
WINTER PREPARATION

**Monitor usage in
extreme temperatures.**

**Check your contact
information for quick
outage reporting.**

**More inside, including exciting
news about your rates!**





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LEADERSHIP CHANGES

DIRK NICKEL RETIRES FROM BOARD

On Wednesday, December 9, 2020, Dirk Nickel was presented with a plaque and Resolution of Appreciation to honor his retirement from the Board of Directors after 30 years of service.

Dirk has served on nearly every special committee of the Board, and held every elected office on the Executive Board-Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

His vast experience and willingness to be involved in so many capacities helped him to grow into a very knowledgeable leader, and thoughtful decision maker.

We hope you will join us in thanking Dirk for his dedication to serving the customers of Kearney County, and Southern Public Power District. We will miss Dirk's contributions to discussions around the Board Room table, and his example of service to our customers.



Board Chairman Dean Klute presents a retirement plaque to Dirk Nickel.

NOVEMBER ELECTION RESULTS

In November 2020, Joel Kuehn was elected to serve customers of Kearney County, filling the vacancy due to the retirement of Dirk Nickel. Joel served in the same capacity beginning February, 2015 through December, 2016. He resides in Kearney County near Heartwell. We will tell you more about Joel in your next magazine.

The November election also resulted in the re-election of current board members including Larry Benson and Marvin Fishler, Merrick County; Dean Klute, Hamilton County; and Dana Meyer, Franklin County. Each of these board members were elected for six year terms.



JOEL KUEHN

A BRIGHTER FUTURE

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM OUR CEO

Customers and friends,

I hope the upcoming year is one that allows you to find a sense of peace and normalcy. I admit, I am very glad to turn the final page of the 2020 calendar and look ahead to a year of hope and new possibilities!

As we move forward, I do have some great news to share. For the 8th year in a row, there will be no rate increase imposed upon our customers! Even better, the District will be lowering rates approximately one-percent in 2021. Most of our customers will be paying approximately six-percent less than they would have paid three to four years ago. We are pleased with the opportunity to offer you even more value for the service you receive from SPPD.

This past year we managed through the COVID-19 pandemic and were able to keep reliability and safety at the highest level. Our customers, on average, experienced less hours without power over the course of the year than in 2019 due to the District's continued improvements in electric facilities and ongoing maintenance programs such as tree trimming and pole replacements. The continued investment into our infrastructure translates into our ability to offer high reliability and superior customer service. We also worked safely during 2020 as our team worked throughout the year without a lost-time accident for the second year in a row. Safety for District employees and the public is our number one priority!

We are proud to offer greater savings on your electric service and a level of reliability that is second to none in our region. Our commitment to offer value to our customers is guided by our vision and mission statements:

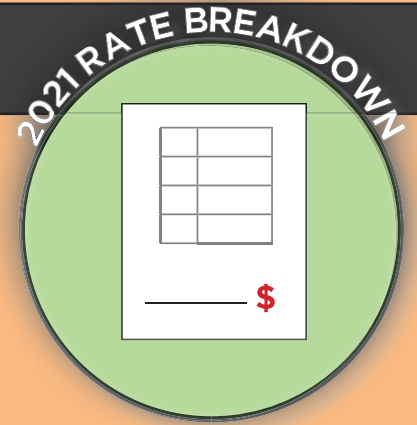
VISION: Powering a brighter future for our customers and communities while supporting public power in Nebraska.

MISSION: To safely provide our customers with highly reliable and competitively priced electricity, superior customer service and innovative energy solutions.

We know that 2020 has been a dark time for many folks throughout Nebraska. Offering value for the reliable service you deserve is key in assuring a bright future for our customers. Value and reliability are critical for our customers as individuals, and for the livelihood of businesses and communities well into the future.



NEAL NIEDFELDT



CHANGES FOR 2021:

Beginning with the billing statement you receive in March, 2021, two changes will occur:

➤ The **Customer Charge** will increase from \$23 to \$24 per month for residential and commercial customers. *The customer charge accounts for the cost to provide minimum services. This includes the cost for a pole, transformer, meter, and some customer service and billing expenses.*

➤ The **Energy Charge** across all rate classes will be reduced to more than offset the increase in the Customer Charge. *The energy charge accounts for the total amount of energy used.*

This item will remain the same:

➤ The **Production Cost Adjustment (PCA)** will continue through February 2022. The credit applied to each bill amounts to \$0.00229 per kWh. *The PCA is a credit that passes on excess margins produced by NPPD, our wholesale electric provider.*

ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATE PROGRAMS

Check out the entire list of residential rebates available to SPPD customers. If you have been thinking about pursuing one of these rebates, this list provides summaries current as of January 1.

HIGH EFFICIENCY HEAT PUMP

This incentive is available for converting or upgrading an existing heating and cooling system to an ENERGY STAR qualified air or ground source heat pump.

- **DUCTLESS MINI-SPLIT**
\$400-600
- **LARGE CAPACITY MINI-SPLIT**
\$1,200
- **AIR SOURCE**
\$400-\$1,200
- **GEOTHERMAL**,
Water-to-air or water-to-water.
\$2,400, any EER, or
\$3,300, 35+EER, 5.0+ COP

ATTIC INSULATION

A maximum incentive of \$300--15¢ per square foot--for adding of at least 6 inches of R-19 in a residential attic. Available to customers in electrically-heated homes, or with a dual fuel heat pump, AND less than six inches of attic insulation.

SMART THERMOSTAT

If you have a Wi-Fi connection and a central air-conditioning or heat pump system in your home, you may qualify for an EnergyWiseSM incentive of up to \$100 for installing a qualifying smart thermostat. Check out the EnergyStar-qualified list before choosing your unit, which can be found on our website.

HEAT PUMP WATER HEATER

An incentive for replacing an existing water heater with a heat pump water heater-- \$300 (air source) or \$500 (water source). These units provide twice as much hot water from each kilowatt-hour of electricity consumed as compared to standard electric water heaters.

SPPD EXCLUSIVE PROGRAM: MARATHON WATER HEATER

This program is offered to customers with an existing electric or fossil-fueled water heater. The incentive is also available for new home construction. A variety of sizes and incentives are available.

- **CONVERSION FROM NATURAL GAS OR PROPANE**
50-Gallon: \$530
85-Gallon: \$390*
- **NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION**
50-Gallon: \$530
85-Gallon: \$390*
- **EXISTING ELECTRIC WATER HEATER**
50-Gallon: \$700
85-Gallon: \$775*

*Installation of time clock required.

COOLING SYSTEM TUNE-UP

Incentive of \$30 for a cooling system tune-up by an HVAC contractor. Customers are eligible for the tune-up incentive once each year.

REBATES FOR RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC VEHICLES:



Three incentive offerings are available for customers interested in tapping into the power of an electric vehicle.

- **Electric Vehicle & Charging Station:** \$4,000 (vehicle) & \$500 (ChargePoint station)
- **Residential Charging Station Only:** \$500
- **Residential Wiring:** New home construction: \$200; Existing homes: 100% of cost, up to \$400

We recommend contacting Sam Reinke at SPPD before making your vehicle purchase, for a thorough explanation of these rebates.

REBATES FOR BUSINESSES:



SPPD also offers six incentives for businesses, small and large. The complete details are available on our website for the following six incentive offerings:

- **Commercial HVAC**
- **HVAC System Optimization**
- **Commercial/Industrial Lighting Efficiency**
- **Variable Frequency Drive**
- **Commercial Electric Vehicle Charger**
- **Commercial Electric Vehicle Conduit**

Visit www.southernpd.com for more information.

IRRIGATION & BILLING NEWS

REBATES FOR AGRICULTURAL SERVICES:

The EnergyWiseSM program offers opportunity for savings on improvements that enhance energy efficiency, and there are several options available for our agricultural customers.



We encourage customers to contact Sam Reinke to review your plans for improvements when pursuing incentives that require pre-approval. He will also gladly answer any questions. More descriptions of these programs are available for review on our website.

CORNER PIVOT-VARIABLE FREQUENCY DRIVE

Variable speed drives can reduce output by controlling the motor speed rather than having the motor work at a constant, almost full load. This incentive is \$12 per horsepower on the investment. Incentives exceeding \$5,000 require pre-approval before purchase or installation.

PRESCRIPTIVE IRRIGATION

This program offers a \$500 incentive when producers replace a pivot system's existing outlet components such as sprinkler heads, sprayers, rotators, plates, pads and nozzles, and regulators on qualified systems. Nozzles must be at least five years old.

CUSTOM AG

This program offers incentives for agricultural energy efficiency improvements that are not covered by other EnergyWiseSM programs. Pre-approval is required for this incentive, applicants interested in this incentive should contact Sam Reinke to verify eligibility prior to making an investment.

POLICY CHANGES FOR IRRIGATION CUSTOMERS

In December, the Board of Directors passed a resolution that will affect the cost that customers will pay when they are installing a new irrigation service or when they upgrade an irrigation well service for the 2021 irrigation season.

The District will be providing the transformers and the metering equipment at no charge to the customer. The customer will still be responsible for the labor to install this equipment plus any additional equipment and labor needed to build the service.

The new policy was approved with the intent to reduce the customer contribution that has been required in the past and to encourage new growth for the District.

If you have questions please contact Anthony Bohaty in the Grand Island office or your local service center.

SPPD PAYMENT OPTION AT BANKS DISCONTINUED

In order to assure that all customer payments are processed in our office in a timely manner, the District has opted to discontinue payment drop-off at the following banks:

- Bank of Doniphan
- Pinnacle Bank, Aurora
- Adams County Bank, Kenesaw
- Pathway Bank, Cairo
- Farmers & Merchants Bank, Axtell

SPPD offers a wide range of other payment options, including the SmartHub payment portal, phone payment, postal mail, drop boxes at SPPD offices, and automatic bank draft. Contact our Customer Services Department if you need assistance exploring other payment methods.

BRAVING THE COLD

WINTER WEATHER AND YOUR SERVICE

In the same way that you prepare for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, we encourage you to be prepared for harsh winter weather events. Blizzards and ice storms can last for days, and treacherous roads and visibility can lengthen the time it takes for lineworkers to provide complete power restoration.

OVERLOOKED DETAIL: YOUR PHONE

One item that is often overlooked in storm preparation is assuring that your account's contact information is up to date. When large scale outages occur, our call center may enter into an "automated" mode, in which your outage is reported by recognition of your phone number. It is important that you understand which phone number is your primary number when reporting your outage. When the automated system does not recognize a phone number, it will ask for the primary phone number to be entered manually. If you have a member of your household making the call to report the outage, they will need to know which phone number is assigned as the account's primary number. We recommend sharing your primary phone number with everyone in your household, or anyone who may report your outage on your behalf.

Additionally, it is important to check your numbers for accuracy. If you have recently updated your phone number or removed one from service, please contact our Customer Services Department so you can be efficiently found in our system.

OTHER PREPARATIONS

Now is a good time to take a look at your home's disaster kit, or create one if you haven't already. Make sure your emergency item include a battery powered radio, alternative phone charging devices, flashlights, batteries and drinking water. Stock up on blankets to carry your household through the coldest weather conditions.

If you use a portable generator, take the time to review the safety precautions in the operating manual, and make sure it is fueled and ready to use. If you plan to purchase a new generator, contact an electrician to install a double throw switch. Do your research to assure you are purchasing a unit that meets your individual needs.

USE SMART HUB TO MONITOR YOUR COLD WEATHER USAGE

Not all surprises are exciting, and a high utility bill due to cold weather can really make your jaw drop!

Fortunately Southern's SmartHub portal provides an immediate look at your usage. We recommend keeping an eye on the portal when temperatures drop to dangerous levels. The portal allows you to review your usage in real time. Keeping an eye on the usage and comparing it to the current activity level in your home can help in pin-pointing specific habits that may be contributing to your bill. Perhaps you have more people in your house than usual, or kids that are opening exterior doors frequently. Comparing your individual situation with the data can help your entire family learn how to make positive changes that take the shock out of winter bills.

You can log on to your account by visiting our website, or downloading the app to your smart phone. If you have any questions about SmartHub contact our Customer Services Department.



OPERATION ROUND UP NEWS

THIRD QUARTER 2020 GRANT RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Since its inception, the Operation ROUND UP Program has awarded \$339,215 in grant funds to projects throughout our service region. During the Third Quarter of 2020, a total of \$15,500 was awarded to applicants as follows:



State Theater Foundation	Front Entrance Windows	\$2,500
Cedar Hollow Elementary PTO	Sound System Equipment	\$2,500
Hastings Literacy Program	Laptop Computers	\$500
Franklin County Historical Society	Steel Door	\$2,000
Roseland Volunteer Fire Department	Bunker Gear	\$2,000
Alda Volunteer Fire Department	Washing Machine	\$2,000
Chapman Volunteer Fire & Rescue	Jaws of Life	\$2,000
Holstein Rural Fire District	Fire Hose	\$2,000

OPERATION ROUND UP SUMMARY

The Operation ROUND UP Program offers grants totaling up to \$2,500. These grants are made possible by SPPD customers who participate in the program. Every month, participants see their monthly bill ROUNDED UP to the nearest whole dollar. The "change" from each customer is gathered into a fund, which is overseen by a seven-member board of directors. This board reviews applications on a quarterly basis and authorizes the distribution of funds to applicants who have met qualifying guidelines.

To date, funds have been distributed to each of the seven counties in Southern's service region as follows:

ADAMS COUNTY	FRANKLIN COUNTY	HALL COUNTY	HAMILTON COUNTY	KEARNEY COUNTY	MERRICK COUNTY	PHELPS COUNTY
\$71,665	\$55,746	\$63,750	\$38,915	\$30,960	\$34,929	\$43,250

If you'd like to enroll in the Operation ROUND UP Program, please contact our Customer Services Department. If you'd like to learn more about the guidelines and qualifications for applicants, contact LeAnne Doose at SPPD.

LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE FAST APPROACHING

Each year, SPPD has an open application period for the Utility Lineworker Scholarship Program. This scholarship is offered to individuals who plan to attend an accredited utility line-worker study program.

The scholarship offers to graduating high school students:

- \$1,000 for attendance at a 1-year lineworker program,
- \$2,000 for attendance at a 2-year lineworker program.

Applicants must submit their applications by Wednesday, April 1, 2021. Applications are reviewed and selected applicants are authorized by SPPD's Board of Directors.

Scholarship applicants must currently reside within Adams, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Kearney, Merrick or Phelps Counties in Nebraska, and agree to serve a 12-week summer internship with Southern in cooperation with the school attended. All details and requirements pertaining to this program are outlined in our Scholarship Application Form, which is available at southernpd.com.

Potential applicants pursuing a lineworker certificate, and who value a workplace with safety consciousness, service and skill in mind are encouraged to apply. Contact Brad Kool for more information.



SLOW COOKER SWEET POTATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 2 onions
- 2 medium carrots
- 2 lb. sweet potatoes (about 3)
- 1 T. grated fresh ginger
- 1 T. mild curry powder
- 1/2 Cinnamon Stick
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 1/4 C. Sliced almonds
- Nonfat Greek yogurt, for serving/garnish

In a 5- to 6-qt slow cooker, combine the onions, carrots, potatoes, ginger, curry, cinnamon, 1/2 tsp salt, 1/4 tsp pepper and 6 cups water. Cook, covered, until the vegetables are very tender, on low for 7 to 8 hours or on high for 4 to 5 hours. Using an immersion blender (or a standard blender, working in batches), purée the soup. Top with the almonds and dollop with the yogurt, if desired.

Look for our “Soups” board on Pinterest for more great winter soup recipes!



RECIPE