



**General Manager Doyle Hazen**

## Blackout rolls through the District

On February 15th, North Central Public Power District

(NCPD) experienced a rolling blackout initiated by the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). SPP is a regional transmission organization (RTO) that is mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). SPP's job is to manage the power, transmission assets and wholesale power prices. SPP manages the power grid, and all things associated with the grid, in 17 states (see the map). NCPD's direct power provider Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) is a member of the SPP.

The customers in the northern half of the district experienced a blackout when the transmission feed was interrupted. NPPD opened one of NCPD's feeds, along with many other feeds in the state, due to load shed demands initiated by SPP. During the week of February 15th, the central part of the United States from

North Dakota all the way down to the southern tip of Texas, experienced record level low temperatures. This created an unusually high demand for electricity in the southern portion of SPP's service area. Without sufficient generation, and in some cases transmission capacity in those areas,

consumers required more energy than there was available. The SPP must balance the load over the entire system. When they cannot get enough electricity to the consumer, they must reduce the overall load. There cannot be a deficiency in the system or the system will become imbalanced

causing a catastrophic collapse of the grid. A collapse would result in a system wide blackout that could last from two weeks to a month.

The blackout was only the tip of the iceberg. What NCPD experienced was not something new. It has already happened in Europe, Australia and portions of the United

States. These things happen when infrastructure and baseload coverage are not sufficient. When transmission capacity is not built to keep up with ever growing demand, and existing generation is eliminated without proper replacement, an imbalance in the system WILL occur.

There have been significant additions of solar and wind generation added in this country. That generation was not sufficient or available when the shortage of generation occurred. Many carbon based (i.e. coal) generation plants have been eliminated or slated for closing. We cannot lose this generation until there is a practical alternative in place to make up the gaps that occur with wind and solar generation. Some of

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**NCPD's Office  
will be  
CLOSED  
Memorial Day  
May 31, 2021**

## Blackout rolls ...

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the generation gaps have been supplemented by gas turbine generation. However, there needs to be a hard evaluation on this policy if a restriction of the production of natural gas continues. Nuclear generation can help with the support of baseload, but generally cannot be throttled up and down as much as other forms of generation to follow the irregular nature of wind and solar generation. Battery based energy storage is also being pursued, but is very expensive and has a limited capacity. We must

be ever vigilant and careful when our baseload coverage is threatened.

The point of all of this is that the current mix of generation in SPP is becoming more and more volatile because entities in the pool are eliminating carbon-based generation. The politicization of the management of the power systems in the United States must stop. The management of the power system must be based, on all levels, in physics. It is not wrong to pursue greener alternatives to the carbon-based generation, but they must be technically ready. The outage some of you experienced the other day was just a small sampling

of what we will find on a regular basis if we continue to prematurely remove generation without proper alternatives.

It is important for everyone to make sure that your representatives in government understand your position in not wanting to have a preventable degradation in the reliability of our nation's power grid. After a power plant is taken off line, it is too late. Infrastructure must be kept in place or developed in a way that all parts of the system can support their needs.

I hope this finds you and your family well. Be safe.

## Managing Trees Under Power Lines and Updating No Spray List



NCPD ROW/Maintenance employee Brian York.

Power outages can occur when trees grow into or fall on power lines. This is not only an inconvenience, but can be very costly.

North Central PPD manages these invasive trees by spraying under and around its lines. This helps to control the underbrush from growing into the lines and to give linemen better access to the poles. If you have property that needs to be on NCPD's No Spray List, please call the Operations Department at 402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060.

Brian York, NCPD ROW/Maintenance employee, will be working the 85-4 Brunswick Rural Sub, 85-15 Hoffman Sub west and south of Brunswick, and the 85-7 Eden Valley Sub Plainview rural area this summer.

**The deadline for making changes to your Irrigation Load Control Schedule is *March 31, 2021***





# Youth Energy Leadership Camp Application Available



Linda Sokol,  
Energy Advisor

Every year North Central Public Power District (NCPD) makes a trip to the Nebraska Rural Electric Association's Youth Energy Leadership Camp available to teen applicants. This year's camp will be held July 19-23 at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp in the Halsey National Forest, Halsey, NE.

If you have a student in the 9th, 10th or 11th grade that would like to attend, the deadline for submitting an application is May 10, 2021. The Youth Energy Leadership Camp is established as an operating rural electric system and provides a "hands-on" approach to member-owned businesses. The students will join high school students from

Nebraska and Wyoming, along with adult counselors and junior counselors. The adult counselors are employees of rural electric systems who donate their time and talents to the camp. The junior counselors are selected by their peers to return to next year's camp.

A highlight of the camp involves a tour of the Kingsley Hydro Station at Lake McConaughy and Gerald Gentleman Station, a coal-fired power plant at Sutherland, NE. Recreational activities include basketball, volleyball and canoeing, with a banquet and a dance.

An application form can be obtained on our website [www.ncppd.com](http://www.ncppd.com) under the Youth Programs link, at your local school from your guidance counselor, or contact our office and we will mail or email it.

NCPD's board of directors will review the camp applications and select which students will be invited to the camp. Students that attend the Leadership Camp are then eligible to apply for a chance to go to the NREA Youth Tour in Washington D.C.

## 2021 Creighton Farm & Home Show



Energy Advisor Linda Sokol tests the energy knowledge of Cathy Barta from Niobrara.

*From our homes to yours . . .*

## One Pot Taco Spaghetti

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 lb extra-lean (at least 90%) ground beef
- 1 carton (32 oz) beef broth
- 1 can (14.5 oz) fire roasted crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (4.5 oz) chopped green chiles
- ½ cup water
- 1 package (1 oz) Old El Paso™ original taco seasoning mix
- 12 oz uncooked spaghetti, broken in half
- 1 cup shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese (4 oz)

### Directions

In 5-quart Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add beef; cook 5 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently, until no longer pink. Stir in broth, tomatoes, chiles, water and taco seasoning mix. Add spaghetti; heat to boiling. Reduce heat to simmering; cook uncovered 15 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently, until pasta is tender. Top with cheese.





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1409 Main St • PO Box 90 • Creighton, NE 68729-0090  
www.ncppd.com • E-Mail: ncentral@ncppd.net  
Customer Service: 402-358-5112 or 800-578-1060  
Reporting Power Outage: 888-358-5112



PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NORFOLK, NE  
Permit No. 125



**FOR SALE:** 72 large round bales. Green, short stem grass hay. \$95 per ton. Call 402-750-6659.

**WANTED:** Paying top dollar for scrap metal. Farm equipment, vehicles, anything metal. Call 402-841-2242.

**FOR SALE:** Craftsman 19.2 Volt cordless power tools. Approximately 15 different tools, Sawsall, circular saws, drill, impacts, & grinders to name a few. Also, 9 battery chargers with 15 batteries. Selling all for \$350 cash. Call 402-841-2242.

**FOR SALE:** 1984 Chevy 1/2 ton 4x4. New motor, transmission, & transfer case. Everything replaced 10,000 miles ago. Runs excellent. Plenty of power. Newer tires & much more. \$5000. Call 402-841-2242.

Do you have something to sell or are you

looking for something in particular? You may call, send or email (bargain.barn@ncppd.net) your description of what's for sale or what you are looking for to our office. The ad will run in the Bargain

Barn section free for one month. Please include name and telephone number. No commercial ads will be accepted, personal items only.

**Winner**



Thank you to all the participants in the North Central Public Power District photo contest. We appreciate all of the wonderful photos that were submitted. The photos were judged by the office staff. Four photos were chosen with Kimberly Meyer as the winner of \$50 credit to her personal electric service account. The top four photos will be made into larger pictures that will adorn the NCPD office walls.