

# Perennial NEWS

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PERENNIAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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*A look back at how Perennial became what it is today.*

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## Our Commitment Hasn't Changed

The other day it dawned on me that it was twenty years ago when we changed our company name to Perennial Public Power District. Prior to that, our official business name was York County Rural Public Power District. Some folks even referred to us as the REA.

Looking back twenty years, I remember the reasons for going through the process of coming up with a new name and logo for the District. For one, the electric power industry was considered to be in a time of dramatic change, where we would soon be facing the challenge of a new era of competition in a deregulated environment. At that time, we felt that establishing a strong, unified presence in the marketplace would help prepare us to be competitive.

Fortunately, the push to have a deregulated power industry nationwide was short-circuited. Mostly thanks to California. With its higher electric rates than the rest of the nation, large customers in California wanted a break in their energy bills and thought competition could lower their rates. With deregulation, the idea was to require utilities to buy power on the open market at lower, competitive costs, and pass those savings on to consumers. But what happened is the price for wholesale power skyrocketed, the price of natural gas that was used to

generate a majority of the electricity in the state also increased substantially, the heavily hydroelectric power-dependent Pacific Northwest and Northern California had little rain, and further stressed the availability of power supply, and much of the electricity used in California was produced and imported from other states where supply had also been tight. The end result? Millions of people were left without power through rounds of rolling blackouts. So much for deregulation.

But there were other reasons why we chose to change our company name. Offering a wide array of new services and innovative ways of doing business with us was also on our mind. In addition to executing a new wholesale power contract with

Nebraska Public Power District, along with other wholesale power customers, we agreed to jointly form an energy services company to provide a broad range of energy solutions such as the design and implementation of energy savings projects, retrofitting, and energy conservation. Although that company no longer exists, we still partner with NPPD and the other wholesale customers to develop and offer the EnergyWise energy efficiency program. This program provides incentives to homeowners, businesses, and agriculture to help cover the cost of a variety of energy-efficient upgrades.



**Jamey Pankoke**  
General Manager



Installing the new Perennial Public Power District sign after the name change.

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Perennial Public Power District  
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**Phone: (402) 362-3355**

**www.perennialpower.com**

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The final reason for the company name change is our old name did not accurately reflect the area that we serve. In addition to York County, we had served Fillmore County for decades. We also started serving seven additional communities in these counties at that time. Our old name, referring to "York County" and "Rural," simply didn't describe us anymore.

You may wonder how we got to the point of selecting Perennial as our new name. It started with strategic planning by the Board of Directors and staff. The next step was to explore and define a position for the District that would establish and reinforce a positive identity among customers and others. We considered the advantages and disadvantages of several positions such as Low Price Leader, High Service/High Quality, Reliability, Historic Provider, and Local Provider. But the positioning strategy that was ultimately adopted by the Board was Confidence.

We felt back then, and still feel today, that this position addresses the basic feeling people want to have about their energy supplier. They want to know that the lights will come on when needed. A business wants to know that it can rely on the power to keep its company running with no downtime. Farmers want to know that their wells will be pumping when the weather gets hot and dry. Additionally, customers want to know that should a problem arise; there is someone there to fix it quickly and accurately.

The next step in the process involved choosing a name that best fits the positioning strategy. Among those that we contemplated, it was apparent that the name Perennial and the tagline Energy for Generations, which we also adopted back then, was most appropriate for what we were trying to accomplish. In simple terms, it says that, no matter what, we are going to be here for an infinite amount of time, providing the service that our customers expect and deserve.

Twenty years ago, we changed our company name. But though the name changed, our commitment to customers at that time and to you today has not. You can be confident that the lights will come on when you flip the switch. That you can rely on the power to keep your business or farm running. And that if a problem does arise, we'll be there as soon as possible to make repairs.

What I said twenty years ago is still true today. Electricity is something that most people don't think about until they don't have it. Our job is to think about it all the time, so you don't have to. Thank you for your continued confidence in us. We plan to keep doing everything in our power to continue earning it.

## FALL SAFETY TIPS FOR KIDS!



Fall is finally here! The leaves are changing, the weather is cooler and the holidays are just around the corner. But Fall also brings a higher risk of home fires and electrical safety hazards.

Read the safety tips below and fill in the blank with the correct term from the word bank.

1. Candles and \_\_\_\_\_ should only be used by adults.
2. An adult should always stay in the kitchen when something is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Smoke alarms should be tested every \_\_\_\_\_ to ensure they are working. Batteries should be replaced at least once every \_\_\_\_\_ or right away if they start to "beep."
4. Make sure all \_\_\_\_\_ are blown out before leaving a room.
5. Keep any items that can burn away from the stove, toaster and other cooking \_\_\_\_\_.



## WORD BANK

APPLIANCES	YEAR	CANDLES
COOKING	MATCHES	MONTH

Answer Key: 1. matches 2. month 3. cooking 4. candles 5. appliances

# Make Time for Safety This Harvest Season

Harvest season often means putting in long hours, which can make it difficult to stay alert and on the lookout for potential hazards. Perennial and Safe Electricity provide safety tips to help farmers make this harvest season a safe one.

Be prepared for potential emergencies during the rush of harvest season. Be sure that you can see well in work areas. Consider adding extra lighting around grain bins and augers.



Always be aware of your surroundings before extending the auger.

Take the time to look up and look out for electrical lines. Always be aware of where they are in relation to your equipment. Keep a minimum of 10 feet away from all electrical equipment, and lower extensions before moving equipment. If you see a power line that is sagging or low, contact Perennial. Also keep an eye out for guy wires. While these wires are not energized, they can bring down energized power lines.

In equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think that they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. Yet, even while using a GPS with auto-steering, farm workers need to keep safety in mind and stay focused on their surroundings. Recognize when you need to take breaks so that you can be active and engaged in the farm work.

## Additional electrical safety tips include:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If the machinery you are operating does make contact with a power line, stay on the equipment. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for Perennial's crew to cut the power.
- Only on the rare occasion that the machinery catches fire should you leave the vehicle after contact is made. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area. Never touch anything that is in contact with a power line.

**For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).**



# ALERT TODAY, ALIVE TOMORROW: HEADS UP FOR FARM SAFETY

Stay safe around downed power lines. Consider all lines, equipment and conductors to be live and dangerous.



## If the vehicle is on fire, or you must exit for other safety reasons, follow these steps:

- 1.** Jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothes touch the ground and the machinery at the same time.
- 2.** Land with feet together and hop away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electric shock.
- 3.** Keep going until you are at least 40 ft. away.
- 4.** Call for help. Make sure no one gets within 40 ft. of the downed line.
- 5.** Do not re-enter the area or vehicle until emergency responders and Perennial Power crews determine it is safe.

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

## Jeff Rhodes

*Electric Journeyman*



**15**  
YEARS

When asked about his favorite part of working as an electric journeyman, Jeff Rhodes stated that, "Chasing outages is my favorite part of the job."

That is good, since linemen 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. Sometimes needing to spend time patrolling the power line to find the cause of the outage.

Jeff Rhodes celebrates fifteen years of employment at Perennial in November. Rhodes graduated from Central Community College – Hastings, receiving his Electrical Technology degree in 1997. In November of 2005 he began his career at Perennial as an apprentice. Apprentices 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, Jeff serves Perennial as a journeyman line technician.

Rhodes resides in York with his wife Brandy along with sons Colton and Gage. After work, Jeff enjoys hunting, fishing, and shooting trap. Perennial is privileged to have employees like Jeff who take pride in maintaining a safe and reliable infrastructure. Jeff, we'd like to thank you for 15 years of dedicated service.

## Lance Ring

*Lead Line Technician*



**15**  
YEARS

Helping customers is Lance Ring's favorite part of being a line technician. But working with high-voltage electric lines leaves absolutely no room for error regardless of the situation.

Mistakes from fatigue can be life-threatening in this job. Every day is a different set of challenges to make sure everyone has safe, reliable electricity, and Ring takes pride in meeting these demands.

Lance is celebrating working at Perennial for fifteen years in October. Ring attended the Utility Line program at Mitchell Technical College in Mitchell, South Dakota after he graduated from high school.

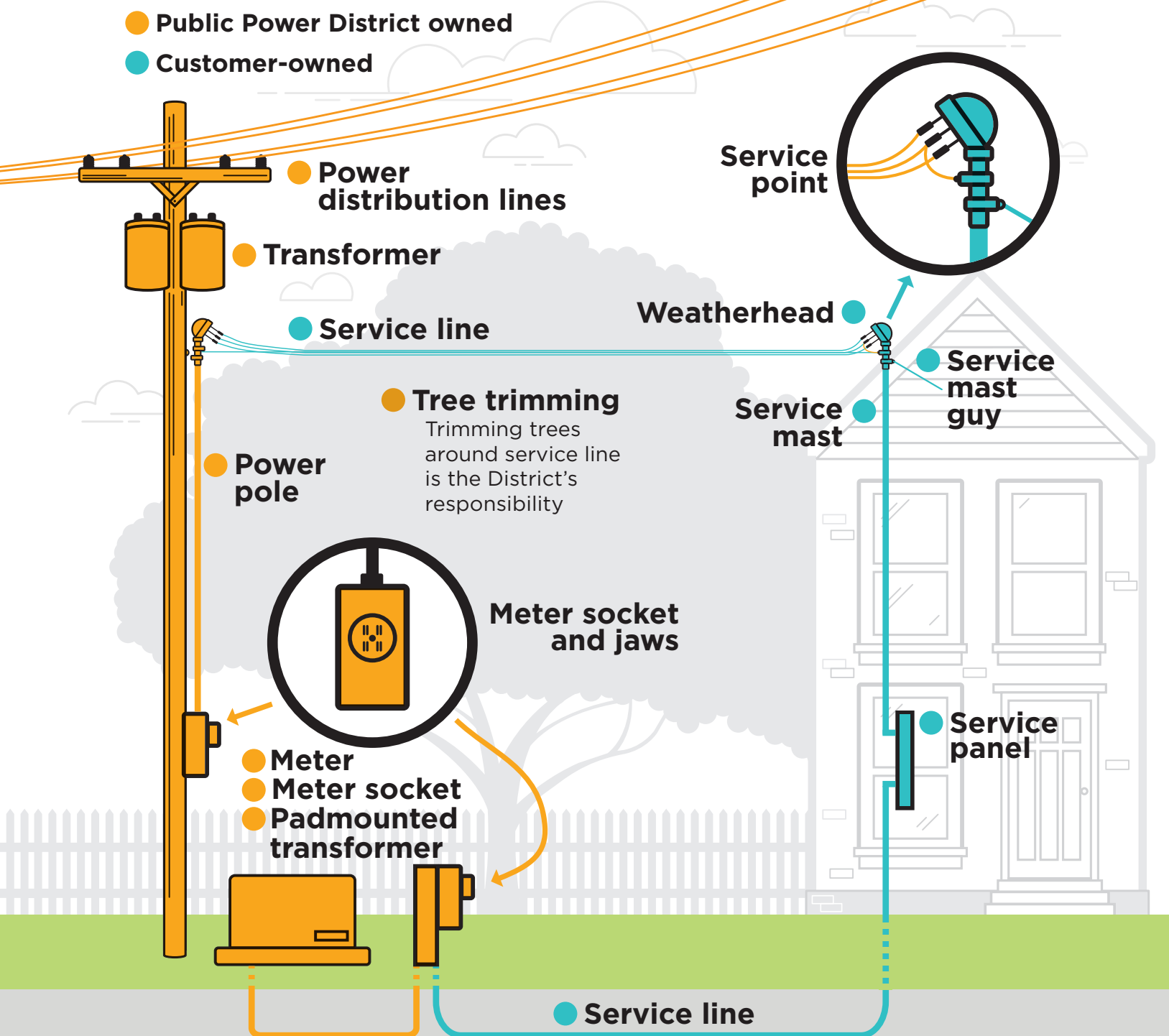
Lance started his career at Perennial in October of 2005 as an apprentice line technician. Apprentice linemen must complete Perennial's

apprentice line program and perform satisfactorily in the field for several years before they can advance to a journeyman line technician. Today, Lance serves Perennial as a lead line technician.

Ring lives north of York with his wife Amanda, his sons Hayden and Lane. After work, Lance enjoys camping, hunting, and spending time with family. Perennial is blessed to have employees like Ring who work outdoors. Taking pride in serving the public, making sure everyone has safe and reliable electricity. Thank you for fifteen years of hard work and dedication, Lance!

# Who Owns What?

Here is a review of electrical items in your electric service and who is in charge of them.



*Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground services. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business. Please contact Perennial if you have any questions regarding what portion of the service equipment is District owned.*

## 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, 2020. Scholarship applications and applicant guidelines are available on our website, [www.perennialpower.com](http://www.perennialpower.com) or contact Courtney VanSkiver at [courtneyv@perennialpower.com](mailto:courtneyv@perennialpower.com).

**Perennial's Office will be closed  
on the following holidays:  
Wednesday, November 11, 2020  
in observance of Veteran's Day,  
Thursday, November 26, 2020  
and Friday, November 27, 2020  
in observance of Thanksgiving.**



### More Efficient Electronics

The average household owns 24 electronic products, which account for roughly 12 percent of home energy use. When shopping for electronics, consider purchasing ENERGY STAR®-certified products, which can be 70 percent more efficient than conventional models.

