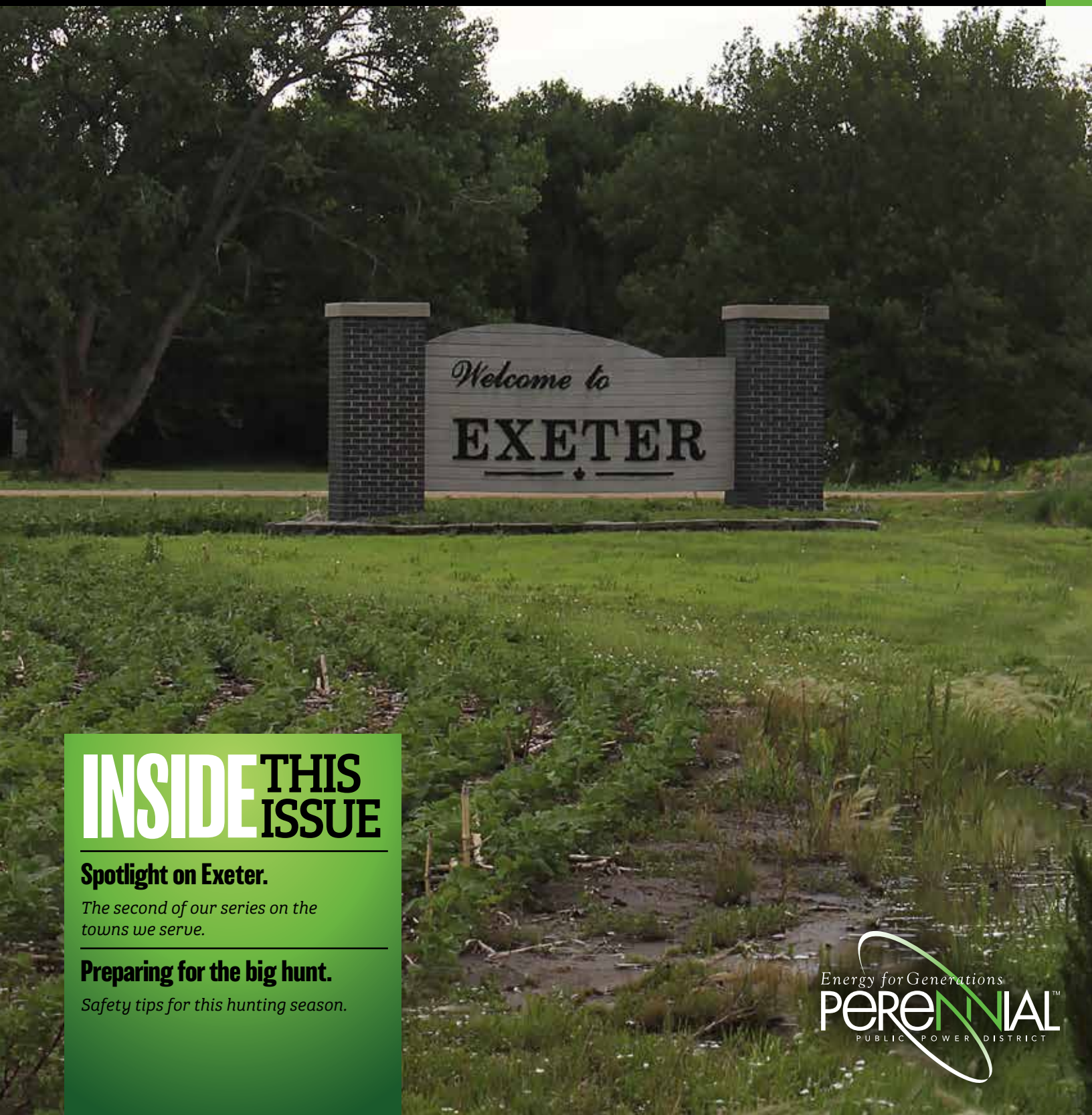
# Perennial NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE
PERENNIAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

August 2026 Vol. 27 No. 4


## INSIDE THIS ISSUE


**Spotlight on Exeter.**

*The second of our series on the towns we serve.*

**Preparing for the big hunt.**

*Safety tips for this hunting season.*


Energy for Generations
PERENNIAL™
PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

PerennialNEWS
CONNECTIONS

**Jeremy Styskal**
Manager of
Operational Technology

# What is AMI?

## AMI is more than just metering reading

AMI stands for (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) which is an integrated, fixed network system that enables two-way communication between utilities. The primary function of this infrastructure is to collect, store and analyze consumer energy usage. AMI helps utility companies like Perennial collect data at certain intervals. Perennial began implementing an AMI system in 2008.

**Top:** A three-phase AMI meter
**Bottom:** A single-phase residential meter.

The heart of Perennials AMI network is built on three core components. Smart meters are digital devices that are installed at your business, irrigation service or home. These meters record consumption in intervals of an hour or less depending on the service type. The communication network connects the devices back to the utility. Perennial uses a radio frequency mesh network where meters relay signals to each other until it reaches the AMI server. The key requirement is that data flows in both directions: Perennial can read the meter remotely and can send commands or signals back to it. The data management system is located at Perennials office headquarters. Meter readings are received from the meters to the AMI server. These readings and other data are then imported into Perennials (CIS) Customer information system where it's processed for billing.

Here at Perennial a big payoff with our AMI system is in outage management. With old analog or mechanical meters outages were typically learned from when the customer called in. With AMI Perennial knows immediately when an outage occurs because each meter can report its own status, restoration tends to be faster & better communicated. In 2010 Perennial integrated its irrigation load management into the AMI system. By doing this it has allowed Perennial to monitor loads more accurately, find faulty load controllers and determine exact control hours on each irrigation service.

What does this mean for you as a customer? The most visible change is more detailed information about your energy use. AMI gives you and Perennial hourly consumption data on your energy bill. AMI in the U.S. has accelerated significantly over the past decade. Approximately 165 million AMI meters are installed nationwide.

## On Our Cover:

Exeter's welcome sign along U.S Highway 6.

***Perennial News*** **(USPS 21610)**

**is published bimonthly by:**
Perennial Public Power District
2122 South Lincoln Avenue
York, NE 68467
**Phone: (402) 362-3355**
**www.perennialpower.com**
**email: perennial@perennialpower.com**
**Subscription Rates: $1.00 per issue**
**Periodical postage paid at York, NE.**

**POSTMASTER:**
**Send address changes to:**
*Perennial News*
2122 South Lincoln Avenue
York, NE 68467

# PREPARING FOR **THE BIG HUNT**

As hunting season approaches, excitement builds for time outdoors. But before you head into the woods, make sure electrical safety is part of your preparation checklist.

## Before you climb that tree stand, look out for power lines.

Never install a tree stand near a power line or on a utility pole. Electricity can arc through the air up to 10 feet from high-voltage lines. This means you don't even have to touch a wire to be at risk of electrocution.

Never shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: those who get within 50 feet of a downed line could be shocked or electrocuted.

## Keep these tips in mind to stay safe:

**Scout the area.** Before hunting, scout your area during daylight. Look for power lines, poles and electrical equipment. Note their locations to avoid them later.

**Power safely.** If you're using a portable electrical generator, don't use it inside a cabin or RV, or in a confined area. Make sure it's used outside with plenty of ventilation.

**Avoid aiming toward power lines or equipment.** A stray bullet could knock down a line, interrupt power or create a deadly hazard.

**Keep your distance.** Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines, poles and other electrical infrastructure when setting up or taking down tree stands.

**Never climb a utility pole.** Even if it looks like the perfect vantage point, don't do it. Poles carry high-voltage lines, and climbing them can be deadly.

**Don't use utility poles for support.** Tree stands or blinds should never be attached to or supported by power poles or electrical equipment.

**Watch for downed lines.** Stay at least 50 feet away from downed power lines or damaged electrical equipment. Call 911 or your utility immediately.

Learn more at: Safe Electricity.org

PERENNIAL

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

# EXETER

**AT A GLANCE**

**POPULATION:** 511

**LOCATION:** U.S. 6; eight miles east of U.S. 81

PERENNIAL CUSTOMER SINCE 1999

**KNOWN FOR:** Exeter Days, historic architecture, Gilbert Park and the Exeter-Milligan-Friend school community

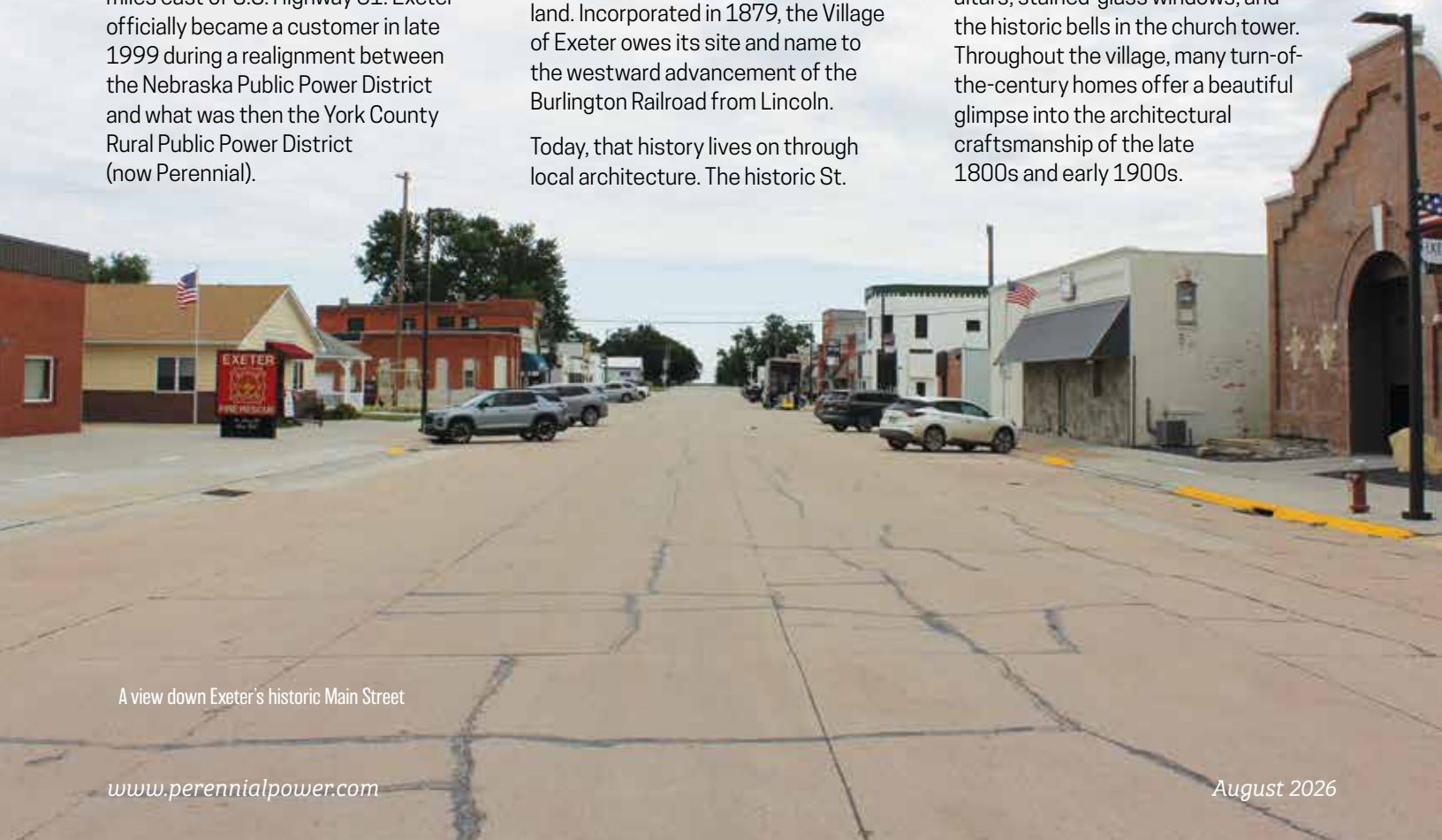
## Next up in our series highlighting the unique communities we serve is Exeter.

Sustained by two major avenues of commerce, Exeter sits along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway main line and U.S. Highway 6, just eight miles east of U.S. Highway 81. Exeter officially became a customer in late 1999 during a realignment between the Nebraska Public Power District and what was then the York County Rural Public Power District (now Perennial).

### Rich Roots and Historic Charm

The Homestead Act of 1862 brought the first settlers to the area in 1870 with the promise of 160 acres of free land. Incorporated in 1879, the Village of Exeter owes its site and name to the westward advancement of the Burlington Railroad from Lincoln.

Today, that history lives on through local architecture. The historic St. Stephen's Catholic Church dates back to 1902 and has undergone several careful renovations and restorations. The interior still features its original altars, stained-glass windows, and the historic bells in the church tower. Throughout the village, many turn-of-the-century homes offer a beautiful glimpse into the architectural craftsmanship of the late 1800s and early 1900s.




A view down Exeter's historic Main Street

Built in 2009, the Exeter Aquatic Center anchors summer recreation at Gilbert Park.

## Parks and Recreation

There are three parks in Exeter covering about 15 acres. Gilbert Park is the location of the city's Aquatic Center, ball fields, picnic facilities, and two camper pads for rent. The Edgar Recreation Center offers both tennis and basketball courts. While the Storybook Park, located behind the Exeter Public Library, is a park for preschool children.

The Edgar Recreation Center adds neighborhood tennis and basketball courts to Exeter's park system.

## Small Town Pride, Big Traditions

Exeter loves to celebrate its community spirit during Exeter Days, held annually during the last weekend in July. Sponsored by the Exeter Community Club, Sons of the American Legion, and the Exeter Fire Department, the festival runs Friday evening through Sunday evening with activities for all ages.

The community also holds a proud legacy in local sports. In 1986, Exeter High School became the first town in Nebraska history to win both the Girls and Boys State Basketball Tournaments in the same year. Following a series of school consolidations—first with Milligan in the early 2000s and later with Friend—the village is now a proud part of the Exeter-Milligan-Friend (EMF) Public Schools system, which serves around 350 students.

## A Thriving Local Economy

Around 30 businesses call Exeter home, alongside the many dedicated farmers who cultivate the surrounding land. Some of the major employers driving the local economy include Horizontal Boring and Tunneling, the Farmers Cooperative, Greg's Market, and Exeter Lumber.

Whether you are visiting for Exeter Days or just passing through, it is easy to see why Exeter is more than just a spot on the map—it's a place people are proud to call home.

> "Exeter is an agricultural-based community that takes care of each other and is always willing to lend a hand to those in need."
>
> ***Becky Erdkamp, Exeter Village Clerk***

St. Stephen's historic Romanesque church survived severe storm damage in 1917–18, although its original tall steeple was never replaced.

# 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, 2026.** Scholarship applications and applicant guidelines are available on our website, **www.perennialpower.com** or contact Courtney Giesenhagen at **cgiesenhagen@perennialpower.com.**

PERENNIAL EMPLOYEES

## POWERING PROGRESS

*Recognizing the People who keep us moving forward.*

To be a line technician, you must have incredible physical and mental strength. Working on the line means hauling gear, pulling thick cable and wire, and not being bothered by working long hours day or night. Every day is different, from challenging job sites to working in all types of extreme weather.

Working with high-voltage electric lines leaves absolutely no room for error. Mistakes from fatigue can be life-threatening in this job. Michael Spellman enjoys these challenges.

Michael was promoted to journeyman line technician in June after completing years of Perennial's apprentice line program and gaining experience in the field. Spellman stated his favorite part of the job was working storms.

Michael attended North East Community College (NECC) in Norfolk to receive his degree in Utility Line after completing high school at Aurora Public Schools. Michael started with Perennial in 2022.

Spellman lives in York, and after work, Michael enjoys spending time outdoors. Congratulations, Michael, on this great accomplishment.

P E R E N N I A L

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Chris Stutzman

*Journeyman 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 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 Chris Stutzman enjoys these challenges. Chris is celebrating five years of working at Perennial in September.

Chris attended McCool Junction High School, where he graduated in 2017. After high school, Stutzman attended the Utility Line program at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha.

Chris started his career at Perennial in 2021 as an apprentice line technician. Apprentice linemen must complete Perennial's apprentice line program and perform well in the field for several years before they can advance to a journeyman line technician. Last Fall, he advanced to a Journeyman Line Technician.

When asked why he enjoys being a lineman at Perennial, he said, "building relationships with customers". Chris lives in McCool Junction with his wife, Bailey. In his spare time, Stutzman enjoys spending time with his family, along with hunting, fishing, and anything outdoors. Congratulations on your 5-year anniversary, Chris!

## Courtney Giesenhagen

*Marketing and Communications Coordinator*

10 YEARS

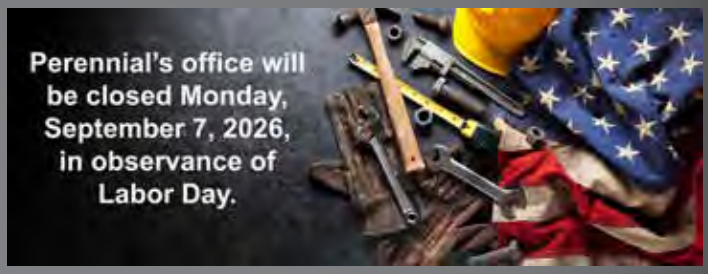
Have you ever wondered who is responsible for finding content for Perennial's magazine, Facebook page, advertising, and website? These are some of the duties for which Courtney Giesenhagen is responsible. Other responsibilities include promoting energy efficiency, helping customers with high bill complaints, setting up load control text notifications, serving as the grassroots coordinator for the district, and other duties around the office to help ensure that Perennial's consumers receive excellent customer service. Courtney is celebrating ten years of working at Perennial in September.

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 Bachelor of Arts in Marketing from Hastings College. Courtney lives south of Milford with her husband, Drew, and two sons, Jaxson and Ryder. In her free time, Giesenhagen enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, and crafting. Congratulations on your 10-year anniversary, Courtney!

# Calendar of Events

| | |
|---|---|
| **August 6-9** | York County Fair |
| **Aug. 28 – Sept. 7** | Nebraska State Fair<br>*Public Power Booth and Hot Line Demo* |
| **September 7** | Perennial Office Closed<br>*In observance of Labor Day* |
| **September 10 - 13** | Yorkfest Celebration |
| **September 15 - 17** | Husker Harvest Days<br>*Public Power Booth and Hot Line Demo* |
| **September 18-20** | McCool Junction Mustang Round Up |




ENERGY SAVING TIP

## Lighten the Load

Running multiple major appliances at the same time—like your dishwasher, laundry machines, and oven—can spike energy demand and strain the electric grid, especially during peak hours (typically late afternoon to early evening). Instead of stacking appliance use, spread it out throughout the day or shift chores to off-peak hours when energy demand is lower. This not only helps improve overall efficiency but can also reduce your energy costs. A simple habit change, like doing laundry in the morning and running the dishwasher overnight, can make a meaningful difference for both your wallet and energy reliability.