

HIGHLIGHTS



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October 2016



Exciting News for Big Horn REA Members

In 2013, the Big Horn REA Board of Directors hired an architect to look at remodeling the headquarters office building. Some of the remodel considerations were: entryway to be upgraded to allow wheelchair accessibility; addition of a conference room; and, replace the flat tar and gravel roof with a new sloped roof. The costs for the remodel were estimated at \$600,000.00. The costs were considered to be excessive for the benefits to be received, and the board decided to analyze other options. In 2015, Big Horn was able to purchase the property of

Lloyd's Roofing on main street in Basin. The board has been evaluating a new headquarters at this main street location. After meeting with an architect and thorough discussions and considerations, the Big Horn REA Board of Directors recently decided to proceed with a new headquarters facility.

Hence, your Board of Directors is proud to announce its decision to replace its current headquarters, in order that Big Horn may continue to most cost effectively meet its mission of providing safe, reliable and competitively-priced electricity,

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OCTOBER

ELECTRIC CO-OPS
BUILD
COMMUNITY

CO-OP MONTH | OCTOBER 2016

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energy products and other services to its members.

The current office, which has served as the co-op's headquarters for approximately 59 years is in need of major repairs and updates, in addition to technology and energy efficiency upgrades that are cost prohibitive.

Big Horn REA staff have done the best they could with what they have, but the current space is inadequate to meet the future needs of the membership. Challenges that were reviewed and discussed with the Board and architect were: energy efficiencies – or lack thereof – contribute to excessive utility expenses. heating, cooling and lighting upgrades to the existing facility are possible but the benefits do not outweigh the costs; safety and security standards have improved, however the current floorplan limits ability to secure the facilities; limited

handicap accessibility, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act; lack of room to expand office spaces; current headquarters is in a residential neighborhood; roof leaks; building is settling which is causing structural issues.

Big Horn's Board and management have carefully considered the decision to build new facilities, weighing the pros and cons in-

involved. The new building will not drive rate increases. The Board is making an investment in the co-op's future and plan to build the new facility to meet the co-op's needs for the next 50 years.

The new headquarters is being designed to help benefit our membership by allowing Big Horn to provide better service and reduce future repair costs of the current headquarters. Ways in which the new headquarters will benefit the membership include:

* Added computer technolo-

Big Horn's Board and management have carefully considered the decision to build new facilities, weighing the pros and cons involved. The new building will not drive rate increases.

gy and automation will allow employees to work more efficiently, which saves money. Big Horn's current office, which was built in 1957, was constructed prior to the explosion of technology. The new headquarters will be designed with proper room for computer storage and ventilation.

* Features to be incorporated into the design of the new



headquarters will make the building more energy efficient than the current building.

* Many design features will be added to increase convenience and provide a more pleasant customer service experience for cooperative members.

The new facility will be fully ADA compliant.

* Provide for more safety and security measures and enhancements.

* Provide for a conference room that can be used by members and the public.

* Will position Big Horn REA for op-

portunities and future growth. The new facility will serve as a solid service base for Big Horn's membership for many years to come, and confirms Big Horn's commitment to the community.

* Will be located on the main street of Basin to provide better access and visibility.

With a mission of providing safe, reliable and competitive-

ly-priced electricity, products and services to enhance the lives of Big Horn's members and the communities it serves, the board and management studied several options to address facility challenges while planning for future needs. The Board values the trust the membership has placed in their hands to make sound decisions to benefit the electric cooperative as a whole.

The Board will continue to meet with the architect as the project progresses. There has been site work/testing performed on the new location. It is anticipated within the next two months the Lloyd's Roofing building will be demolished. Building bids will probably be sent out in early 2017, with the anticipated start date of the new facility for spring of

2017. The initial plans call for a new building of 6,200 square feet with a completed project cost of slightly under \$2,000,000.00.

Big Horn will keep their members and the public informed on the progress of the building project through the monthly newsletter, Highlights, and on the website, www.bighornrea.com.

CO-OP MONTH FUN FACTS

- Minnesota was the first state to declare an official Co-op Month proclamation in 1948.
- Co-op Month has been a nationally recognized celebration since 1964, when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman, a former Minnesota governor, proclaimed October Co-op Month.
- The first national theme in 1964 was "Cooperatives: USDA Helps Build a Better America."
- The U.S. Government sponsored Co-op Month from 1964-70.
- Since 1971, cooperatives, statewide associations, and the National Cooperative Business Association have fueled their own events and promotions.

ALERT TODAY, ALIVE TOMORROW: HEADS UP FOR FARM SAFETY

Stay safe around downed power lines. Consider all lines, equipment and conductors to be live and dangerous.



If the vehicle is on fire, or you must exit for other safety reasons, follow these steps:

1. Jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothes touch the ground and the machinery at the same time.
2. Land with feet together and hop away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electric shock.
3. Keep going until you are at least 40 ft. away.
4. Call for help. Make sure no one gets within 40 ft. of the downed line.
5. Do not re-enter the area or vehicle until emergency responders and your electric co-op crews determine it is safe.

LIEAP and WAP

(Low Income Energy Assistance Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program)

LIEAP is a federally funded program that helps people pay home heating bills November through June. The program is open to home owners and renters, and it helps cover the costs of electric, natural gas, propane, wood, diesel heating oil, coal and pellets used for heating a home.

People who are approved for assistance through LIEAP may also be eligible for weatherization services to make their homes more energy efficient and further lower heating costs. The Weatherization Assistance Program helps households save money on home heating costs by improving energy efficiency.

Weatherizing homes often means adding more insulation, sealing leaks around doors and windows, and it always includes basic health and safety checks. An energy audit determines which weatherization measures will get the biggest bang for the weatherization dollars spent

on each home. Weatherization can save 5-25 percent on home heating bills.

Applications for LIEAP are available beginning October 1, 2016 and are accepted until February 28, 2017. It's often best to apply earlier rather than later. DFS accepts Weatherization Assistance Program applications every day of the year.

Winter 2016-2017 Application Information:

Applications will be available on the DFS website <http://dfsweb.wyo.gov/economic-assistance/lieap>, at local DFS offices, senior centers and at the Big Horn REA office.

To get specific information about your application or to ask that an application be mailed to you, call: 1-800-246-4221.

Is your application is complete? Get it to the LIEAP Office today.

- Fax:** 307-778-3943
- Email:** lieapinfo@thealignteam.org
- Mail:** PO Box 827, Cheyenne, WY 82003-0827
- Deliver:** 1401 Airport Parkway, Suite 300 Cheyenne, WY 82001



HIGHLIGHTS

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For Outages or Trouble

Call the office number: **ANYTIME**
(307) 568-2419 or 1-800-564-2419

After 5 p.m., weekends and holidays all calls will be answered by our professional answering service, who will contact the appropriate person(s).

Big Horn Rural Electric Company is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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