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308-384-2350 or  
800-579-3019

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www.southernpd.com

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This newsletter is published as a service to Southern Power District's customers.

Comments or questions?

Contact: LeAnne Doose  
PO Box 1687

Grand Island, NE 68802-1687

## We Welcome Casey Jurgens to Our Team

We are pleased to introduce Casey Jurgens of Giltner to the SPPD team. Casey will be working in Grand Island as a Mechanic, and will be responsible for performing maintenance on a variety of vehicles in the District's fleet. Welcome to Southern Casey!



## ATTN: Update to SPPD Phone Numbers

We are doing some "housecleaning" in our communication system! At one time, we had a variety of phone numbers that you could call, assigned to different locations or for service requests. We are about to make your phone call to SPPD a little easier!

If you look at the column on the left-hand side of this page, you will see only two phone numbers listed. Each of these phone numbers will connect you with the District's Corporate office in Grand Island. From there, you will receive assistance from our Customer Services staff, or will be referred to the individual or area with whom you would like to speak. There will no longer be separate phone numbers for each of our offices, they can all be reached at 308-384-2350 or 800-579-3019. Likewise, these are the numbers you will need to call to report a power outage.

We will gradually update this information in all of our publications, as well as published phone books.

## BEEF TACO NOODLE CASSEROLE

- No-Stick Cooking Spray
- 6-oz. dry extra wide egg noodles, uncooked
- 1 lb. ground chuck beef (80% lean)
- 2 C. frozen Southwest mixed vegetables (corn, black beans, red peppers)
- 1 can (1-oz each) Diced Tomatoes & Green Chillies, undrained
- 1 can (10-oz each) red enchilada sauce
- 1-1/4 C. water
- 1-1/4 C. shredded Mexican blend cheese
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions
- Sour cream, optional

### PREPARATION:

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray 13x9-inch glass baking dish with cooking spray. Place uncooked noodles in baking dish.
- Heat large skillet over medium-high heat. Add beef; cook 5 to 7 minutes or until crumbled and no longer pink. Drain. Add vegetables, undrained tomatoes, enchilada sauce and water to skillet; stir. Bring to a boil. Pour mixture over noodles.
- Cover dish tightly with foil; bake 15 minutes. Stir; sprinkle with cheese and cover with foil. Bake 10 minutes more or until noodles are tender. Sprinkle with green onions. Serve with sour cream, if desired.

# SPD Newsletter

LIGHTING THE WAY

March 2017

Series 34, Issue 3

# Choice?

*Choice.* It sounds like a great word, doesn't it? Its always great to have options when we are considering the purchase of a product or a service. But there are situations when added choice can lead to consequences you may not have foreseen. The matter of retail choice in electricity is one that has been an item of discussion and debate in the Nebraska Legislature this session. We'd like to share some facts about how this topic applies to our public power system, and why we have spoken in opposition to legislation that would create retail choice.

### ABOUT PUBLIC POWER...

Southern Public Power District is just one of nearly 30 public power districts in the State of Nebraska. Power districts were created by Legislative Statutes, with oversight of our operations by a Board of Directors elected by YOU, our customers. State policy requires we avoid and eliminate conflict and competition between public power districts, municipalities and electric cooperatives. Over the past 80 years we have successfully operated under this policy by working within a defined service area, executing service area agreements between the electric providers, planning together for electric infrastructure needs that improve our reliability and eliminate duplication of facilities, and providing mutual aid when neighboring utilities need assistance. This has resulted in superior customer service, rates that are some of the lowest in the nation and an open line of communication between our customers and the District.

### THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION...

This year in the legislature our public power model is being challenged by an outside interest group who calls themselves "Americans for Electricity Choice". This group convinced a Senator from Omaha to introduce a bill called *The Nebraska Retail Electricity Choice Act*. If you are interested in reading the bills contents, it can be found on the Nebraska Legislature's website under LB 660. The drafters of the bill conveniently left out the first part of our state policy regarding "eliminating conflict and competition" and instead focused on a second portion of our state policy that says "the State should prepare for an evolving retail electricity market if certain conditions are met which indicate that retail competition is in the best interests of our citizens". The Americans for Electricity Choice are trying to make a case that our rates are too high and that giving Nebraskans a choice of their power supplier would drive rates down. They argue that this condition would indicate retail competition is in the best interest of Nebraskans and that our state policy would be met by offering choice to our customers.

So why haven't we offered choice in electric providers here in Nebraska before? Owned by the public and created as political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, Districts like our own are operated by a locally-elected Board with no motive to create profits. Our rates are based only on our costs with an obligation to serve any customer wanting service in our service area.

## Choice? (Continued From Page 1)

So for about 80 years we have kept the customer in mind first, improved service reliability and offered low rates based only on costs with no profits or expectations of shareholders to receive dividends or an increase in value of their shares of stock. The result is that Nebraska is currently ranked about the 10<sup>th</sup> lowest in residential rates and about 15<sup>th</sup> lowest in overall rates when compared to the other 50 states.

Yet with such a successful history and high customer satisfaction levels, we are now being challenged by Americans for Electricity Choice. Let's not be fooled by their appearing to be working for the people of the State of Nebraska and their constant theme that the utilities in Nebraska are no longer competitive. Who exactly is this group representing? We would assume an out of state investor is waiting in the wings for the bill to pass and then they will move in and cherry pick our largest electric customers. What happens if we lose those customers? We will have fewer customers to share in our fixed costs meaning we either must cut costs which would result in diminished service, or we raise rates to the remaining customers. Either way it would not be good.

The District represented our customers on February 16th by opposing the bill as it was heard by the Senators on the Natural Resources Committee. Hopefully our competitive rates, having a locally elected Board overseeing our operations, cost-based rates with no motives for profit and a high customer satisfaction level will be evident to those on the Committee that electric choice would not work well and is not necessary in our public power state.

## Scholarship Deadline Expires April 1st

The count-down is on! Graduation is coming soon for current seniors, and so is the deadline to submit an application for Southern's Utility Lineworker Scholarship. That date is Monday, April 1st.



This scholarship is an option for students interested in pursuing a career as a utility lineworker, this scholarship offers \$1,000 toward the cost of your education.

Details and application form are available at [www.southernpd.com](http://www.southernpd.com). Contact Brad Kool at SPPD if you have any questions.

## Terry Nelson Joins Operation ROUND UP Board

Terry Nelson of Loomis recently joined Southern's Operation ROUND UP Board, representing Phelps County! Terry joins six other board members, and each of these folks are great resources for information about the program! If you know one of these familiar faces, feel free to visit with them about the program, or contact LeAnne Doose at SPPD!

Top, L-R: Terry Nelson, Phelps County; Jay Meyer, Franklin County; Terry Connick, Vice-Chairperson, Hall County; and Mark Utter, Secretary/Treasurer, Adams County. Front, L-R: Terry Sorensen, Kearney County; Jayne Mann, Chairperson, Hamilton County; and Bill Bolte, Merrick County.



We are now accepting applications for the first quarter of 2017.

Application forms are available at [southernpd.com/roundup](http://southernpd.com/roundup).

## New Operation ROUND UP Grant Recipients Announced

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. <b>Campbell American Legion</b>                     | <b>\$1,100</b> |
| Exit signs   |                |
| 2. <b>All Belong to Christ Daycare &amp; Preschool</b> | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Security System  |                |
| 3. <b>Merrick County Child Care, Inc.</b>              | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Educational Technology                                 |                |
| 4. <b>Lane Tomasek Eagle Scout Project</b>             | <b>\$2,500</b> |
| New Playground for the community of Hordville          |                |
| 5. <b>Hampton High School Booster Club</b>             | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Multi-function welder for welding/metals class         |                |
| 6. <b>Loomis Fire Protection District #44</b>          | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Airbag Rescue Kits                                     |                |
| 7. <b>Naponee Fire Department</b>                      | <b>\$1,400</b> |
| Thermal imaging camera                                 |                |
| 8. <b>Wilcox Volunteer Fire Department</b>             | <b>\$625</b>   |
| Technical Rescue and Recovery Gear                     |                |
| 9. <b>Roseland Fire Protection District</b>            | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Pagers   |                |
| 10. <b>Central City Volunteer Fire Department</b>      | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Wildland Extrication Gear                              |                |
| 11. <b>Phillips Community Foundation, Inc.</b>         | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Convection Oven for new community center               |                |
| 12. <b>Central Nebraska Quilts of Valor</b>            | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Quilting Kits  |                |
| 13. <b>Edgerton Explorit Center</b>                    | <b>\$1,500</b> |
| Solar Eclipse Viewing Specs                            |                |

TOTAL **\$19,125**

