

Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth set for March



Registration is open for the 17th annual Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth. Co-hosted by OPPD and Metropolitan Utilities District, the event is Saturday, March 2, at Aksarben Village in Omaha.

Participants will begin at Zone 6 in Aksarben Village. Events include timed 5K and 10K runs and an untimed walk. The timed events will begin at 9 a.m., with the untimed walk immediately to follow. A virtual option is also available at a location of your own choosing.

We need your help! Our Energy Assistance Program (EAP) depends on the generosity of individual donations, fundraisers and sponsorships. EAP disbursed \$319,987 in utility



assistance to 937 households over the past year. The need for assistance is increasing each year while funding has decreased by 40%.

That is why the annual Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth is so important. While there is a year-round need for assistance, the event is held

during cold winter months to bring attention to those forced to make difficult decisions about where their money goes – food, medicine or heating and cooling their homes.

For more information, visit HeatTheStreetsOmaha.com.

Registration ends March 1. Children under 12 walk for free, but must still register.

The money raised is split equally between M.U.D.'s Home Fund and EAP. It's administered by the Dollar Energy Fund (DEF), a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that serves low-income utility customers. DEF works with 35 local entities throughout both utilities' service territories to provide this financial assistance.

FEBRUARY BOARD MEETINGS

All-committee meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 13 (see oppd.com/BoardMeeting for details). **Regular board meeting:** Thursday, Feb. 15, 5 p.m. (see oppd.com/BoardMeeting for details). Hearing-impaired call 531-226-3208, 72 hours prior to request an interpreter. Agendas posted and meetings viewable on oppd.com/BoardMeeting.

Outlets

OUR MISSION

Provide affordable, reliable and environmentally sensitive energy services to our customers.

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Omaha Public Power District

OPPD board approves rate proposal to promote reliability

OPPD's board of directors has approved a new, \$2.1 billion budget with a modest general rate increase to help maintain robust, reliable electrical service amid rising costs and growing customer demand.

The exact increase for 2024 will vary based on the type of customer and their usage, but the average among different customer classes would be 2.5%. Most residential customers would see a 1.6% increase.

The new budget will allow OPPD to continue upgrading its infrastructure to improve reliability while adding new programs that give customers more control over their energy use.

OPPD's retail rates were 26.5% below the national average in 2022, according to the Energy Information Administration. The increase will maintain OPPD's competitive edge while preserving the health of the utility's operations.

The new rates go into effect on

Jan. 1 as part of OPPD's Corporate Operating Plan.

OPPD has some tools and energy-efficiency tips at oppd.com/ee to help customers manage costs and assistance programs for those struggling with utility bills.

Customers can also contact a customer care representative by emailing customerservice@oppd.com or calling 402-536-4131 in the Omaha metro area, or toll-free outside the metro at 1-877-536-4131.

Students learn about careers in the trades

OPPD recently hosted a Careers in Energy event for 150 Omaha Public Schools students, highlighting the many fulfilling and high-paying jobs available at public utilities.

OPPD and Metropolitan Utilities District co-sponsored the two-day event at OPPD's training center in Elkhorn. Students watched demonstrations of line worker skills, drone flights and water filtration, among others.

Of course, utilities such as OPPD and M.U.D. have engineers and technicians who

provide a crucial public service. But they also employ mechanics, accountants, lawyers, chemists, information technology specialists and others.

Schools participating were Benson



High School, Bryan High School, Buena Vista High School, Burke High School, North High School, Northwest High School, South High School and Westview High School.

Tax incentives can help with winter home improvements

Winter's upcoming arrival is welcome news for those who love the holiday season, snow days or sitting in front of the fire.

Of course, the cold can also hit people's pocketbooks in the form of higher heating bills.

But tax credits and rebates can help ease that burden, including incentives available under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA). The IRA offers a wide range

of tax credits for home improvements and upgrades. Among the improvements covered: heat pumps, windows and exterior doors, and insulation.

The IRA is touted as one of the largest investments in clean energy in the nation's history. Various tax credits through the IRA are available through 2032.

Upgrading your home's heat and cooling system can have a sizable impact on your bill. Incentives for new

electric or natural gas heat pumps are as big as \$2,000.

A home energy audit can evaluate your home's energy efficiency. A maximum \$600 credit is available for such audits.

Incentives of up to \$2,000 are also available for qualifying customer-owned solar systems. More details are available at oppd.com.

7"x 2.5" AD SPACE AVAILABLE IN 2023 Proceeds benefit EAP. For details, please email gpschulte@oppd.com.

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