

# Perennial NEWS

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## Supply Chain Stabilizes

The last time I wrote about the supply chain issues, prices across the board were rising and lead times were extremely long. For the most part, pricing has stabilized somewhat. Tariffs have caused some items' costs to increase, but not nearly as much as I feared. Lead times have also stabilized. Distributors have also had time to replenish their inventories, which really helps reduce lead times on the items we use daily, like bolts, crossarms, and poles.

### Current Manufacturer Lead Times

Underground Connectors	9-40 weeks
Meter Sockets	8-75 weeks
Wood Poles	Stock to 12 weeks
Crossarms	Stock to 6 weeks
Underground Wire	Stock to 22 weeks
Overhead Wire	Stock to 20 weeks
Transformers	13-16 weeks

Actually, wood poles are a bright spot in our industry. Pricing of poles has come down since the pandemic, and availability has drastically improved. We can get some poles in a matter of days instead of months, which was a blessing this past year.

Prior to the pandemic, a manufacture lead time of 8 weeks was considered a long time. However, new bucket trucks and digger trucks still have as much as a three year lead time.

All in all, lead times have improved, and pricing is stabilizing for the most part. To help elevate the situation, Perennial has increased its own inventory considerably over the past several years. It is still very important for customers to plan well ahead for new services or upgrades, so we can make sure we have the material for your project.



Transformers in Perennial's inventory.

With the two major storms this past year, the storm in March and then again in August, the District has needed approximately 1,500 poles. In a normal year, the District uses around 400 poles.



Perennial's supply inventory in the bull pen.

### On Our Cover:

May your holidays be merry, bright, and full of good energy — from Perennial Public Power.



**Jeff Burk**

Manager of  
Purchasing and Warehousing

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# Stay in the Know

At Perennial Public Power District, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our customers (that's you!).

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows customers to receive information about other important programs, events, and activities.

Up-to-date contact information could speed up the power restoration process during an outage. Accurate information helps our Operations Department or office personnel to follow up with you in the event of questions or an extended outage.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair, or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected customers through automated phone messages, phone calls from our Operations department, text messages, or email,

if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences.

Keeping the district updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered customers of any changes in district event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if Perennial has accurate account information.

Many of you have been customers of the district for years, and it's likely that your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many customers now use a cell phone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

Perennial wants to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the district, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by Perennial to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by updating it in SmartHub on our website [perennialpower.com](http://perennialpower.com), calling our office at 402-362-3355, filling out the back of your bill pay slip, or emailing the office at [perennial@perennialpower.com](mailto:perennial@perennialpower.com). By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all customers of the district.

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to be brought to



# Prevent holiday fires

Keep your family safe and your holiday merry with these fire safety tips

## Cooking safety in the kitchen

The kitchen is often the heart of holiday celebrations, but it can also be a hot spot for fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), cooking equipment is the leading cause of home fires. Here's how to stay safe:

- **Never leave burners or the oven unattended.** Keep a fire extinguisher nearby for emergencies.
- **Ensure children stay away from the kitchen,** where hot appliances and sharp utensils can pose risks.
- **Install smoke detectors** at least 10 feet away from cooking appliances and test them monthly to ensure they're working.

## Be aware of holiday fire risks

The combination of candles, fireplaces, and flammable decorations increases the risk of fires during the holiday season.



### Use candles with care

Only burn candles where you can keep an eye on them. Also:

- **Extinguish candles before going to bed,** leaving the room, or leaving the house.
- **Use heat-resistant surfaces for candles,** placing them out of reach of children and pets.
- **Keep candles away from flammable items,** such as trees, decorations, curtains, and furniture.
- **Opt for battery-operated candles** near flammable objects.



### Fireplace safety tips

A cozy fireplace is a holiday favorite, but it requires careful handling.

- **Decorate wisely.** Avoid hanging flammable decorations like stockings and greenery directly on the mantel.
- **Perform annual maintenance.** Have your chimney and fireplace checked and cleaned at least once a year.
- **Use a screen.** Install a screen to prevent embers from landing on floors or carpets.
- **Burn responsibly.** Never burn trees, wreaths, or wrapping paper in the fireplace, as they can ignite rapidly and cause flash fires.



### Christmas tree fire prevention

A beautiful Christmas tree adds to the festive spirit, but it's essential to ensure it's safe.

- **Choose a fresh tree.** Fresh trees have needles that are hard to pull from branches and have a sticky trunk bottom.

- **Keep the tree away from heat sources** such as fireplaces, space heaters, and vents.
- **Check the water level daily** to prevent the tree from drying out.
- **Place the tree away from high-traffic areas** and doorways.
- **If using an artificial tree**, ensure it is labeled as fire-resistant.
- **When discarding a real tree**, place it far from your home and other combustible objects, as dried trees are highly flammable.



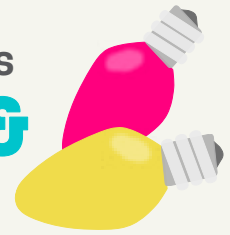
## Holiday lighting safety

Decorative lights add cheer to the season, but safety is key:

- **Purchase lights from reputable retailers** and ensure they are approved by recognized testing labs such as UL or CSA.
- **Only use lights designed for outdoor use** when hanging outside.
- **Use circuits equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs)** for outdoor lights.
- **Avoid water and snow** when using extension cords and outdoor lights.
- **Stay at least 10 feet away** from power lines while hanging lights.
- **Check for broken sockets and frayed wires** before use.
- **Avoid plugging too many devices** into a single outlet.
- **Turn off indoor and outdoor decorations** when going to bed or leaving the house.

By following these fire safety tips, you can enjoy a joyful and safe holiday season with your loved ones. Perennial wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## Keep Your Holidays MERRY & BRIGHT



Don't add stress to your holiday season. Knowing how to properly use and hang lights could prevent injury or fire.



Make sure your home's electrical system can handle the load.



Unplug lights or decorations before changing a bulb or other parts.



Do not use cords or plugs that are damaged, frayed or cracked.



Only use lights certified by a reputable testing lab.



In addition, consider LED lights when replacing old light strands. LEDs use 80 to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs.

Learn more:  Safe  
Electricity.org®

# Should I use a space heater or turn up the heat?

Drafty room? Before reaching for your space heater, consider whether it's better to plug it in or simply turn up the thermostat.

Space heaters are designed to warm small, targeted spaces — not your entire home. If you find yourself relying on one often, it may be time to address your home's energy efficiency.

## Fix efficiency first, then supplement with a space heater

Improving your home's efficiency helps it retain heat, reduces drafts, and reduces your energy use. Many solutions are affordable and DIY-friendly, such as:

- Seal air leaks. Use caulk and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors to prevent drafts.
- Add insulation where it matters. Attic insulation has the biggest return on investment, and loose-fill insulation is an affordable option. Perennial has rebates available check <https://perennialpower.energywisenebraska.com/residential/> to see if you qualify for the attic insulation rebate.
- Check your heating system. Schedule regular service for your furnace or heat pump. If it's outdated or struggling, it could be time for an upgrade. Perennial has rebates available. Visit <https://perennialpower.energywisenebraska.com/residential/> to learn about available rebates.

- Use programmable thermostats. These can help reduce energy waste by heating only when and where needed. Smart thermostat rebates are available. For more information, visit <https://perennialpower.energywisenebraska.com/residential/>.

Once your home is sealed and insulated, a space heater can be used to increase comfort and warm specific rooms, like a home office or bedroom, without turning up the heat for the whole house.

A space heater is like a ceiling fan; it can improve comfort in a small area, but it's not a whole-house solution.

## Use space heaters efficiently:

- Heat only the room you're currently in.
- Close doors to keep heat contained.
- Choose the right size — too small and it won't warm you; too big and it wastes energy. Check manufacturer sizing guides.
- Use a heater with a thermostat and timer to avoid overheating the room or wasting electricity.

## Stay safe while staying warm:

- Place the heater on a solid, flat, nonflammable surface — never on carpets or rugs.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use extension cords or power strips.

- Keep children, pets, and anything flammable, such as curtains or bedding, at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- Choose a heater with built-in safety features, including:
  - Overheat sensor.
  - Tip-over shutoff switch.
  - UL, ETL, or CSA International certification label.
- Never leave a space heater unattended, especially around children or pets.
- Turn off the heater when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Unplug it when not in use to prevent electrical hazards.

Ultimately, the decision to use a space heater or turn up your thermostat hinges on a simple principle: efficiency. A space heater is an excellent tool for targeted, short-term comfort in an already energy-efficient home. If your home is drafty, however, simply turning up the heat or plugging in a space heater will be a temporary and costly fix. By prioritizing home efficiency upgrades like sealing leaks and adding insulation first, you'll tackle the root cause of the cold, save money on your overall heating bills, and then be able to use a space heater as it was intended - as an efficient, supplemental way to warm a specific spot. Don't forget to check out the rebates Perennial offers at <https://perennialpower.energywisenebraska.com/residential/> to make those energy-saving improvements more affordable.

# P E R E N N I A L EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Keith Hoffman

*Journeyman Line Technician*



**20**  
YEARS

Keith Hoffman will celebrate twenty years of employment at Perennial in January 2026. He graduated from York High and then received

his Associate's Degree in Utility Line from Omaha Metropolitan Community College. Hired in 2006 as an Apprentice Line Technician, he was promoted in 2010 to his current role as a Journeyman Line Technician. His responsibilities include general maintenance and construction of overhead and underground electrical infrastructures.

When asked about his favorite part of being a lineman, Hoffman stated, "Restoring power and mutual aid work."

Keith lives in rural York County with his wife, Cassie, along with their three children, Wyatt, Emry, and Ryker. After work, Hoffman enjoys watching his kids' activities, traveling, golf, fishing, and hunting.

Perennial is privileged to have employees like Keith, who not only take pride in maintaining a safe and reliable infrastructure but enjoy it. Keith, we'd like to thank you for twenty years of dedicated service.

## Steve Gerken

*Manager of Operations*



**20**  
YEARS

Steve was hired in December of 2005 as an Apprentice Line Technician. In the twenty years Gerken has been employed at Perennial, he has advanced from Apprentice Line Technician to a Journeyman Line Technician. Then to a Lead Line Technician, and in 2016, he was promoted to Operations Coordinator.

In 2021, Steve attended the School of Business at the University of Wisconsin in Madison to receive his National Rural Electric Association Management Internship Program. Most recently in 2022, he was promoted to his current position, Manager of Operations. As Manager of Operations, Steve is responsible for the substations, power lines, new or change of service inquiries, vehicles, and outages.

Gerken stated, "My favorite part of the job is working with customers, planning large construction projects, and seeing them get finished."

Steve resides in McCool Junction with his wife, Susan, along with three of

their four children, Payton, Braxton, and Dawson. Their daughter Madison lives with her husband, Kade. Gerken is very involved with the McCool Junction community by being a part of the McCool Community Improvement Foundation, serving on the Evening with the Stars Committee, and a McCool Community Church Board of Trustee. After work, he spends his time camping, fishing, and watching his children's activities.

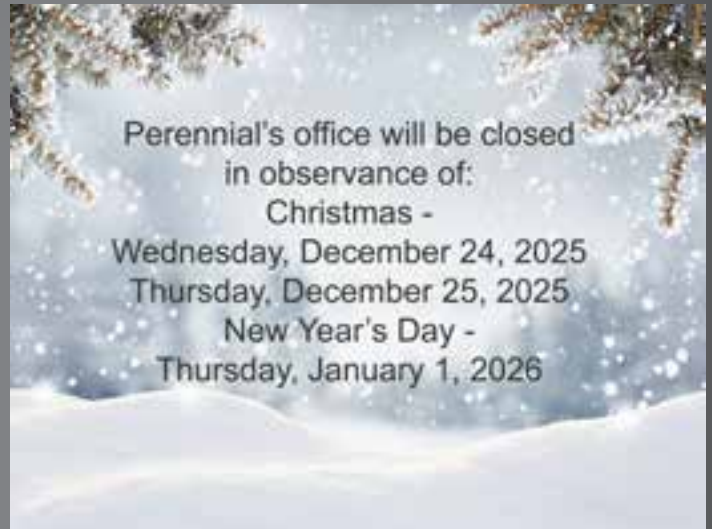
Perennial is thankful to have employees like Steve, who help keep our Operations Department running smoothly, helping to provide reliable electricity. Thank you, Steve, for 20 years of hard work and dedication!

# 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, 2025**. Scholarship applications and applicant guidelines are available on our website, [www.perennialpower.com](http://www.perennialpower.com) or contact Courtney Giesenhagen at [cgiesenhagen@perennialpower.com](mailto:cgiesenhagen@perennialpower.com).



## Save Money While You're Away

If you're heading out of town during the holiday season, remember to set your home to vacation mode. You can save energy while you're away by lowering your thermostat a few degrees or creating an "away" schedule with a smart or programmable thermostat. Newer water heaters include a vacation mode setting to help you save on water heating costs, or you can simply lower the temperature manually. Small actions can also stack up to energy savings. Unplug devices that consume energy when they're not in use, including phone chargers, toothbrush chargers, TVs, and gaming consoles.

