

## 1. The First Days of Electricity

Before the Municipal Electric Plant served customers of Hutchinson, electricity was initially furnished by a local corporation at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A headline from the Hutchinson Leader declared "Light at Last" would be coming to the community before Christmas and further announced that, "Main Street is to be lighted at least enough more so that a stranger getting off from a train at night will be able to find the town without a guide." Service began when a group of local men formed a company, the Hutchinson Lighting & Manufacturing Co., which was incorporated with \$25,000 worth of capital stock. The village council granted permission to these men to set poles, string wire, and to start constructing the electric plant next to the water pumping station along Main Street, lying north of the bridge. City Iron Works of Minneapolis was awarded the contract for furnishing the company with electrical machinery, steam boiler, engine and street wiring. It was only supposed to take a mere 10 weeks to complete the plant. Successful, the corporation was able to bring light to the community before Christmas Day. A 60-kilowatt dynamo (which had a capacity of lighting at least 1,200 lights) furnished the community's first supply of electricity on December 20, 1900. It began as a primitive utility, with only 80 customers that were serviced with electricity; its modest operations lit 800 private lights, two private arc lights, four on Main Street, and 32 candlepower incandescent street lights. Because the Hutchinson Company did not have an adequate supply of energy, light bulbs were only powered to emit a glow until midnight.

Meter No.		Reading		Meter rent	
352		2/27		15	
		1/29		13	
		1348		@ 12½c per K. W. H.	
		1335		1.78	
		13			
Received payment for the company		This month			
\$		Balance from previous month			
		Together			
		Less discount allowed only if paid on or before the 10th inst.			

*When making payment in cash, bring bill and attached stub with you  
When making remittance by check, detach and retain this bill, mailing stub with check*

A bill for \$1.78 from the Hutchinson Lighting and Manufacturing Company.

In 1915, the men of Hutchinson Lighting & Manufacturing Company sold their interests to Northwest Light & Power Co. and only nine years later, Northern States Power Company (NSP) assumed the role of electricity provider for Hutchinson.