

July 2013

HIGHLIGHTS

From Big Horn Rural Electric Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Your cooperative is a proud member of
WREA
Western Rural Electric Association



When Lightning Strikes... *Surviving Power Surges*

High-tech gadgets, appliances, and computers all have one weakness in common: deadly power surges. Too much electricity coursing through connecting wires can fry circuitry inside sensitive electronics, reducing them to expensive trash.

Electricity can spike for a number of reasons, including lighting strikes on power lines, which can send millions of volts searing through your wiring. During a recent storm, lightning struck a tree near two residences in the Lovell area. One home owner lost several items due



Lightning damage near Lovell.

to the massive surge that coursed through the wiring in their home.

All is not lost

Homeowners can protect digital electronics with surge suppressors. As the term implies, these devices suppress a fluctuating power supply by diverting excess voltage to a ground wire. There are several types of whole-house surge suppressors available, although none of them are able to fully stand up to the enormous power spike caused by lightning.

Some protectors mount on your circuit breaker panel indoors

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Damage to a tree caused by lightning in a recent storm. A homeowner lost several items due to the power surge that accompanied the strike.

BIG HORN REA
OFFICES WILL
BE CLOSED JULY
4TH – HAPPY
INDEPENDENCE
DAY!

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Does your Electric Meter Go On Vacation When You Do?

When vacation time comes, and you're planning to be gone for a couple of weeks or so, your electric bill should decrease significantly, right? Wrong!

Many people believe that when they leave on vacation, their electric meter stops until they return. If they are on vacation for two weeks, they expect their electric bill to be cut in

half. Let's ask ourselves a few questions before we assume our electric bill should decrease by any considerable amount during vacation time.

First, was the water heater turned off during your vacation? Remember, if the electric water heater is left energized during vacation, it will continue to operate and maintain the tank temperature even if you're not using any hot water.

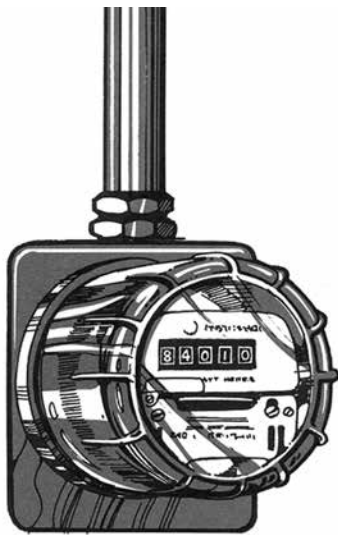
Were the refrigerator and freezers emptied and turned off? If not, they will continue to operate to maintain the pre-set temperatures.

Take a look at other electrical appliances that keep running while you are on vacation—clocks, attic fans and power ventilators, heating and air conditioning equipment, lights, and TV sets with the “instant-on” feature.

If you are determined that no electricity is to be used during your vacation, you can accomplish this by turning off your main breaker or pulling the main disconnect. But

remember, when you do this, the automatic appliances and lighting will stop. Your refrigerator and freezer will defrost, your electric water heater will not have hot water ready for use upon your return, and your home may be too hot or too cold when you walk in the door. It's a decision only you can make. Perhaps you can make arrangements with a neighbor to keep an eye on your place and adjust the heat, water heater and/or air conditioner shortly before you return. In addition, you may wish to unplug all appliances not in use. If a light is to be left on, it should be connected to a timer.

Another reminder is that many vacationers bring home several days or weeks of dirty laundry. This laundry will give your electric water heater a workout during your first day or two back home. Only you can decide whether your electric meter gets a vacation or not while you are gone.



Manager's Message

Last month we held meetings in Basin, Ten Sleep, Meeteetse and Lovell to meet with members to discuss potential new service load requirements. It is important for Big Horn to gather this information as it will be utilized as part of our Long Range and four year construction work plans. Providing this information will also benefit you because we can make plans to upgrade the electrical facilities for any new or additional load growth of services. For example, an irrigator may plan on adding several three phase pumps to an area where there is currently only single phase. If system upgrades are planned for,

then Big Horn can commit financial and operational resources for upcoming projects in order to serve the needed facilities. Otherwise, a request by an applicant for a service that would require a line conversion (i.e. from single phase to three phase power), line change, line upgrade and/or a system facility betterment may require the applicant to pay the entire cost. In other words, it may pay to keep Big Horn in “the loop”.

You can submit information to Big Horn by logging on to www.bighornrea.com and then go to Services Tab, then Proposed Projects, then Project Planning Sheet. You can also call Kendal Wambeke, Asst.

Line Superintendent at 568-2419 and discuss your project.

We want to know your service requirements and plans! Additionally we want to be included early in your plans. That is, if you are planning on adding or changing facilities regarding electrical needs, such as a bin dryer, irrigation motor, or home upgrade, please contact us so that we can review your electrical requirements. We will be able to determine if facilities are available and, if necessary, order materials so that your service can be completed in a timely manner.

Thanks for your patronage and have a safe summer.

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When Lightning Strikes...

or are built into a specific circuit breaker. Others are designed to mount at the base of your electric meter. Suppressors are available for a multitude of applications, from single-plug wall units to rack-mounted setups that cover an entertainment system.

For those who don't like continually stooping to flip the switch

on a power strip, some models even include remote controls. You can also find pivoting protectors that adjust to accommodate a variety of adapters, letting you plug all of your gadgets into one strip.

Finally, keep a few things in mind before you buy.

"It's important to remember that many of your devices may be

connected to other outlets, like satellite, cable, phone, and Internet lines," Kendal Wambeke, Assistant Line Superintendent, adds. "Surge protectors are available with options to protect these conduits as well. And make sure the manufacturer guarantees to cover the cost of replacing any damaged equipment that was attached."

THREE PHASE PUMP OWNERS

From Jeff Stocklin, Line Superintendent:

"Three phase pump owners: do your pump motors a favor. Have a motor saver installed on your control panels to prevent motors from trying to run on load imbalance caused by Mother Nature: lightning, high winds, trees, etc. Any kind of imbalance can happen - from power outages to a loose connection at the disconnect and all the way to the motor itself.

Just a reminder before trying to start the system, turn off the disconnect and check out the control panel and motor for any problems first. It will save you time and money in the long run."



Please help us help you!

Do we have an updated phone number to reach you? There are times when we need to contact members about service problems, billing questions or safety issues, and it's much easier when we have a home or cell phone number on file.

If you could please fill out the form below and get it back to us with your contact information we would greatly appreciate it. We do NOT sell or share these numbers with other organizations.

Thanks for your help!

BIG HORN RURAL ELECTRIC

Information Update

208 S 5th Street
P.O. Box 270
Basin, WY 82410

Name (as it appears on your account) _____

Home Telephone _____

Cell Phone _____

Work Phone (Daytime) _____

You can mail this form with your bill payment, drop it off at our office, or call in the information during business hours.

**CO-OP
Connections
Local
Discount**



Big Horn REA is pleased to announce that we have secured another local discount for those members using their Co-op Connections cards.

A great big thank you to :



VALLEY HARDWARE, INC
111 S 4TH ST
BASIN, WYOMING

Present your Co-op Connections card at time of services to receive
2% OFF ANY PURCHASE

If you own a business and would like to join the Co-op Connections program as a local vendor, please contact Sheila at Big Horn REA, 307-568-2419. Please encourage those businesses you use the most to join our program!



Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Lighting accounts for about 13 percent of the average household's electric bill—cut costs by choosing new light bulbs that have increased output and longevity. Some cost more up front, but prices are dropping as technology advances. Options include color, brightness, and even dimming and multi-way functions. Combining lights with automatic sensors can cut costs further.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

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).