

# Perennial NEWS

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*More people are switching to electric as technology makes it more appealing*

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*Severe storm season is upon us. Here are some things to do when it hits.*



## Transparency at its best

Critics of Legislative Bill 1008 that was passed by the Nebraska Legislature this year claimed that the piece of legislation will take “public” out of our public power structure in Nebraska. Nothing could be further from the truth.

For the record, the amendment in LB 1008 will allow our publicly owned generation companies in Nebraska to withhold competitive or propriety information related to costs that would give an advantage to competitors in the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) who also produce electricity. Electricity is bought and sold daily into the SPP, a regional organization that oversees the bulk electric grid and wholesale power market, where utilities such as Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) submit bids for the energy they produce.

Requiring NPPD and Nebraska’s other publicly owned generation companies to provide specific power production cost information would have put all of Nebraska’s ratepayers at a distinct disadvantage. Simply put, if the competition knows your costs and the likely prices that you are going to bid it can undercut you and keep you from doing business. In the SPP market, without the LB 1008 amendment it would have meant Nebraska’s power generators might not be able to receive the amount of revenue they currently get from the sale of energy they produce and bid into the market. And its this revenue that helps keep Nebraska’s rates among the lowest in the nation.

Make no mistake about it. Opponents of the amendment were from, or supportive of, companies from other states that simply want to make money in Nebraska. I’m all for people making money but let’s be honest. Their concern had nothing to do with being able to get information to determine the efficiency or honesty of public power.

The debate on whether or not public power utilities should be required to reveal proprietary cost information isn’t the point of this article. My point is that when it comes to being transparent public power districts are second to none. They are democratic organizations controlled by customers that are elected by customers to serve on the board of directors, and board meetings are open for anyone to attend. In other words, it’s the best form of accountability that there is.

A few years ago, I was told about a woman from Iowa that frequently attended Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) board meetings. She was averse to coal powered generation, and she attended OPPD’s meetings to encourage the board to shut down their North Omaha Station coal plant. Finally, after several months of coming to the meetings and continuing her plea one of the directors asked her why she kept coming to their meetings, when she wasn’t even an OPPD customer. Her response was something to this effect, “Because I can. I can’t go to my power supplier’s board meetings. They are private.”

Transparency is one of the core values of public power. Keeping customers informed about matters such as rates and service policies, as well as allowing them to participate in the meetings of locally elected officials are prime examples. And yes, many documents are subject to Nebraska’s Public Records Statutes, which provide interested persons the right to obtain access to public records of public power districts. But thanks to the state’s Legislature, records of proprietary information that could harm Nebraska ratepayers isn’t among them.



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# Prevent Deadly Shocks

## Check Your Boats and Docks

Perennial Public Power District and Safe Electricity urge boat and dock owners to prevent deadly shocks by checking your boats and docks. Have electrical systems checked and repaired to help prevent water electrocution accidents. Exposure to the elements and the motion of water can degrade the condition of electrical components allowing electricity to leak into the water or energize surrounding metal.

Each year, people are killed by electrical shock while in the water near docks or boats plugged into shore power. Proper maintenance and safety equipment are vital in helping to prevent these tragedies.

Perennial and Safe Electricity in conjunction with the American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers/National Electrical Contractors Association recommend:

Docks should have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) breakers on the circuits feeding electricity to the dock.

The metal frame of docks should be bonded to connect all metal parts to the alternating current (AC) safety ground at the power source. That will ensure any part of the metal dock that becomes energized because of electrical malfunction will trip the circuit breaker.

Neighboring docks can also present a shock hazard. Ensure your neighbor's dockside electrical system complies with the National Electrical Code and has been inspected.

All electrical installations should be performed by a professional electrical contractor familiar with marine codes and standards.

When it comes to your boat's electrical system, particularly those with AC systems, keep in mind:

Boats with AC systems should have isolation transformers or equipment leakage circuit interrupter (ELCI) protection, comply with ABYC standards, and should be serviced by an ABYC Certified® Technician.

There are some big differences between your house and your boat. Household wire is not suitable for use on boats as houses are motionless and generally dry. Even marine-rated wire that is not supported along its length will break with constant motion stress.

Do NOT use wire nuts or splice connectors! Wire nuts are for solid conductor wire, which should never be on a boat, and splice connectors cut wire strands.

Fuses are rated to protect the wire, not the appliance. If a fuse blows continuously, it should NOT be replaced with a larger one just to keep it from blowing again—something else is wrong.

Have your boat's electrical system checked at least once a year. Boats should also be checked when something is added to or removed from their systems.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) and [www.abycinc.org](http://www.abycinc.org).



# STAY AHEAD OF



Summer storms can happen at any moment, it is important to know what actions to take during a summer storm. Lightning strikes the United States millions of times each year, and every strike is a potential killer. To keep your family safe, it is important to know what actions to take during a thunderstorm.

There is no safe place from lightning when you are outside. To be as safe as possible, you must seek shelter indoors or in an enclosed vehicle with a metal roof when there is a thunderstorm in the area. If your day is going to involve being outdoors, check the weather forecast to know if there is a danger of severe weather, and make sure you can get to a safe location if a thunderstorm develops.

Remember, if you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. It is a good idea to heed the advice of the National Weather Service, "When thunder roars, go indoors."

However, being indoors does not mean you are completely clear from danger. Electrical current from lightning can enter a building through phone lines, electrical wires, cables, or plumbing.

During a thunderstorm, stay away from electrical outlets and any corded devices that could carry an electrical surge if lightning were to hit your home or the electrical system

servicing it. Turn off or unplug appliances and other electrical devices. You might also want to turn off your air conditioner to protect the compressor from a power surge and avoid a costly repair job.

Avoid water and contact with plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets. Do not wash dishes, shower, or bathe during a thunderstorm. Also avoid washers and dryers since they are connected to the plumbing and electrical systems and also provide an electrical path from the outside through the dryer vent.

Wait until 30 minutes have passed without lightning or thunder after a storm before returning outside. Lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the area where it is raining.

If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and care for the victim immediately. You are not in danger of being shocked or electrocuted by touching the victim, but you should be alert to the risk of lightning.



Lightning isn't the only threat summer storms bring, as heavy rains, hail, high winds, and tornados can all be produced by summer storms.

Heavy rains can cause flash flooding, although flash floods are more likely in mountainous areas than in rural Nebraska.

Still flooding in some form is a relatively common occurrence here after heavy rains. Never drive or walk through moving water. The force of moving water can be very strong. Your vehicle or you could be swept into deeper water by the current. This is true for even relatively shallow moving water. The phrase often used to warn of this danger is, "Turn around, don't drown."

We think of hail as more of a nuisance than a threat, but it can be a threat. A hailstone measuring 7 inches across (with a diameter of 18.75 inches) was recovered near Aurora after a storm on June 22, 2003. According to the National

# MOTHER NATURE



Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, large hailstones can strike at speeds more than 100 mph! Hail causes around one billion dollars in damage to property and crops annually. Always take cover at the first sign of hail.

Thunderstorms can produce exceptionally high wind speeds. The wind itself seldom causes injury, but the blowing debris it creates certainly can. High winds can topple trees, wooden walls, and even break windows by “throwing” debris against them. Toppled trees have crushed buildings and vehicles. At the first sign of high winds, take cover and be aware of where you are relative to potential damaging debris.

Tornadoes are the most dangerous threat posed by a thunderstorm. A tornado is a violently rotating column of air that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground and is often, although not always, visible as a funnel cloud. Tornadoes can cause extensive damage to structures and disrupt transportation, power, water, gas, communications, and other services in its direct path and in neighboring areas.

About 1,200 tornadoes hit the United States every year, so it is important to know what to do when a tornado touches down near you. You should prepare for a tornado before severe weather strikes. Identify a storm shelter in sturdy buildings

near locations you frequent so you have a plan for where you will go quickly for safety when there is a tornado warning. A safe room should be a small interior windowless room on the lowest level, below ground in a basement or storm cellar, (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. You will want to put as many walls as possible between you and the outside of the building.

Look for the following tornado danger signs: dark, often greenish sky, large hail, a large dark low-lying rotating cloud, or a loud roar, similar to the sound of a freight train. If you see approaching storms or any of the tornado danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

Additionally, familiarize yourself with the difference between a watch and a warning. During a watch, tornadoes are possible while a warning means a tornado has been spotted or indicated by radar. If you are in a tornado warning you should seek shelter immediately. Most injuries associated with tornadoes are from flying debris, so remember to protect your head.

After a tornado, stay away from downed power lines and always assume that power lines, downed or not, are energized. Stay out of damaged buildings and homes until local authorities indicate it is safe to enter the buildings. For more information and tips on what to do before, during, and after summer storms go to [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).





Nebraska Public Power District has purchased an all-electric Chevy Bolt to help the public power districts promote electric vehicles.

# Public Powered

Many people think that electric vehicles (EV) are the way of the future and they are slowly being adopted by drivers across the Midwest. All EVs have a battery to store energy for propulsion and an electric motor. The EV offering ranges from hybrids, through plug-in hybrids to fully electric vehicles. At one extreme, a hybrid vehicle may have a relatively small battery installed just to assist the vehicle's engine from time to time or move the vehicle for short distances at low speeds. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle can operate in an all-electric mode for miles and then transition to gasoline mode once its relatively large battery is exhausted. While an all-electric vehicle is just that, all-electric.

EVs have many benefits over gasoline-powered vehicles. EVs generally cost less for energy to run and have lower maintenance costs. EVs also produce no tailpipe emissions, have lower lifecycle emissions and are quiet due to lack of engine noise.

On the negative side, variety among plug-in EVs is still limited and price is still at a premium, plus they might not meet the consumer's needs if they commute more than 70 miles a day and do not have access to workplace or public charging stations. For a list of all available charging stations in Nebraska, visit [www.publicpowered.com](http://www.publicpowered.com).

"Range anxiety" is an issue for potential rural users of all-electric vehicles because of the distance you can travel between charges. Most range ratings are taken during fair to moderate weather conditions. The need to use a heater or air conditioner will affect all-electric EV range.

Nebraska Public Power District just bought an all-electric Chevy Bolt for Perennial Public Power District and other public power districts to use in their service territories. The Chevy Bolt will be at Perennial during Public Power Week, October 7-13, 2018. Perennial would like to invite you to stop by our office to look at the Bolt and see what electric vehicles have to offer.



No gas here. Under this lid is the location to plug in.



A different view under the hood than most people are used to.



Energy usage is shown on a screen on the dash.

# Vanderneck to participate in Washington Youth Tour.

Isabelle Vanderneck of Henderson will participate in the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Rural Electric Washington Youth Tour. Isabelle will represent Perennial Public Power District on the seven day tour in Washington, D.C. with eighteen other students from across rural Nebraska.

This all-expense paid trip gives participants an opportunity to learn first-hand about our nation's history and the pressing issues facing the energy industry. In addition, the experience fosters student's appreciation for the democratic process, builds leadership



Photo by Linda Vanderneck

skills, and educates the students about the role rural electric systems have in the national economy.

While on Youth Tour, Isabelle will attend the Nebraska breakfast with the entire Nebraska congressional delegation and will have private meetings with their representatives.

To be considered for Youth Tour, students must first attend the NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp in Halsey, NE, a week long leadership program for rural youth. Isabelle attended camp last year in Halsey and is the daughter of Chris and Linda Vanderneck.

## Operations Report

### June 2018

#### Distribution Projects:

This summer Perennial crews will be continuing to rebuild existing 3 phase power lines with larger conductors to handle the growing loads in the district. Crews will be replacing poles in the Village of Benedict and around rural York County. Right of Way clearance will be done by Perennial crews as time permits. We would like to thank customers for their patience during the April blizzard and other spring storms that have caused outages. Remember to Look Up and Look Out for power lines to ensure a safe summer and growing season.

**Reminder:** If you are considering a new service whether it is a house, business, irrigation service, etc. please keep Perennial in mind when considering your project. It is very helpful if we are involved from the onset to plan the work and to have time to order special materials that may be needed to complete your project.

**Randy Martin**  
 Manager of Operations

## Community Calendar

**June 2** — Five Mennonites & a Greek Luncheon  
*Henderson Heritage Park 11:30am*

**June 6** — Kid's Camp: Russia to America  
*Henderson Heritage Park 1-3pm*

**June 8-10** — Milligan June Jubilee

**June 15-17** — Ohioa Days

**June 22-24** — Fairmont Old Settlers Day

**June 22-24** — Waco Days

**June 30** — Brew's BBQ's & Cigars Festival  
*Lazy Horse Brewery & Winery*

**July 11-14** — Fillmore County Fair

**August 2-5** — York County Fair



### Laundry Tip

Use rubber or wool dryer balls, which help separate clothing in the cycle, providing better airflow and a shorter drying time. Wool dryer balls can help absorb moisture, which also reduces drying time. Source: energy.gov

