# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



# **POWERING THROUGH**





11. Elk City Station

6 megawatts

81.3 megawatts

From Western Area Power Administration

**HYDRO** 

Omaha Public Power District is a publicly owned electric utility that serves an estimated population of 849,000 people, more than any other electric utility in the state. Operating since 1946, the public utility is governed by an elected board of eight directors. While its headquarters is located in Omaha, Neb., OPPD has several other locations in its 13-county, 5,000-square-mile service area in southeast Nebraska.

OPPD uses baseload power facilities fueled by coal and natural gas, peaking units fueled by natural gas and oil, and renewable energy, including wind, solar, landfill gas and hydropower.

## **POWERING THROUGH**



OPPD ANNUAL REPORT 202

In 2020, our work, like all of our lives, was different. It changed into something few of us imagined and is now something we endure, something we manage, for ourselves, our communities and our loved ones. "Masking up" and "physical distancing" weren't always part of our everyday language, and hopefully, someday soon, those measures won't be necessary.

For now, we will all continue to power through this time in history and do our best. At OPPD, yes, the way we work may have changed, but it is still the same fundamental work we have done for our communities and customers since our inception, powering lives and powering through all challenges.

#### CONTENTS

Board Chair and CEO Message 2
Board of Directors
Senior Management
Operations Review
Report of Management12
Independent Auditor's Report 13
Management's Discussion and Analysis (Unaudited)
Statements of Net Position24
Statements of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position. 26
Statements of Cash Flows27
Statements of Fiduciary Net Position
Statements of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position
Notes to Financial Statements32
Required Supplementary Information (Unaudited)
Notes to Required Supplementary Information (Unaudited)82
Statistics (Unaudited)86
Investor Relations and Corporate Information Inside back cove

**On the cover:** All across OPPD, like everyone around the country, people are working through the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. That means masking up, washing hands and practicing physical distancing. But even though the work may look a little different, the mission of providing reliable, affordable and environmentally sensitive energy services remains unchanged.

#### BOARD CHAIR AND CEO MESSAGE



President and CEO Timothy J. Burke



Board Chair Amanda E. Bogner, P.E.

For Omaha Public Power District, as it was for much of the world, 2020 was about Powering Through. It is something we have all had to do at home and at work as a pandemic changed the world around us. As phrases like "masking up" and "physical distancing" have become the norm, our employees are taking the necessary precautions to make sure they show up to work healthy.

That's because our employees know how vital our product is to our customers. Having reliable electricity keeps their world functioning as close to normal as possible. Within OPPD, just like people everywhere, new daily tasks like temperature checks and COVID-19 assessments are now the norm. With so many working from home, including half of our workforce, and so many students learning remotely, electricity has never been more valuable. That's why our energy production employees, line technicians, and system operators are taking their health so seriously. Our communities need us. Despite all of the new challenges, including changes to and new guidelines for our working environments, 2020 was the safest year in OPPD's history.

We know that so many small businesses and industries were hit incredibly hard by COVID-19. The coronavirus also exposed vulnerabilities of minorities and women in our local workforce. Civil unrest around the country, including the streets outside OPPD's downtown Omaha headquarters, highlighted the need for all of us to do more. That's why we worked with partners inside OPPD and around our community on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) initiatives. From our work with CEOs for CODE (Commitment to Opportunity, Diversity and Equity), nearly 150 Omaha business founders, leaders and CEOs produced a powerful "We Will" statement in June that commits them and their organizations to stand united against racism. We held leader huddles on racism and a corporate town hall on racism sponsored by the OPPD African American Network employee resource group. In recent years, we have hosted meetings for employees that encourage creating inclusive work environments, something we have worked hard to achieve.

In 2017, we started our Legacy i3 initiative that targets juniors and seniors in high school from diverse backgrounds. Through the program, they have a chance to work at OPPD while learning from employee ambassadors about careers in the energy field. They also gain skills they will need later to compete for jobs in the workforce. To date, three of these students have become full-time OPPD employees, with more to follow.

OPPD worked with other agencies to help secure and distribute CARES Act funds for energy assistance to those customers struggling with their utility bills due to the coronavirus.

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, OPPD has moved forward with its Power with Purpose and Pathways to Decarbonization initiatives including its plans to build two backup natural gas generating facilities to support 400 to 600 megawatts of utility-scale solar coming to the generation mix.

2020 marked the first full year of OPPD's community solar program, with the facility producing more than 9.2 million kilowatt hours of energy for 880 customers. And the interest is not waning. Nearly 500 customers remain on the program's waiting list.

Our decommissioning work at our Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station continues safely, on time and on budget. The last of the plant's spent fuel was moved to onsite dry cask storage in May.

And through it all, OPPD's communications professionals have worked to keep the rest of the company informed about everything they need to know as the work shifted last spring and work guidelines changed. From a dedicated resource page on our intranet website to emails and a weekly newsletter sent to each employee's home, employees remained connected to their jobs and to each other.

Across 13 counties in Nebraska, our employees do their part to help our customers thrive, and that hasn't changed. While seemingly everything else changed in 2020, the work of OPPD's employees and the promise of affordable, reliable and environmentally sensitive energy services remain constant.

Jounte

Timothy J. Burke President and CEO

Hark Spn

Amanda E Bogner, P.E. Chair of the Board

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



Amanda E. Bogner, P.E. Chair of the Board **Business Owner** 



Eric H. Williams Vice Chair of the Board Natural Resources Planner



Rick M. Yoder, P.E. Treasurer Consultant (retired)



Janece M. Mollhoff Secretary U.S. Army Nurse Corps Colonel (retired)



Michael J. Cavanaugh **Board Member Omaha Police Lieutenant** (retired) Security Contractor



Sara E. Howard **Board Member** Policy Advisor



Craig C. Moody Board Member **Business Owner** 



Mary G. Spurgeon Board Member Educator (retired)

#### SENIOR MANAGEMENT



Timothy J. Burke President & **Chief Executive Officer** 



Kate W. Brown Vice President & Chief Information Officer Assistant Secretary



Juli A. Comstock Vice President -**Customer Service** Assistant Secretary



L. Javier Fernandez Vice President & **Chief Financial Officer** Assistant Secretary



Troy R. Via Vice President -Energy Delivery Assistant Secretary



Mary J. Fisher Vice President -**Energy Production** & Nuclear Decommissioning Assistant Secretary



**Kevin S. McCormick** Senior Director - Safety & Technical Training



Scott M. Focht Vice President -Corporate Strategy & Governance Assistant Secretary



Lisa A. Olson Vice President -**Public Affairs** Assistant Secretary



Martha L. Sedky Vice President -Human Capital Assistant Secretary







# **OPERATIONS REVIEW**







## Powering through: Operations

In the spring of 2020, half of OPPD's workforce began working from their homes, quickly adjusting by setting up office spaces in resourceful ways and places. It was a huge challenge for our Business Technology unit, one they passed with flying colors. Meetings went virtual and the work of powering OPPD's 13-county service territory never skipped a beat. Plant workers, line technicians and other frontline workers did their best to physically distance and made sure they monitored their health to avoid contracting and spreading COVID-19.

At our service centers, the morning safety briefing looked a little different. Workers used laptops and smart phones to attend their briefings through virtual platforms. From underground cable replacement work, to fiber optic replacement work to the final fuel move into dry cask storage at Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station, the work of providing our customers with reliable, affordable energy continued.



Khiem Tran, equipment operator at North Omaha Station, performs maintenance work inside the station.



The number of OPPD employees who work remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Powering through: Innovation

Two of OPPD's biggest initiatives continued despite the challenges of the pandemic. Power with Purpose, which incorporates both utility-scale solar and modern, backup natural gas generation, and Pathways to Decarbonization, which takes a holistic approach to how OPPD will reach its goal of net-zero carbon production by 2050, remained on track.

A total of 880 customers were part of OPPD's Community Solar Program, which had its first full year of operation in 2020. The facility produced 9,200,806 kilowatt-hours of renewable energy and nearly 500 customers are on the program's waiting list.

Despite the pandemic, customer and stakeholder outreach continued by transitioning to virtual online meetings. OPPD also

The first full year of OPPD's Community Solar Program was completed in 2020 and there is a waiting list of customers who hope to take part.

6° OPPD ANNUAL REPORT 2020 •



The number of customers who have participated for a full year in OPPD's solar program.



Residents who live around the future location of the Standing Bear Lake Station tour the grounds. To be located in northwest Omaha, the natural gas units will provide backup for OPPD's utility-scale solar as part of the utility's Power with Purpose project.

introduced a new, online community engagement platform, OPPDCommunityConnect. This new tool allows customers to ask questions, watch videos and learn more about various OPPD initiatives. Starting in the middle of 2020, visitors to the platform were able to obtain transparent, in-depth information about such projects, and offer their input, as well.

OPPD's Economic Development team came up with new ways to engage with potential clients through virtual coffee meetings. The monthly OPPD Board of Directors meetings and committee meetings were mostly done online, following pandemic guidelines and restrictions.

## Powering through: Customer Solutions

As the pandemic worsened across the service territory, and directed health measures greatly reduced capacity at businesses, OPPD recognized a growing need to help customers who may be struggling financially. A crossfunctional team came together to craft a package of solutions to help those in need.

One of those solutions was to suspend shut-off notices. The utility also worked with Dollar Energy Fund to help distribute federal funding to customers who were struggling to pay their utility bills due to the pandemic. The Douglas County Board of Commissioners voted to allocate funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for utility assistance, to be distributed by OPPD and Metropolitan Utilities District. As of the end of this program on Dec. 31, it had distributed \$2,177,684 of the funding to 6,673 OPPD customers. The average benefit was \$329.

Other Customer First Solutions also included the Gift of Energy program, which allows anyone to make a payment towards a friend, loved one, or neighbor's OPPD account. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Energy Assistance Program both offer assistance to customers struggling with their energy bills. In all, the combined total of energy assistance provided to OPPD customers through October 2020 was more than \$6.5 million.

Call Center Representative Felisha Horne is shown at her work station. OPPD employees can remove their mask when they are seated at their desks and are spaced apart.

## Powering through: Partnerships

OPPD's Economic Development team continues to bring valued businesses to the area while also helping to strengthen existing ones. In 2020, both Dollar General and Amazon announced they would bring large distribution facilities to the area, bringing jobs and investment to our local communities.

> In August, Frontier Cooperative saw its 100th shuttle train come through its facility on OPPD's Arbor Rail Line. The rail line is a 54.6-mile line that runs between Lincoln and Nebraska City. OPPD opened up the line and helped construct a connection to Frontier to better serve that community, just another example of how OPPD partners with other organizations to benefit the local communities we serve. In addition, OPPD partnered with local falcon enthusiasts to band and document a new group of peregrine falcon babies born at North Omaha Station. This was the first time the utility was able to band chicks born in the box at that facility. The falcon family also gained a live webcam, which allowed the public to watch the babies and stay updated on the family of falcons that nests in the box.

OPPD continues partnering with others to support our communities. One example is Frontier Cooperative using OPPD's Arbor Rail Line.



OPPD sent 15 crew members down to Oklahoma to help Oklahoma Gas & Electric restore power to customers after an ice storm caused widespread outages.



### Powering through: Communities

In addition to the pandemic, the country saw a rising call for social justice in the communities we serve. OPPD leadership believes we should work to better represent our communities through diversity and inclusion efforts.

Our annual Best Places to Work for YOU survey had an 87% participation rate, and 71% of employees participated in the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce's Commitment to Opportunity, Diversity and Equity – CODE – survey.

And OPPD sent crews to Oklahoma in October to assist Oklahoma Gas & Electric on restoration after an ice storm hit the state. Fifteen OPPD crew members spent nearly two weeks on the mutual aid effort.





These photos highlight the work OPPD crew members performed during nearly two weeks of mutual aid. This is an example of how public power utilities like OPPD help communities power through, even communities hundreds of miles away.



The number of days OPPD crews spent in Oklahoma, restoring electricity.

