

Electric News Magazine *NORRIS*

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Mother Nature
Strikes Again

What's Inside

NORRIS ELECTRIC NEWS
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"Dedicated to Serving You"

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Events Calendar Information

If your event falls within the first two weeks of any given month, you should plan to submit your information **two months** in advance. Our publication is normally in the printing process between the 1st-10th of each month.

We reserve the right to limit ads based on space availability. Send events to

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On the Cover:

Several tornadoes touched down near Beatrice on April 15, causing severe damage to homes, farmsteads, electric poles and lines.

Photo by Susan Barnard

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Employee Spotlight



Susan Barnard is celebrating 15 years of service with the District. She was hired in May of 1991 as Executive Secretary. In 2001 she was promoted to the position of Marketing, Customer Communications and Energy Management Consultant and began her role as Editor of the Norris News magazine. In 2006 her title was changed to Marketing and Communications Coordinator. Congratulations to Susan on 15 years of service!



Brett Weers is celebrating 5 years of service with the District. He actually began working for Norris as an intern student in May of 2000 out of the Fairbury office. He transferred to the Beatrice office in 2001 and was hired full-time as a groundman in Area III-Beatrice in April of 2001. In October of 2002 he reached Apprentice Lineman status. Congratulations to Brett on 5 years of service!

Safety is our way of life

By Susan Barnard, CCC

“Safety is our way of life” are not just words on paper. These are words that Norris Public Power District lives by every day.

Through public education, training and safety accreditation, Norris positions itself as a proactive company when it comes to the safety of its employees, as well as its customers.

We work to educate adults and children about the importance of being safe around electricity. Norris employees regularly conduct electrical safety demonstrations for schools, civic organizations, businesses and fire departments. We also visit classrooms and provide information on how to be aware and beware of electricity.

This commitment to safety is a necessary part of our every day lives. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), each year there are an estimated 150 accidental electrocutions related to consumer products. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) also reports that nearly 300 people are electrocuted on the job annually and 4,400 people are injured each year because of electrical hazards. Contact with power lines, both above and below ground, is the leading cause of fatal electrical incidents. Electrical hazards carry a tremendous price tag in terms of corporate and personal productivity, medical and insurance expenses and litigation. The key to preventing potentially fatal, destructive and traumatic injuries and electrocution is awareness.

Avoid Electrical Hazards at Work and Home

One thing you should always remember is that water and electricity do not mix.

*With summer just around the corner, many will be swimming and boating. Keep an eye out for any power lines near the water. Try not to place an outdoor swimming pool off your deck that has a power line running above it.

*Keep cords and electrical devices away from pools. Never handle electrical items when you are wet.

*Indoors, remember to keep appliances, radios and hair dryers away from tubs and sinks.

*Ladders, even those made of wood, that contact a power line can prove fatal. Look up and live.

*Unplug outdoor tools and appliances when not in use.

*Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housing and repair or replace damaged items.

*Parents and other caregivers should operate electrical lamps and appliances. Do not allow small children to plug in or unplug items. Use safety outlet protectors where applicable.

Downed Power Lines

Downed power lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or death. The following tips can help you stay safe around downed lines:

*If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.

*If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.

*Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick. Even non-conductive materials like wood or cloth, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and then electrocute you.

*Do not drive over downed power lines.

*If you are in your car and it is in contact with the downed line, stay in your car. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle. The only time to exit the vehicle is when help arrives and the power has been shut off, or if the vehicle starts on fire.

*If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid contact with the live car and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the car to the earth. Shuffle away from the car with both feet together.

We're proud to have a part in educating the public and increasing the awareness of electrical safety. Keeping adults and kids safe around electricity is our way of life. Make it a part of your everyday life too. ✈

Canada's Oil to Travel Through Nebraska



Landowners, public officials and other interested individuals gathered at the Odell Community Building on April 5 to hear details of a proposed new oil pipeline to be built across Nebraska. Personnel from the TransCanada Corp. were on hand to visit with guests about the Keystone Pipeline project they are proposing which would transport approximately 435,000 barrels per day of crude oil from an oil-supply hub near Hardisty, Alberta to Wood River and Patoka, Illinois through an approximate 1,830 mile pipeline system. Nearly 1,070 miles of new pipeline will need to be constructed in the United States. The pipeline will run on a north-south path through eastern North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska. At the Nebraska-Kansas border, the proposed route turns in a southeasterly direction through Kansas, Missouri and Illinois.

This new pipeline will run through portions of Gage, Jefferson and Saline Counties in the District's service area. Five pumping stations will need to be constructed in Nebraska, and the Norris District will be required to provide power to two of those five stations. The proposed stations will be located nine miles southwest of Crete, and nine miles southwest of Diller. The pumping station at Crete would require the District to construct a direct step-down substation at a projected cost of \$1.5 million. The

Diller pumping station would require the conversion of 4 miles of 34.5 kV subtransmission line to 69 kV, rebuilding the current 34.5 kV substation to 69 kV, construction of nine miles of 69 kV subtransmission line, and a new substation, at a projected cost of just over \$2 million. In both cases, TransCanada would be required to make contributions in aid of construction to assist with the cost.

Within each pumping station, there will be a series of two to three electrically driven motors with a pump connected to each of the motors. The pumps turn on and off automatically according to fluctuations in the flow of oil. Crude oil will essentially be "pushed" by the pump stations from the beginning of the pipeline to the other end. TransCanada officials indicated it would take approximately one month for one barrel of oil to travel from Hardisty, Alberta to Wood River, Illinois pumping at 435,000 barrels per day.

Pipeline and pump stations would be monitored using control systems that use computer and communication technology to monitor things such as line pressure, facilities, temperatures, flows and other key information.

One of the main reasons for this project is to provide a cost-competitive way to link growing Canadian oil sands supply to refineries in the U.S. Midwest.

The proposed pipeline will be 30 inches in diameter and will be buried, with a minimum depth cover of four feet in agriculture areas. The permanent right-of-way easements, the strips of land set aside to construct and operate a pipeline, will measure approximately 50 feet in width, although additional temporary workspace of 60 feet will be required during construction of the pipeline. TransCanada has more than 50 years of experience in building and operating one of the largest underground pipeline systems in North America. They are based out of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Landowners along the proposed route should have received notification in mid-March from TransCanada. Many of those landowners were on hand in Odell to ask questions, check out maps of the proposed route, and obtain further information about construction and project timelines.

TransCanada officials estimate that they will invest \$240 million in construction in Nebraska and pay about \$5.5 million in property taxes.

Before construction can begin, TransCanada has a lot of work to do. They will be seeking regulatory approvals from a number of agencies for this project. In the U.S., the project will require federal approvals from agencies such as the U.S. Department of State, the Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service and the National Parks Service. Other state permits and various local and regional approvals will need to be secured prior to any construction taking place.

During 2006, TransCanada plans to receive commercial commitments for shipping the crude oil, prepare and submit regulatory applications, and begin environmental assessments and field studies along with engineering design. In 2007 they would continue the engineering design and material procurement, with the hope of receiving approvals and licenses. Construction of new facilities and conversion of existing facilities would take place in 2008 with the goal of the pipeline being in service and operating in 2009.

Crude Oil

Oil, like natural gas, is a fossil fuel or hydrocarbon having hydrogen and carbon as its primary chemical components. Crude oil is comprised of complex long chains and rings of hydrogen and carbon atoms. There are many forms of crude oil ranging from light to heavy and sweet to sour. The proposed Keystone project would transport batches of crude oil that is similar to the consistency of molasses.

About 75 percent of Canada's crude oil undergoes sophisticated processing at refinery facilities to produce transportation fuels. Other refined oil products are used to heat homes and buildings, generate electricity, and manufacture lubricants, waxes, plastics, synthetic rubber and asphalt. The crude oil that Keystone proposes to transport will most likely be refined into products such as gasoline, jet fuel and diesel fuel; products necessary to support our land, sea and air transportation industries, at facilities in the United States.



Top left page: Brian Peterson, Keystone Pipeline Project Manager, visits with interested parties at the Odell Community Building. Attendees were able to look at aerial photos to see exactly where the pipeline will be placed in southeast Nebraska.

Above: This map is an illustration of the proposed Keystone Pipeline route as of February 9, 2006. The route will continue to be refined based on consultation with stakeholders and engineering design. The solid red line indicates that it will travel through the Norris District's service area in the counties of Saline, Jefferson and will just clip Gage County. Pumping Station 27 and 28 will be served by the Norris District and will require considerable construction activity and costs.

Getting Power to the People

Over seventy years ago if you were a new Norris customer and wanted to build a home and have access to electricity, things might have been a little tricky. Even today, things can be a little tricky, but we've come a long way in terms of construction, technology and service improvements.

In order to educate you on the many steps involved in building new electric lines and services for customers, I spent some time recently with one of the District's Staking Technicians, Mark Engler. The Norris District has Staking Technicians located in Hebron, Beatrice and Roca.

Mark had a new service to stake and invited me to go along. We met with Virgil Harms of Omaha and his contractor, Gary Heetderks of Built By Design. Harms initially contacted Norris last fall when he purchased some ground that is located in the District's service area. Harms plans to build a new home and shop southeast of Beatrice. "I can't stress enough how important it is for customers to contact us right away when they are planning to build a new home or business," said Mark Engler. Even if you do not plan to build right away, there are many things to consider such as costs and scheduling.

Lots of Questions

Harms and his contractor had as many questions for us as we had for them. Some of which included where the house and shop were going to sit and what direction they

would face, where they wanted the meter located, and where the poles would be placed.

In this particular case, there was an existing power line less than 1,000 feet from where Harms plans to build. In order to bring in power, Norris crews will need to place three poles and build line west to the corner of the property.

"I can't stress enough how important it is for customers to contact us right away when they are planning to build a new home."

Mark Engler
Staking Technician

What's Our Policy?

According to District Service and Line Extension Policies, we will make overhead extensions from existing overhead lines, so making this entire line extension underground was not an option. Our policy further states that the District will construct, at its expense, a single phase line extension, along a public road, not to exceed 1,000 feet. In cases where the line exceeds 1,000 feet, the customer must pay the District \$2.00 per foot for all additional footage.

What about the meter and transformer?

One suggestion was to place the meter and transformer back into the customer's property, but Engler quickly advised them against this. "We want to put the transformer and meter in a location where we can easily get to it for repairs or maintenance purposes," said Engler. "If you put a transformer back between a house and a shop, you run the risk of having to tear up grass if emergency or routine repairs must be done." In Harms' case, the meter and transformer will be located near the road..easy access for them to read their meter each month and easy access for Norris to complete maintenance.

For extensions on customer premises the customer is required to furnish and install their own secondary for distances less than 250 feet from the District's metering point to the customers service entrance. For distances greater than 250 feet, the customer may request that the District extend primary service onto the customer's property, which will require an aid to construction of \$4.50 per foot, for all primary footage required not along a public road. We also have specific service and line extension policies in place for platted subdivisions.

Staking the service

Once we obtained all of the necessary information from the customer, it was time to stake the service. This involved placing wooden stakes where the pole, transformer

and meter would sit, and then two more stakes roughly 240 feet apart. One particular item that was very helpful to us was the foot meter located inside the vehicle. This device is connected to the vehicle's transmission and sends out pulse when the vehicle moves. The meter counts the number of pulses and records it in feet.

Most staking jobs Engler is able to use a transit to assist him in measuring distances and elevation, which becomes extremely important when dealing with proper line clearances over driveways or roads.

Additional Steps

Back at the office, a staking sheet was completed and is then sent to the District's system engineering designer, Jay Schulz, who reviews the project. Once approved it travels to Nadine Hibbert's desk in the Work Orders department, where she assigns a work order number and generates a picking list of materials and supplies. That information is then submitted to the construction supervisor/scheduler and he then schedules the job for construction. Depending on current work load, it may take 3-4 weeks for construction to occur, which again reinforces the need to contact us as early as possible.

If you are planning a new home, contact your local Norris Public Power office.



Above: This view shows where the line ends at the bottom of the hill. Norris crews will need to construct a new line to serve the Harms's new home. Three new poles will need to be set as well as an anchor. The contractor will then run secondary underground cable onto the Harms property.



Left: Contractor Gary Heetderks, Mark Engler and Virgil Harms discuss options for bringing power to the Harms residence.



Left: Staking Technician Mark Engler prepares stakes to use when marking where the poles will be set.

Director Spotlight

Herman Freese has the most years of service on the Norris Board of Directors. He was appointed by Governor Frank B. Morrison in 1965 to fill the vacancy of Herman's father who passed away. Herman represents customers in Subdivision VIII which includes parts of Jefferson and Saline Counties.

Freese served with the Army Air Corp from 1942-1945, 8th Air Force 379th Bomb Group. Most of his time was spent in England, France and Germany.

He married his wife, Lillian, in 1950. They lived on the home place near Plymouth where Herman was born. The Freese's were in the farming and cattle feeding business. They have five children.

Daughter Priscilla married Thomas Koch and they farm in the DeWitt area and have three children. Gloria, is a semi-retired registered nurse and works part-time in Lincoln. She is married to Ray Hernandez and they own the Ford-Mercury-Lincoln dealership in Beatrice. They have four children. Rita is married to Ron Horst and they make their home in Kearney where Rita works in the city library and Ron is a loan officer in the Platte Valley Bank. They have two children. Son Forrest lives on the family farm home place where he farms and also works part-time with the Hueske T & L Pivot dealership. He has two children. Youngest son Aaron and his wife, Ann, live in their home west of Plymouth with their three children. Aaron and Ann farm and Ann is also a professional seamstress. In total, the Freese's have 14 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

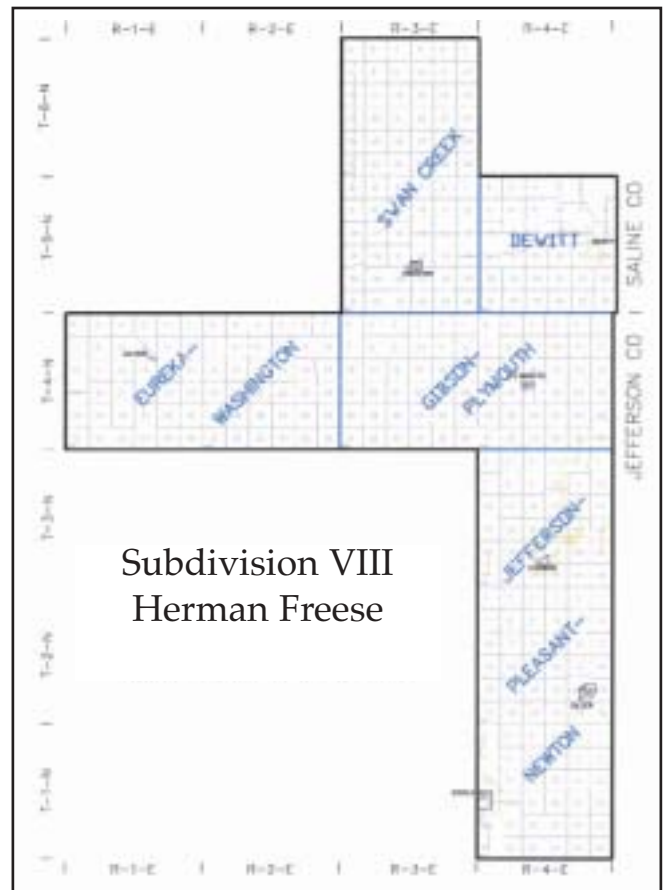
Herman has held various offices in St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Plymouth. He is a member of the American Legion Post #243 and has served as commander several times, and also 22 years at the post financial officer. He also served on the rural school board.

In his spare time he enjoys hunting pheasant and deer. Herman and Lillian retired from farming in 1985 and now live in Plymouth. He still enjoys driving out to the farms and country side to see the fields and check the crops.

Freese said he's proud to have served on the Norris board for over 40 years. During that time he's held every office on the board at least twice with the exception of Treasurer, which he held only one time. Freese said he's always appreciated his fellow board members and feels that over the years the various members of the Norris board have helped to make Norris a progressive District.



**Herman Freese
Subdivision VIII**



**Subdivision VIII
Herman Freese**



The Operation Round Up Board awarded \$15,000 in grants at their April 19, 2006 meeting. Over 40 applications were received for consideration. This program would not be possible without the support of our customers who participate in the program and have their electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar each month. Thank you for helping make a difference in the communities that we serve!

<p>Saline County Sheriff's Office Foundation for Thayer County Health Services Blue Valley Lutheran Homes-Hebron</p>	<p><u>\$1,000</u></p>	<p>New Radar Units in Patrol cars New health clinic wiring Transport Bus</p>
<p>Gage County Ag Society Thayer County 4-H Council-Deshler</p>	<p><u>\$750</u></p>	<p>Fans for fairgrounds Grill/outside cover for food stand</p>
<p>Pleasant Hill Cemetery Association Tobias Cemetery Association Friends of American Legion-Hebron Ball Diamond Meridian Girls Softball Association-Daykin Meridian SFS Baseball Odell Volunteer Fire Department Beatrice Rural Fire District Crete Volunteer Fire & Rescue Central Light & Rec - Sprague/Martell Wilber Youth Organization Dorchester Area Community Foundation Village of Plymouth Community Center Hallam Park Committee Plymouth Community Improvement Association Gage County Emergency Management Agency The Salvation Army Ready-Set-Go Program-Beatrice</p>	<p><u>\$500</u></p>	<p>Cemetery directory Cemetery directory Revamp field for legion playing Scoreboard Scoreboard Hand held radio Fire cache at Homestead National Monument Portable pro/pak foam system Ball field improvements Batting cage at ball park New park shelter Folding chairs Playground equipment for park Portable stage for community building Audio visual equipment School supplies for needy children</p>
<p>Blue Valley Community Action Partnership-Gage Co.</p>	<p><u>\$400</u></p>	<p>Appliances for family shelter homes</p>
<p>Blue River 4-H Club-Wymore</p>	<p><u>\$350</u></p>	<p>Storage shed for Wymore Rodeo Arena</p>
<p>Tri County Youth Wrestling Club</p>	<p><u>\$300</u></p>	<p>Flip scores and time clocks</p>
<p>Homestead National Monument of America Noah's Assistance Dogs - Crete Sewing for Babies</p>	<p><u>\$250</u></p>	<p>Homestead Days presenters Training center improvements Fabric and notions for sewing</p>
<p>Fairbury PTA DeWitt Community Club Beatrice Optimist Club</p>	<p><u>\$100</u></p>	<p>Sea serpent slide art project for school 4th of July celebration-fireworks Youth fishing derby prizes</p>

\$50 - Post Prom/Graduation Parties

<p>Beatrice High School Fairbury</p>	<p>Tri County Diller-Odell</p>	<p>Wilber-Clatonia Parents for Another Choice-Wymore</p>
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Choosing a Generator a

A flash of lightning! A clap of thunder! Darkness! Most of the time a power outage may last minutes or hours. But if the damage is widespread, in the case of a tornado or blizzard, power may be out for a few hours or more. Like it or not, we have become totally dependent upon electricity.

In the past, enduring a power outage was as simple as lighting a candle and the fireplace. Not anymore. Without electricity, basements can flood when sump pumps fail to operate. Security systems can falter. Livestock can perish. Home businesses can fail.

According to Jeremy Engelman, Branch Manager of Industrial Electric Motors in Beatrice, many homeowners are not willing to take that chance and are installing backup power systems in their homes.

In visiting with Engelman, he said there are many steps and decisions involved in purchasing a backup power source. The first step is figuring out how much power you need. Generator systems are rated according to the number of kilowatts (kW) of electricity they produce. For example, a 5 kW generator could run about 4 lights, furnace fan, sump pump and a refrigerator/freezer. In comparison, a 15 kW generator is powerful enough to run a small home, survival appliances, plus family room, a home office, kitchen and laundry room. In order to figure out what size of generator you need, you must add up the wattage of everything you want to restore power to. (Note: 1,000 watts = 1 kilowatt)

Generator Options

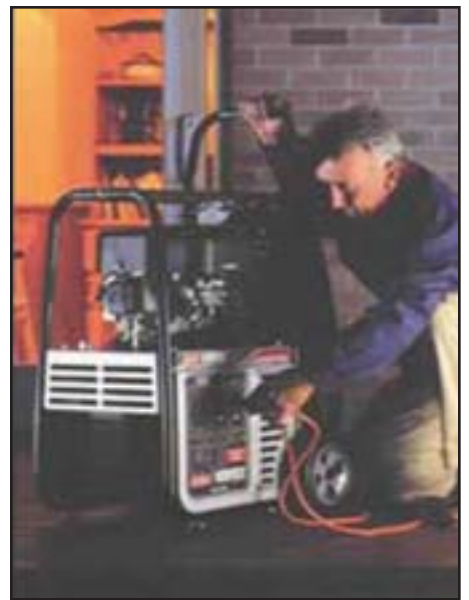
There are several types of generator options available. They include PTO, Portable and Standby. Power Take Off (PTO) generators offer a very cost effective way to produce electricity. A tractor owner is able to utilize their tractor's power take off to produce electricity. A manual double-throw transfer switch is required to safely transfer between the PTO generator and the power provider, such as Norris, to your breaker panel. The transfer switch prevents the generator's power from back feeding through utility lines where it can injure utility workers who are out repairing the lines. It also prevents electrical current from the generator from causing a short circuit with your normal house current when the power is restored. The short circuit could cause a fire in the house or cause the generator to catch fire or explode. When the power is restored you can switch back those circuits to the utility power lines. Some generators even have an automatic transfer switch that detects when there's a power outage. Others can be switched on manually.



Portable Generators

Portable generators are commonly used outdoors, with an extension cord(s) run through an open window or door to the chosen appliance. The minimum size recommended for home-emergency use is a 5,000 watt generator, which can power multiple appliances for about 8 hours.

Be sure to use appropriately sized power cords to carry the electric load. If you use an undersized cord, you can potentially damage the generator and appliances. Extension cords are rated by "gauges." The smaller the gauge number, the larger the cord's conductor is and the more amperage it can carry. The drawbacks of this type of system is that you can't plug an extension cord into a furnace,



Left: This is one example of a Power Take Off generator which is attached to a tractor. Above: Portable generators require the use of extension cords to run from appliances to the generator.

and Operating it Safely

well pump or ceiling-light fixture. And, if they are placed under rugs or carpets, heat can build up and cause a fire.

For safety's sake, it is recommended that you hire a licensed electrician to install a transfer switch that distributes power from the generator to the home's circuit box. This reduces the need for multiple extension cords running from the generator to specific appliances and eliminates the risk of electrical "back feed" injuring utility workers working on downed lines. The transfer switch is installed beside the main electrical panel and then connected to circuits you'll need during an outage. When the power goes out, you simply crank up the generator and run a properly sized extension cord from it to the transfer switch.

Automatic Standby Generators

An automatic standby generator is a permanently installed, fully automatic emergency generator system that continuously monitors the incoming utility power supply. The system is designed to automatically furnish electrical power to pre-selected circuits in your home that

supply your lighting, heating and cooling, appliances and water. There's no need for extension cords, gasoline cans for refueling or manual start pull ropes.

Standby generators can be easily installed outside new or existing homes and businesses. Natural gas or propane is needed to activate the automatic start system on the generator.

The systems range from 7 to 40 kilowatts of output, in both air and liquid-cooled models.

Safety Tips

If you own a generator or plan to purchase one in the near future, it is a good idea to test the unit before using it and know how to operate it and shut it off before an emergency situation occurs. You should also follow these guidelines:

- * Keep children and pets away from the generator when it is running.
- * Use clean fuel and avoid contaminating the fuel tank with dirt or water.
- * Always switch the engine off and allow it to cool before adding fuel. Only add fuel in a well-ventilated area.

* Test the GFCI on the generator regularly, if it is equipped with one.

* Turn the generator's circuit breaker off before starting it so the load doesn't draw current until the generator is running smoothly. Turn off the breaker before stopping the generator.

* Review the procedures for using the transfer switch with your electrician so you won't be left to guess how it works when you need to use it.

* Read and follow the manufacturer's instruction for proper use.

* Most importantly, the National Electric Code requires that a double-throw transfer switch be installed between the generator and the utility source. This not only protects the generator, but eliminates the risk of electricity backfeeding onto the lines and endangering utility linemen.

* If Scott or Julie Macke of Firth will call the Roca office by the end of the month, a serviceman will deliver a free electric clock radio when he is in the area.



Left: This is an automatic standby generator which would sit outside of your house like an air conditioning unit does. It would be connected to either a propane or natural gas line and would start on its own if a power outage occurred.

Cook of the Month

Carolyn Vitosh Odell, Nebraska

Carolyn Vitosh of Odell was nominated for the Cook of the Month by her daughter-in-law, Laurie Vitosh. Laurie said that Carolyn is an excellent cook who makes most of her dishes from scratch and is passing her cooking skills on to her granddaughters.

Carolyn and her late husband, LeRoy Vitosh, farmed and milked dairy cows from 1970-1998 on their farm north of Odell. Their children include Stuart & Laurie Vitosh, Josie, Paige, Mackenzie and TJ of Odell; Sid & Tracy Vitosh, Alex and Kevin of Odell; Christie Vitosh, Lexi and Cara of Odell; and Barb & Brent Beekman of Beatrice.

Carolyn is employed as a craftsman at Storekraft Mfg. of Beatrice. In her spare time she enjoys sewing for the grandkids, collecting cookbooks and trying new recipes. She's a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church of Odell.



Caramel Cinnamon Rolls Bread Machine

1/4 cup warm water
1 cup milk
1 egg
1/4 cup margarine
3 1/2 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
2 1/2 tsp. yeast

Add all ingredients to bread machine. Set machine on dough cycle. When cycle is done, roll dough into rectangle.

Filling:
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup margarine, melted
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon

Spread melted margarine on dough rectangle. Combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over dough. Roll up, jelly roll fashion. Cut in slices and place in a greased 9 x 13 pan. Let rise until double. Bake at 375° for 25 to 30 minutes.

Caramel Topping Version:
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup white sugar
1 stick margarine
1 cup vanilla ice cream

Combine ingredients and heat until dissolved and smooth. Put in 9 x 13 pan. Place rolls over mixture and let rise until double. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes. Let cool 3 minutes, then invert on foil or large plate.

Swiss Steak in Foil

2 lbs. round steak, 1 inch thick
1 cup catsup
1 large onion, sliced
2 T. lemon juice
Salt to taste
1/4 cup flour

Tear off a 5 foot length of aluminum foil, fold double, shiny side in. Combine catsup and flour, spoon half of the mixture in center of foil. Place steak on top. Season with salt. Cover the meat with onion slices and remaining catsup mixture.

Sprinkle with lemon juice. Fold foil over and seal edges securely. Place in shallow baking pan. Bake at 350° for 2 hours. Makes 5 servings.

Toffee-Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup oleo
1/2 cup shortening
1/4 cup honey
1 egg
2 cups flour + 1/4 cup
1 tsp. soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
12 oz. chocolate chips
6 oz. toffee chips

Cream sugar, oleo and shortening. Add egg and honey. Mix well. Add dry ingredients and chips. Drop by teaspoonful on baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes.

Helping You Manage Your Energy

Warmer temperatures are on the way and so too are higher energy costs associated with keeping cool during the spring and summer. By taking action, based on these questions alone, you could greatly lower your electric bill and save a lot of money.

1. *Have I replaced my air filter within the last month?*
Yes _____ No _____

It costs just a couple of dollars to replace your air filter. A dirty filter makes your unit run harder and use more electricity. Not replacing filters on a regular basis could cause your system to fail.

2. *Have I checked and replaced or repaired leaky ducts?*
Yes _____ No _____

Manufactured home owners are especially surprised to find ducts lying on the ground, damaged by rodents or pets and pulled away from the home.

3. *Have I installed a programmable thermostat?*
Yes _____ No _____

A programmable thermostat automatically adjusts your home's temperature setting when you are asleep or not at home.

4. *Have I checked my furnace closet?*
Yes _____ No _____

The furnace closet should be sealed from the attic. If it's not, heating and cooling are going through the roof and taking your money with it.

5. *Do I have sufficient insulation in the attic?*
Yes _____ No _____

You should have about a foot of attic insulation. Fiberglass batts, blown-in insulation, or a combination of both, will help you greatly.

6. *Have I done a gap inspection?*
Yes _____ No _____

Broken window panes, missing door seals, broken caulk around window air conditioners, holes in walls and gaps around electrical outlets can cost you hundreds of dollars.

7. *Have I lowered the temperature on my water heater?*
Yes _____ No _____

Your water heater sits there and keeps on heating the water to the temperature of your choosing, whether you ever use a drop. You can often lower the setting and not change your comfort. Also, check for water leaks. Wasted water is doubly costly.

8. *Have I cleaned my fridge coils and freezer gaskets?*
Yes _____ No _____

Clean the refrigerator coils and make sure the doors on your refrigerator and freezer are clean and sealed tightly. Keep your freezer full. Wasted space means wasted energy.

9. *Do I know what appliances make my meter spin?*
Yes _____ No _____

Turn all your switches off at the breaker. Flip on a single breaker at a time, see what comes on, watch the meter, track down and reduce the use of the biggest users.

10. *Have I investigated smarter housing choices?*
Yes _____ No _____

It's what we see that entices us to buy our homes; it's what we don't see that drives our cost of running it through the roof.

11. *Have I removed the freezer from the garage and placed it in a conditioned space?*
Yes _____ No _____

If you have a spare refrigerator or freezer for your extra food, you should consider moving the appliances to a conditioned space. Also, replace older appliances with new, energy-efficient models.

* * * * *

How Energy Efficient Are You?

Give yourself 1 point for every "Yes" answer and 0 points for every "No" answer.

0-2 Points: Poor.

Do these steps for savings in your future.

3-8 Points: Fair.

Address every detail for more savings.

9-11 Points: Great job!

You've done your homework for energy efficiency.

Add Some ICE to your Cell Phone

Ice means In Case of Emergency. This new cell phone safety concept was originated by a paramedic name Bob Brotchie following terrorist attacks in London.

ICE (In Case of Emergency) uses your cell phone directory to tell police or others whom to contact in an emergency. Having this vital information readily available in your cell phone can help authorities save your life.

The ICE concept is simple. Enter your emergency contacts as ICE-Mom, ICE-Dad, ICE-Sis, ICE-Bro, ICE-Ken, etc., each with the appropriate phone number. If you have existing medical problems, you can identify the person with the detailed knowledge of your meds and/or condition as ICE-Med. Your ICE contacts will appear together in the directory.

More is Better

Multiple ICE contacts are very important. Authorities recommend at least five. They give emergency personnel a choice of whom to call.

Sis or Bro may be a better choice than an elderly Mom or Dad in some circumstances. They also increase the probability that authorities will be able to reach one or more of your ICE contacts.

At least one of your ICE contacts should be an out-of-town number. We all recall what happened to local cell phone calls on 9 - 1 1 .



Typing in a space or a period before the I in each ICE entry may place all your ICE contacts right at the head of your list. Not all cell phones are capable of this, but it is worth a try.

It's also a good idea to tell in advance those you choose to be

your ICE contacts. Also, use your ICE listings routinely to call those people. This ensures that the numbers are always current and correct. It will also save double listings, to conserve memory.

Double Your Protection

ICE contacts are important. Your "Emergency Card" is equally so. It can carry detailed information on your allergies, meds, condition and so forth that will greatly assist emergency personnel, especially if for some reason they can't reach any of your ICE contacts.

You can obtain an emergency card from your local Red Cross Chapter. Carry it in your wallet or purse. It is wise to laminate the card, once completed, to protect the information on it. You really need ICE contacts and an Emergency Card. Each backs up the other.

Be cool. Put ICE into your cell phone directory right now. Help authorities save your life.

It's never too early to start thinking ahead to 2007. We are in the process of planning the 2007 Customer Calendar and are currently accepting photographs from now until October 1, 2006. Print and digital images will be accepted and should be high quality. This year we will also be accepting photos with people in them, so subjects should be identified when you submit the photos. Entries will be judged based on subject matter, quality and creativity. As a reminder, please submit photos that have been taken horizontally, not vertically. All photos will be returned later this fall in 2006. Please be sure to include your name, address, and phone number along with a description of your entry.

Digital photos you would like to enter via e-mail may be sent to comments@norrispower.com.

As you are out and about this summer and early fall, be sure to take your camera along. You never know when a photo opportunity might present itself!

Picture Yourself A Winner!



Nebraska Snapshots

2006 Customer
Calendar Entries



Above: Storm clouds on the horizon near North 27th and Mill Road in Lancaster County. Photo by Pam Butterfield of Raymond.



Left: Denise Bartels of Tobias photographed the International Harvest tractor collection owned by Rolland and Juliann Endorf of Tobias.

Right: A yellow water lily is in full bloom in the pond of JoAnn Hevelone of Plymouth.



Community Events Calendar

Firth Town-Wide Garage Sales
Saturday, May 13, 2006 8:00am - 3:00pm
Lots of bargains - come visit us!

Lincoln Boys Choir Spring Concert
May 14, 2006 7:00pm

Nebraska Wesleyan O'Donnell Auditorium
(50th & Huntington Streets)

Tickets: \$8 adults, \$4 children 5-12, under 5 free. Tickets available at the door. Open to the public

Parade of Homes
May 14-21, 2006

Weekdays 6-9pm, Sat & Sun 1-6pm

Visit a Christo Design Home located in
The Preserve at Cross Creek, 2.5 miles south of
Saltillo Road and 68th Street

Turn into Preserve at Cross Creek on Prairieflower Lane, turn left on
67th Street and follow to first home on the left.

James Arthur Vineyards

8th Annual Renaissance Festival

Saturday, May 20, 2006 Noon to 8:00pm

2001 W. Raymond Road, Raymond, Neb.

Go back in time to the days of sword fighting, jousting, Lords and ladies celebrating the medieval fare, music and fun for all ages. \$1.00 per person Admission
Phone: 402-783-5255

Camp Creek Thrashers

Annual Flea Market and Swapmeet

May 20, 2006 Swapmeet opens at sunrise

176th & Bluff Road

(2 miles east of Waverly Middle School)

All You Can Eat Pancakes - 6:00am

Free Admission Vendor fee: \$20

Info: 402-427-7417

1st Annual Head Start

4-Man Golf Scramble May 20, 2006 8:00am

Hebron Country Club

\$40/pp or \$160/team Lunch included

Info: 402-984-4962

115th Annual Odell High School

Alumni Banquet

May 27, 2006 5:00pm Serving starts at 6:30pm

Info: 402-766-4335 or www.statebankofodell.com

Odell 125th Anniversary

Sunday, May 28, 2006

Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy - 2:00pm - Odell Comm.
Center

Cake, ice cream, music, marker dedication, postal stamp cancellation and more!

Blue Springs United Methodist Church
Memorial Day Luncheon

Monday, May 29, 2006 11:00am to 1:30pm

Freewill offering will go to upkeep of Blue Springs cemetery

Annual Plymouth Garage Sales

Saturday, June 3 8:00am - 4:00pm

Noon lunch at Legion Club

Maps available Info: 402-656-5260

Hebron Bible Church Vacation Bible School
Son Treasure Island

June 5-9 9:00am - 12:00

Ages 3 to 6th grade

Open to the public. Info: 402-768-4223

Zion Lutheran Church - Pickrell

Sunday, June 11, 2006 2:00-4:30pm Parish Hall

Tex & Mary Schutz performing country and gospel music

\$6 admission, kids 10 & under free

Refreshments - Open to the public

Deshler Daze June 16-18

Friday: Chicken BBQ 5:30-7:30 High School

Dance to Giggle Box 9pm-1am

Saturday: Kids Fishing Contest 8:30am

Remote control air show 9:00am

Hamburger fry, Little Tuggers, Baseball tournament, free swimming in city park, ATV safety course for kids

11am-3pm, alumni banquet 5:00pm.

Sunday: Road rally 1:30pm

Races at Thayer County Speedway 6:00pm

Info: 402-365-4206

St. Mary's Catholic Church-Denton

Pancake Feed

June 25, 2006 8:30am - 1:00pm

Denton Community Center

Scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage, applesauce, beverages. Adults \$5, Kids 5-10 \$2.50 Under 5 free