

February 2011

HIGHLIGHTS

From Big Horn Rural Electric Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



From the Manager's Desk

I hope everyone had a nice Christmas and New Year's Day! The year of 2011 is upon us and Big Horn REA looks forward to the challenges and opportunities to work for you - our member/owners. Our team of directors and employees are committed to providing you with reliable electric energy and quality customer service.

All of our members were sent a Member Survey letter in January 2011. The results of the survey will be analyzed to help determine areas that Big Horn can improve on and determine our customer satisfaction rating. Your opinions and efforts in completing the survey will help Big Horn REA continue to be a successful company.

I want to invite all members to make plans to attend your upcoming annual meeting on March 12, 2011. Attending the annual meeting offers you a voice in the decision making by voting for directors and being informed of the business activities of your cooperative. Your involvement and participation at this year's annual meeting will be sincerely appreciated.

Annual Meeting - Capital Credits \$490,000 to be Refunded

Every year, Big Horn's board members, employees and Annual Meeting committee

members strive to bring our members an informative and interesting meeting. The plans for the annual meeting to be held on March 12, 2011 started nearly a year ago! Within a month after last year's annual meeting, the Advisory Committee met

and reviewed the survey comments regarding that meeting. All the comments were reviewed and the positive items as well as the negative were evaluated. The Committee has since met two more times and put together the plans for the Annual Meeting.

We feel that this year's annual meeting will again provide a great opportunity for you to become



Big Horn REA Linemen Warren Adams and Keith Armstrong demonstrate electrical safety at the 2010 Annual Meeting.

informed and take an active role in your cooperative. You will also be able to visit with friends and neighbors, view displays, receive registration gifts and much more!

One of the cooperative principles that make Big Horn Rural Electric Company a cooperative form of business entity is Members' Economic Participation. Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. Big Horn was established to provide at cost electric service. Our net margin above expenses and reserves belongs

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to the members and are called capital credits. These capital credits are reinvested in poles, wire and other elements of our system for a period of time before they are refunded to the members.

At the November 23, 2010 board meeting, Big Horn's directors

in nomination for the Director seat for Directorate District #1 which includes the Burlington, Otto and Emblem areas. Those four candidates are Michael Carlson, Felix Carrizales, Jessie Hamilton and Donald Russell. The Committee has placed one name, Kathy Gilbreath, in nomination

can make an informed decision when voting.

Big Horn's board members, employees, and Annual Meeting Committee members are dedicated to bringing you and your family and interesting and informative meeting. We are counting on you to make this annual meeting a success. Be sure to read the March issue of HIGHLIGHTS for more details.

During the week of February 21st, each member will receive in the mail their complete Annual Meeting brochure and proxy. Make plans now to attend!!

Annual Meeting Committees

Advisory Committee

- District 1 Norma Anderson
- District 2 Jan Barnett
- District 3 Peggy Johnson
- District 4 Ann Lawler
- District 5 Jody Lynne Bassett

Nominating Committee

- District 1 Sheri Hartman
- District 2 Loren Good
- District 3 June Booth
- District 4 Sharon Fech
- District 5 Willie Bridges

Elections & Credentials Committee

- District 1 Grace McCoy
- District 2 Veda Gerrard
- District 3 Doris Anderson
- District 4 Yvonne Renner
- District 5 Judy Johnson



The winners of the 2010 District prizes and Grand Prize. This year, we will again award one \$50 bill credit to someone from each of the five Districts, as well as one \$250 bill credit Grand Prize!

approved a refund of capital credits to the membership. Refund checks will be handed out to members that attend the 72nd Annual Meeting in Greybull. Those members that are unable to attend will receive their refund checks by mail after the meeting. Checks will be issued to those members who received power from Big Horn during any of the years of 1976 through 1979.

The Nominating Committee has placed four names

for Directorate District #4 which includes the Meeteetse area. Look for their candidate profiles in next month's issue of Highlights. You are encouraged to carefully read the candidate statements so that you



Not only can you learn about your electric company, but Annual Meeting is a great time to catch up with your friends and neighbors.

**BIG HORN REA
OFFICES WILL BE
CLOSED FEBRUARY
21, 2011 IN
OBSERVANCE OF
PRESIDENTS' DAY**

Winter Tips for Heating Your Home

Winter is a reminder that your heating system has a few months of hard work ahead of it. Heating and cooling costs typically account for 44 percent of a home's total energy expense according to the U. S. Department of Energy. Another 14 percent of a home's energy usage is used to heat water. So in the interest of energy conservation and reducing electric bills, Big Horn Rural Electric offers these simple, energy saving tips.

Heating System - If you haven't done so already, have a qualified technician inspect and service your system to ensure it's safe and working at peak efficiency. Trim or remove grass, weeds, leaves, etc. from around the outdoor unit of your heating system. When airflow is blocked, it puts a strain on the system and lowers efficiency.

If you have a forced-air heating system, clean or replace the filter monthly and keep heat vents open and unobstructed by furniture.

Thermostat - Install a programmable thermostat. The energy savings will offset the cost of a basic unit in less than a year. Programming your thermostat from 72 degrees to 65 degrees for eight hours a day while no one is home, or while everyone is tucked in bed, will cut your heating bill up to 10 percent.

If you have a standard thermostat, set it at 68 degrees and lower one degree until comfortable. For every degree you lower the thermostat, you can gain as much as a three percent savings in energy costs.

Insulation - Check the insulation in the attic, ceilings, floors, exterior and basement walls or crawl space to make sure it's in tip-top shape and at the recommended levels for your area. If your home is not adequately insulated, have additional insulation professionally installed.

Insulate heating ducts and keep them in good repair to prevent heat loss. The system can lose up to 60 percent of its warmed air before it reaches the register if ducts are not properly insulated in unheated areas such as attics and crawlspaces.

Air Leaks and Ventilation - Test your home for air leaks. You can save 10 percent or more on your energy bill by reducing the air leaks in your home. On a windy day, stand next to windows, doors, electrical outlets, and light fixtures. If you can feel a draft, you have an air leak that may need caulking, sealing, or weather stripping.

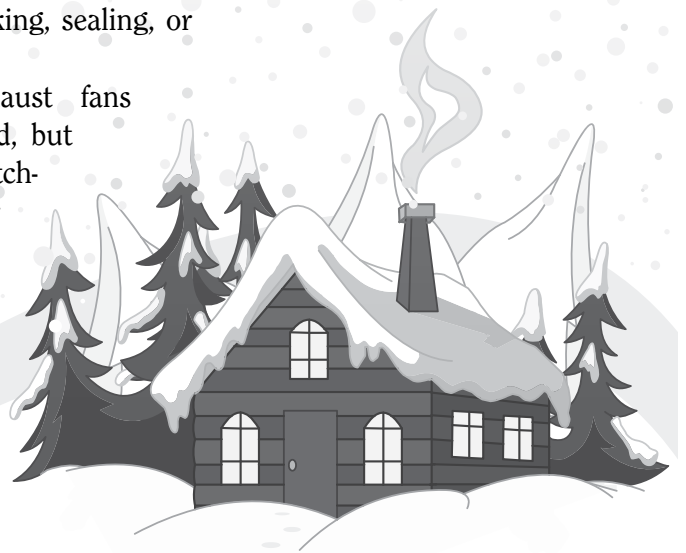
Ventilation exhaust fans are often overlooked, but in just one hour, kitchen, bath, and other ventilating fans can pull out a houseful of warmed air. Turn off ventilation exhaust fans as soon as they've done the job.

Look for the Energy Star and other tips - Cut your energy bills by up to 30 percent with Energy Star-labeled products when replacing your heating and cooling systems, as well as appliances, lighting, windows, office equipment and home electronics.

When the fireplace is not in use, keep the flue damper tightly closed. A chimney is designed specifically for smoke to escape, but warm air escapes as well - 24 hours a day!

Open curtains or blinds on your windows during the day to allow direct sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

By taking advantage of these helpful tips you can keep your house warm, conserve energy and maximize your electric savings.



Quality Member Service Update

- Please join us at the 72nd Annual Meeting which will be held March 12, 2011 at the Greybull High School Gymnasium in Greybull. Registration begins at 9:45am and the meeting starts at 11:00am. Come join us for lunch and an informative meeting!
- Everyone should have received their Co-op Connections card in the bill you received in December. This card will allow you to receive discounts on prescriptions if you don't have prescription insurance coverage, as well as discounts on many, many other things you will find on the website, www.connections.coop. You may also access the site through our website, www.bighornrea.com. If you did not receive a Co-op Connections card last month, please call the office at (800) 564-2419 and we will mail you one.
- You can now pay your bill with a credit/debit card through our website www.bighornrea.com. You must use the password which you will find on your billing statement the first time you log in. The system will then ask you to change your password. Just another reminder that we are now able to take credit/debit card payments over the phone. We do have to charge a convenience fee when taking a credit/debit payment. This fee is 2.45% of the total charged.
- We look forward to seeing the results of the member survey sent out by Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, North Dakota. We are interested to know how we are doing as your power company.
- Remember, if you purchase new Energy Star qualified appliances we offer a rebate program. Big Horn REA's Board has decided to match Tri-State G & T's rebate amount for the present time. Don't miss out!



HIGHLIGHTS

is an official publication of
**BIG HORN RURAL
ELECTRIC COMPANY**



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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).



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

By replacing your five most-used light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified bulbs, you could save \$70 a year.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency