

BURT COUNTY

PUBLIC POWER

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Tekamah, NE 68061

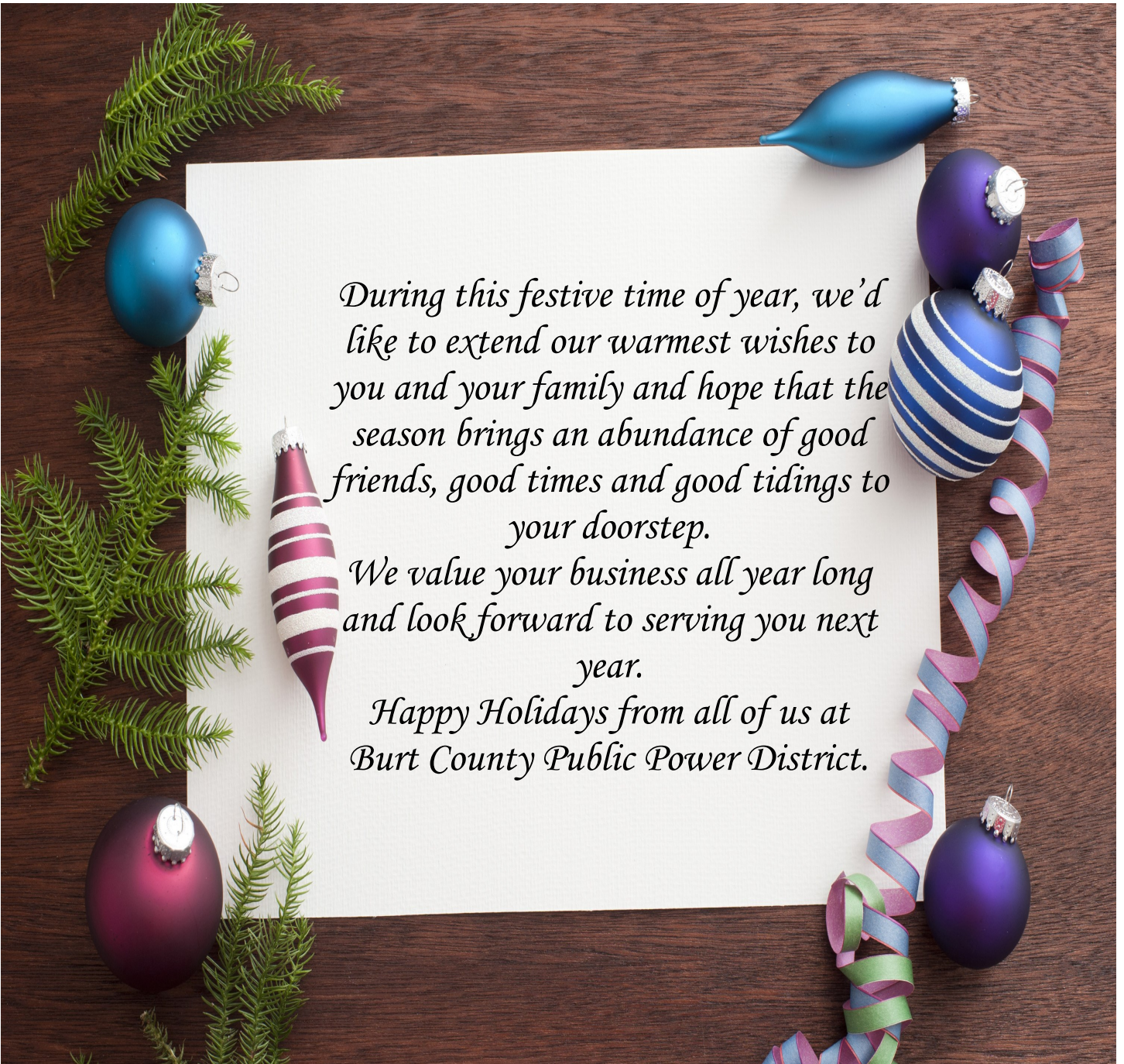
It's Your Power!



During this festive time of year, we'd like to extend our warmest wishes to you and your family and hope that the season brings an abundance of good friends, good times and good tidings to your doorstep.

We value your business all year long and look forward to serving you next year.

Happy Holidays from all of us at Burt County Public Power District.



Beat Holiday Stress: Tips for a Calmer Season

Old songs call it the most wonderful time of the year, but the holiday season carries a high degree of stress for many people. The final months of the year include added pressures that may affect well-being, relationships, finances and other factors that contribute to anything but a merry and bright time.

Common Causes of Holiday Stress

Although it sounds obvious, the best way to manage stressors is to remove or avoid them as much as possible. (This is often easier said than done.) Are there holiday-related events or tasks that are daunting? If so, consider the cost of not doing them (if there is a cost) versus keeping them on your list of obligations.

An overbooked holiday schedule is not the only thing that can cause strife and discontent, however. Here are other seasonal but common causes of stress, anxiety or depression:

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

As daylight hours become shorter, the rates of depression increase. If you are diagnosed with SAD, follow your doctor's advice. Options include light therapy, counseling and medication.

Unrealistic Expectations

These anxiety-producing thoughts and feelings can either come from external sources or ruminate in our minds. Outside expectations from family members, children, bosses, friends and others can leave you feeling like you are not enough or that you are spread way too thin. Internal expectations can push you to do more than is healthy or reasonable. Consider reframing your thoughts and anticipating unreasonable expectations by:

- Knowing your limits for work hours, budgets or patience with specific people or situations.
- Practicing writing down polite refusals that you can use with others who pile on the pressure.
- Recognizing that it is okay to have negative thoughts and feelings sometimes.
- Realizing that while others may put their best holiday foot forward, this does not mean that they will have a perfect holiday season (which is also unrealistic). Social media posts are not always as they appear.

Financial Difficulties and Debt

Financial stress is often paired with unrealistic expectations. According to a Magnify Money survey conducted in 2020, more than 30% of shoppers went into an average of \$1,380 of debt for holiday gift buying and other expenses. This type of strain on your budget lasts far longer than the celebrations. Consider:

- Setting a limit before you begin to shop.
- Tracking expenses.
- Putting credit cards aside and using only cash for gift buying.
- Setting aside money each month as a Christmas or holiday fund.

Loneliness and Family Issues

Memories of pleasant holidays or comparisons between your life and others enjoying the season can exacerbate loneliness. With so much focus on sharing time with others, people without positive familial or social connections can experience more sadness during the holiday season than during other times of the year. Consider:

- Creating new traditions with friends.
- Volunteering for an organization that helps others, such as serving food on Christmas Day.
- Getting help if you need it by seeking out counseling.

Tips to Alleviate Stress

If you find you are overstressed, that you just do not feel like yourself, or that all the joy has been zapped from the most wonderful time of the year, try out some of these stress-alleviating techniques.

- Identify negative self-talk and immediately refocus on a more positive message.
- Maintain a healthy eating and exercise regimen to minimize physical stress.
- Keep your distance from toxic or negative people. Focus on quality relationships.
- Use positive affirmations and take the time to pamper yourself.

This holiday season may come with more stressors than at other times of the year, but self-care, tempering expectations, reaching out to positive people and sticking to both financial and time budgets will help you avoid a blue Christmas and instead focus on the warmth of the season.

ELF ON THE SHELF AND OTHER

HOLIDAY STRESSORS



Feeling overwhelmed this holiday season? If so, you are not alone. According to a survey of 1,000 Americans 18-55+ years old:

50%

say that holiday shoppers cause them the most stress

27%

with children begin to feel stressed by early November

TOP TWO THINGS THEY WOULD REMOVE IF THEY COULD



Black Friday

OR

Elf on a Shelf



Dislikes aside, the holiday season can cause added stress for many people

TIPS TO COMBAT HOLIDAY STRESS



Identify negative self-talk and replace it with more positive messages



Maintain a healthy eating and exercise regimen



Keep your distance from toxic or negative people



Use positive affirmations and take the time to pamper yourself

Here's to finding some quiet time this holiday season

Survey Source: Total Brain

Keep Your Pets Safe During the Holidays and Beyond

Regardless of what time of year your pet first called “your casa mi casa,” the holiday season presents a plethora of hazards way beyond too much catnip or too many gourmet doggie treats.

Christmas lights, decorations and presents under the tree all create opportunities for your furry friend to get hurt. Your dog or cat could start with the gift of chocolates under the tree (a no-no for pets), get tangled up in light strands and make a run for it, causing holiday chaos. And your puppy could be in for a shock if she decides cords or light strands are meant for her gnawing pleasure.

Electronics are popular gifts during the holidays, and they could be a hazard for your pets as well. When using laptops, tablets, or phones or other electronics that are charging and plugged into an outlet, make sure your pet does not chew on the cord, which could cause electrical shock.

Chewing on an electrical cord is the most common cause of electric shock in puppies, according to Maureen McMichael, DVM, lead ER veterinarian at the Small Animal Clinic at the University of Illinois (U of I).

She said a puppy can chew a light strand of any type of live electrical cord and the owner may not realize it until a couple of hours later when the pup has trouble breathing. The Small Animal Clinic at the U of I sees 15 to 20 cases per year, she says, and the symptoms follow a predictable course: ulcers in the mouth and lesions on the tongue and gums. Furthermore, the contact with the live wire sends a surge of electricity through the heart and lungs, which eventually causes fluid to accumulate in the lungs.

She recommends enclosing cords in a long plastic or rubber cord protector that snaps shut to enclose and protect cords, and to pet proof your home much like you would for babies and toddlers. McMichael adds that puppies are the most likely culprit to get into electrical mishaps, and that most lose interest as they grow into adulthood. She said felines (and other pets) are more selective about what they chew on and are less likely to chew on an electrical cord, although it could happen.

[Safe Electricity](#) reminds pet owners to take these additional precautions not just during the holidays, but year round:

- Even when charging cords left plugged in but not in use are tempting for pets. Unplug and put away while not in use (doing so saves energy as well).
- Do not let your pets nap by or behind warm computer equipment or any other electrical devices. While it might make a cozy spot, it could cause trouble for your pet.
- Don't leave your pets unattended around burn hazards, such as a hair straightener or portable heater, or, when outside, a hot grill. Pets can easily burn themselves. (Any heating appliance, but especially a space heater, should never be left unattended.)
- If you find your furry friend has swallowed a gadget such as a chewed up cell phone (it has happened!) or other electronic parts, call your vet or pet hospital right away. It could cause a digestive blockage. In addition, the contents of many tech-savvy or electronic devices are toxic.
- If your pet lives outdoors, bring it inside during thunderstorms. Outdoor dogs kept in cages or on chains are more susceptible to lightning strikes due to their close proximity to metal.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](#).

Considering Changing from Diesel to Electric on Your Pivot?



The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy's 2021 Clean Diesel Rebate Program is now accepting applications for replacement of eligible diesel irrigation engines with all-electric equipment. Applications must be submitted by January 13, 2022 to be considered. The replaced diesel engine must be scrapped. NDEE will reimburse 60% of the cost of the electrical equipment, installation, and required electric line extension up to a maximum rebate of \$20,000. Contact our Office at 402-374-2631 for more information.

Nebraska Extension News

By Luan P. Oliveira , Extension Educator

Don't Forget to Check Stored Grain

As harvest is close to an end and temperatures are getting low, it is time to start taking care of the grains that are already in the bins. Just because grain is in the bin, it doesn't mean things still can't go wrong, which is something we want to avoid with a valuable commodity.

The first step to keeping the grains safe is to check grain temperature. Warm grain creates conditions conducive for insect infestations, so lowering the grain temperature reduces insect activity. With temperatures below 50°F most insects go dormant. In addition, the allowable storage time is increased as grain is cooled, roughly doubling in time for each 10 degrees the grain is cooled. The reason for this, is that mold growth slow down with colder temperatures. For example, corn at 16 percent moisture content can be stored about 80 days if maintained at 70°F, and about 230 days at 50°F.

When storing grain during winter, the recommendation is to cool the stored grain to near the average outdoor temperature using aeration. Grain temperature should be cooled to within about 20 degrees of the coldest average monthly temperature or below 40°F for winter storage. For Northeast Nebraska the average January temperature is 24°F, so the goal is to cool the grain to below 40°F.

To estimate the cooling time of corn, divide 15 by the airflow rate of your bin. For example, if you have an airflow of 0.2 cubic feet per minute per bushel (cfm/bu), the required time of fan to cool down the grain will be 75 hours (15 divided by 0.2).

Check and record the grain's temperature and condition at several locations and consider keeping track of these conditions as a heads up of storage problems. Look for indications of problems, such as condensation on the roof or crusting of the grain surface. This is where new technology to monitor moisture and/or temperatures make things easy by giving you more data points throughout the bin at any time you want.

Additionally, remember the importance of safety when working with stored grain. Take steps to avoid entrapment, be safe when climbing ladders, and wear masks to protect your lungs from grain dust and mold.

Information from Ken Hellevang of North Dakota State University was used to write this article. For

Burt County Public Power District News

Tekamah, Nebraska 68061
Phone 374-2631 or 1-888-835-1620

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Meetings

In accordance with Nebraska Statute, notice is hereby given that the regular meetings of the Board of Directors of the Burt County Public Power District are held on the 1st Thursday of each month, commencing at 9:30 A.M. at the district office located in Tekamah, Nebraska. In the event that a holiday falls on the said 1st Thursday, the meeting date shall be as set by the Board of Directors and published in the Legal Notice.

An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours at least three (3) days prior to each meeting; provided however, that the Board of Directors shall have the right to modify the said agenda to include items of an emergency nature.

Office Hours

7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

more information, feel free to give me a call at 402-374-2929, e-mail me at luan@unl.edu, or contact your local Nebraska Extension Office.

