resulting damage to the pole. Secondly, the cost for the complete

installation of a Pole Enforcer is one third the cost of replacing the pole. Another advantage of restoration is no hot-work or outage is required to complete the restoration.

We have contracted the installation of these Pole Enforcers with Great Plains Power LLC. with its headquarters in Grand Island. Jim and Chad will oversee a select number of installations to verify quality work is completed. The work has been scheduled for this fall, taking 3 weeks to complete. Great Plains will install 80 Pole Enforcers from previous inspections with most located in southern York County.



Reinforced Pole Using Galvanized Steel Support



Brandon Lehman
Manager of Engineering

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On Our Cover:

Perennial Substation

Keep Food Safe When the Power Goes Out

Severe winds, lightning and even squirrels can temporarily cause the power to go out. We understand power outages of any length can be frustrating, especially when your fridge is stocked with perishable foods.

Extended power outages are rare, but when they occur, it's important to understand food safety measures to take to avoid illness.

Here are a few food safety tips to keep in mind before, during and after a power outage.

Before an outage

A good rule of thumb is to keep an emergency supply kit on hand. Be sure to include nonperishable food items like bottled water, powdered milk, canned goods, cereal and protein bars in your emergency kit.

If you have advance warning that an outage is possible, fill a cooler with ice—just in case the outage spans several hours. Having a cooler ready to go can buy extra time for your refrigerated, perishable items.

During an outage

If an outage occurs, do not open the refrigerator or freezer unless *absolutely* necessary. An unopened refrigerator will keep food

cold for about four hours. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for about 24 hours and a full freezer for about 48 hours. If it looks like the power outage will last longer than four hours, move your important perishable items to an ice-filled cooler.

After an outage

If refrigerated foods have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40 degrees for more than two hours, the American Red Cross recommends discarding the items. If any foods have an unusual color, odor or texture, they should be thrown away.

While most perishable foods should be thrown out after an extended outage, there are a few items that are safe to consume after a two-hour exposure to 40+ degrees:

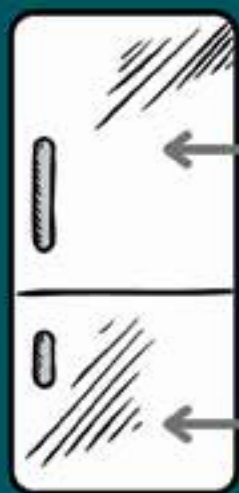
- hard cheeses that are properly wrapped
- butter or margarine that is properly wrapped
- taco, barbecue and soy sauces
- peanut butter, jelly, mustard, ketchup and relish

The best way to avoid illness from spoiled food during or after an outage is to follow the four-hour rule of thumb. After an outage, always smell and inspect foods before consuming and remember: when in doubt, throw it out.

To learn more about food safety after an emergency, visit www.ready.gov/food.

Keep Food Safe During and After a Power Outage

Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after a power outage. Use these tips to minimize food loss and reduce risk of illness.



Refrigerated food will last four hours. After four hours, place refrigerated foods in a cooler with ice.

Food in a **half-full** freezer will last 24 hours. Food in a **full** freezer will last 48 hours.

Food Safety Tips

1. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
2. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after four hours without power or a cold source (like a cooler with ice).

When in doubt, throw it out!



Factors That Impact Electricity Prices

Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs associated with the production and delivery of electricity have also risen.

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity prices and rates. Some of these factors Perennial can manage, some of them you can impact and other factors are beyond our control.

There are three primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a facilities charge, an energy purchased power charge, and an energy distribution

delivery charge. To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, we will unpack one piece at a time.

The first is a fixed monthly facilities charge, which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor, and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in Perennial's service



Nebraska Public Power District's Gerald Gentleman Station, a power generation plant.

territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, substations and other necessary equipment. Like many other businesses, we have experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment. For example, the cost for a distribution transformer (which looks like a long metal can at the top of a power pole) went from \$730 in 2021 to \$1775 this year, and wait times to receive this essential equipment is approximately one year. Because we are a not-for-profit public power district, some of these expenses may have to be passed on in the future to our customers. Perennial's facility charge is based on the type and size of service at the service location.

The other two components of your monthly bill are the purchased power energy charge and

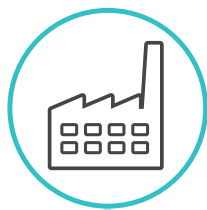
the distribution delivery energy charge, which are based on how much energy you consume. The purchased power energy charge is a charge for the cost the District incurs related to the purchasing of energy used by customers. While the distribution delivery energy charge is a charge to cover the cost associated with maintaining and operating the District's distribution system, including the delivery of electricity from the substation, through power lines, to the location it is consumed.

You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month and is typically impacted by extreme temperatures. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start, so be sure to keep it close to 78 degrees during the summer months. Additionally, Perennial offers a smart thermostat incentive to help give you more control, details at www.perennialpower.energywisenebraska.com.

Hopefully, this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of materials and fuels, please know Perennial is doing everything possible to keep controllable costs down. Contact us at 402-362-3355 or visit www.perennialpower.com if you have questions about your energy bill, for advice on how to save energy at home, or for more information about incentives to help you save energy and money.

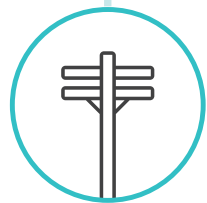
4 KEY FACTORS That Impact Energy Bills

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.



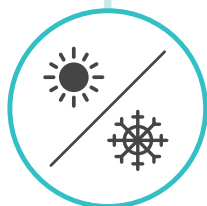
Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must first be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source. The cost of fuels used to generate electricity fluctuates, which is why you see a power or fuel charge on your monthly bill. This monthly charge covers cost fluctuations without having to continually restructure electricity rates.



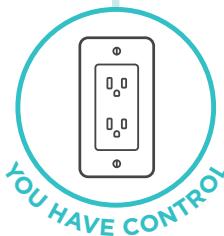
Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the District's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide electric service.



Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.



Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Planning a yard project? Don't just dig in

August 11th is National Safe Digging Day. It reminds us all that as we begin beautifying our yards, we shouldn't just dig in. According to 811, the "Call Before You Dig" national hotline, an underground utility is damaged **every nine minutes** because someone didn't call before digging.

Whether it is a do-it-yourself project or you are hiring a professional, call 811 two to three days prior to starting any digging project to request that all underground utilities be marked. (Call-to-completion time varies from state to state.) The service is free.

You may think it won't hurt anything to dig in an unmarked yard when landscaping, installing a fence, deck or mailbox, or even "just" planting a small flower bed or bush, but damaging an underground cable can have serious consequences.

Hitting a line could result in serious injuries and disrupted service for you and your neighbors. It could also make a dent in your wallet for repair fees or other fines.

The 811 hotline points out that there is more than one football field's length of buried utilities for every man, woman, and child in the U.S. before digging:

- **Notify** your state's one-call center by calling 811 or making an online request 2-3 days before work begins.
- **Wait** the required amount of time for affected utility operators to respond to your request.



- **Confirm** that all affected utility operators have responded to your request and marked underground utilities.
- **Dig Carefully** around the marks with care.

Remember that **privately owned underground lines** will NOT be marked by location flaggers. Examples of private lines/equipment include well and septic, underground sprinkler systems, invisible fencing, gas or electric lines that serve a detached building, as well as any lines (electric, water, sewer) from the meter to your home.

We can help locate private lines upon request, for a fee.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

PERENNIAL EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Aaron Norquest

Journeyman Line Technician



Aaron Norquest celebrated working at Perennial for five years in July. Norquest attended the Utility Line program at Northeast Community College in Norfolk after he graduated from York High School.

Aaron was hired at Perennial in 2018 as an apprentice line technician. Apprentice lineman must complete Perennial's apprentice line program and perform satisfactorily in the field for a number of years before

they can advance to a journeyman line technician. Today, Norquest serves Perennial as a journeyman line technician. Norquest stated, "restoring power after an outage or storm and getting to be outside every day are my favorite parts of the job."

Aaron resides in York and in his free time he enjoys boating and riding four wheelers.

Congratulations on your 5 year anniversary, Aaron!

Utility Line Scholarship

Perennial Public Power District is offering a \$1,000 per year scholarship to a student planning to enroll in an accredited utility line program. Applicants must reside within Perennial's service area to be eligible.

This scholarship program is aimed at highly-motivated and safety-conscious individuals who want to become a line technician. Participation in this program offered by Perennial does not guarantee future employment by Perennial.

The application deadline for this scholarship is **December 31, 2023**. Scholarship applications and applicant guidelines are available on our website, www.perennialpower.com or contact Courtney Giesenhagen at cgiesenhagen@perennialpower.com.



Community Calendar

August 3-6 - York County Fair

August 25 - Public Power Booth

September 4 - Nebraska State Fair

September 4 - Perennial Office
Closed in Observance
of Labor Day

September 7-10 - Yorkfest Celebration

September 12-14 - Husker Harvest Days
- Public Power Booth
and Hot Line Demo

September 15-17 - McCool Junction
Mustang Round Up



**Perennial's
office will be
closed Monday,
September 4, 2023,
in observance
of Labor Day.**



Ceiling Fan Usage

Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. Ceiling fans can help improve comfort year-round. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room. *Source: energy.gov*