For Immediate Release

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**Rolling Blackouts and Rates**

Rolling Blackouts or rotating outages are controlled, temporary interruptions of the electrical service. Southwest Power Pool (SPP) on February 15th & 16th forced Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) and others to reduce demand by a certain amount within just minutes. Cuming County Public Power District (CCPPD) is a wholesale customer of NPPD, which is a part of the SPP.

Rolling blackouts are necessary as a last resort to maintain the reliability of the electrical grid system. SPP directs rotating outages when electricity generating resources cannot meet the electrical demand in the region. This was an extraordinary situation with an unprecedented chain of events, including historic low temperatures across the entire 14-state SPP footprint that had not ever been seen in the region.

Electric demand on NPPD’s system was up during the five days of record cold temperatures, but there is no overall rate increase for NPPD’s or CCPPD’s 2021 electric rates. Customer electric bills are expected to be higher than normal when bills arrive in March due to usage expected to be 30% higher than normal. Furnaces and space heaters had to work so much harder to keep the temperature since it was so frigid outside. Bills continue to be dependent on how much electricity each customer used, but the overall rate for electricity did not change. Customers who took conservation measures, like lowering their thermostats, may not see much of a difference.

While these were unprecedented times, we still need to remain committed to reliability and look at how to prevent this from happening again. Power is a fundamental part of our lives, whether it is under extreme cold conditions or extreme hot conditions. The electrical grid needs to be prepared and this will take work from all parties involved to achieve the best resolution to be sure generation resources meet demand needs, now and in the future.

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