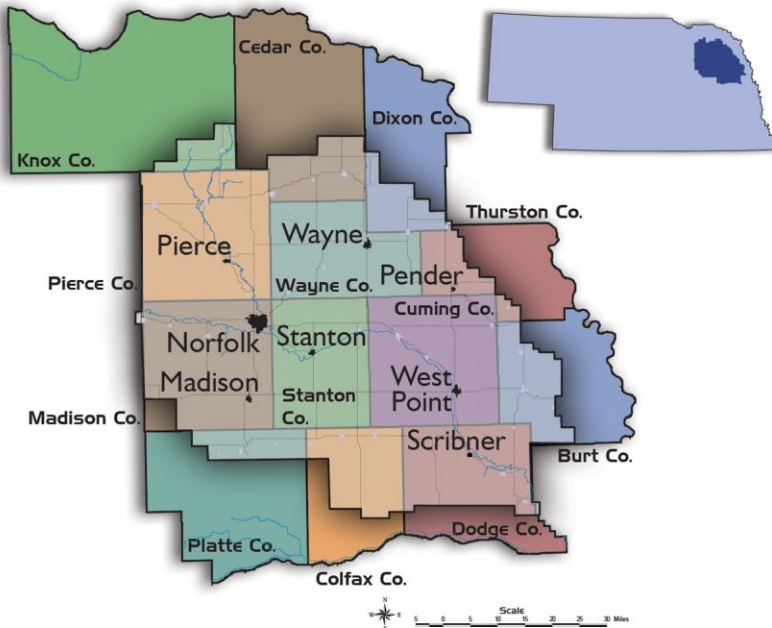


KNOW YOUR NRD



Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Making the Good Life Better Since 1972

Summer 2017



LOWER ELKHORN NRD

LENRD QUICK FACTS:

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) serves the people in all or parts of 15 counties in northeast Nebraska, and is governed by a 15 member Board of Directors elected by the people of the district.

Our Mission:

“Strive to improve the quality of life for all citizens of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District by promoting and demonstrating sound methods of stewardship which conserve, develop and manage all natural resources.”

Protecting Lives - Protecting Property - Protecting the Future

Limited cost-share still available for flow meters

In an effort to remain proactive in the management of our groundwater, flow meters are required on all active irrigation wells within the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) by **January 1, 2018**.

The LENRD received a grant from Nebraska's Water Sustainability Fund (WSF), administered by the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, to assist landowners with the expense of this requirement. The deadline to apply for this funding was June 30th. However, there are still some limited funds available for landowners.

LENRD Projects Manager, Curt

Becker, said, “Since the application deadline has passed, the amount that landowners can receive per flow meter has changed. Originally the amount was \$500 per meter, but that has now decreased to \$250, with a very limited amount remaining for those who have or will apply after the deadline. Contact your local NRCS or LENRD office right away to apply for this cost-share.”

The LENRD has approved several meters for installation. Becker, said, “The change in our Groundwater Management Area rules and regulations also requires anyone installing a flow meter within the LENRD to attend an

installation training session to become a certified installer.”

A list of the approved meters as well as a list of the LENRD Certified Flow Meter Installation Contractors can be found on the district's website. These contractors have already completed the required flow meter installation training. Becker added, “If you do not want to become certified to install your own meter, you must select a certified installer from the list.” If you would like to be trained to install your own flow meter, please contact the LENRD.

Visit www.lenrd.org/flow-meters for more information.

Improving the Quality of Life

Flow meters required for all wells designed to pump more than 50 gallons per minute

At the April board meeting of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD), the board held a public hearing to consider amending its rules to expand the requirement of flow meters. The amendment added the requirement of flow meters on all public water supply, commercial, industrial, and livestock wells designed to pump more than 50 gallons per minute. The board approved these changes, which became effective on May 26, 2017. The amended rules require flow meters to be installed on these wells by **January 1, 2019**. Limited cost-share funds are now available. Contact your local NRCS office or the LENRD to apply.

LENRD Assistant General Manager, Brian Bruckner, said, "These high-capacity wells in the district join irrigation wells in the requirement to have flow meters installed. All irrigation wells must have flow meters installed by **January 1, 2018**."

LENRD General Manager, Mike Sousek, said, "This makes the groundwater management rules more equitable across the district. The board made the decision that instead of focusing everything on agriculture, we need to look at all the stakeholders. If your well pumps more than 50 gallons per minute, you will need a meter installed." Sousek added, "We're going to work with the communities in our district, explaining the next steps. This will be a benefit to them in the long run. When a drought hits, especially a multi-year drought, it affects everyone."

A lower tax levy approved for fiscal year 2018

The 2018 fiscal year budget for the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) once again calls for a lower tax levy.

The operating budget was approved by the board of directors at their August 24th meeting with a tax request of \$4,270,002. The budget of all expenditures shows a 5.52% decrease of \$477,863 from last year.

The estimated levy based on the property tax request is 2.327 cents per \$100 of valuation, which is a 2.74% decrease from the fiscal year 2017 levy of 2.401 cents per \$100 of valuation. For example, if a person owns a \$100,000 house, the taxes owed to the LENRD would have been \$24.01 in 2017, and will be approximately \$23.27 in 2018.

LENRD General Manager, Mike Sousek, said, "It's becoming more difficult to continue decreasing the tax levy year after year. This is the 6th year in a row for a decrease in property tax asking. This year valuations flat-lined, and our levy asking decreased 2.74%, which is a historic low for the district, the lowest tax levy in 45 years."

The funds received by the LENRD are returned to the citizens of the district, through projects, programs, and studies that protect our natural resources. Some of these conservation benefits include: water quality and quantity programs, flood control, nitrate management, erosion control, cost-share to landowners for conservation practices, recreation areas and trails, urban recreation and community forestry programs.

Sousek, added, "We are working together to create a budget that not only addresses our 12 responsibilities, but that also focuses on improving the quality of life for the citizens across our district. We're doing more with less, by focusing on efficiencies and streamlining processes to protect our natural resources. With multiple flood protection projects coming down the pipeline, I am proud of the budget the board has put together."

More LENRD Facts:

- The LENRD has distributed over 4 million trees to customers across our 15 counties.
- 72 road structures have been constructed since 1972 to replace old, worn out bridges.
- The LENRD has sold 2,010,559 feet of weed barrier through the Conservation Tree Program, which equals approximately 381 miles.
- Rural Water Systems provide a reliable supply of quality drinking water to a large number of rural customers and small communities. The LENRD has worked with various local, state, and federal agencies to provide area and regional water supply systems for people across the district.
- The LENRD requires the installation of a flow meter on all high capacity wells, pumping more than 50 gallons per minute.
- The LENRD Board of Directors will hold a public hearing on November 21, 2017, to receive public input on the goals and objectives of the Drought Mitigation Plan.

Concerned about your natural resources? So are we. Give us a call or stop by our office. We have programs to fit both urban and rural lifestyles. Our staff and directors are here to serve you - we're your *local* voice for natural resources management.



Find out more about
Nebraska's NRDs at
www.nrdnet.org and
www.lenrd.org