

May 2010

HIGHLIGHTS

From Big Horn Rural Electric Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



From the Manager's Desk

Big Horn Rural Electric Company held its 71st annual meeting on March 13, 2010 in Greybull.

There were 316 members registered, of which 134 were proxies. Overall there were approximately 400 people in attendance.

We want to thank those members who attended the meeting and those who executed their proxy. It is imperative to have the involvement of our members. Big Horn is required to have 10% of our members, either in person or by proxy be in attendance at the annual meeting in order to properly conduct the necessary business at any annual meeting. Big Horn has approximately 2,300 members and thus a quorum was successfully reached. Big Horn also wants to thank all the committee members, volunteers, employees and others who assisted in making the meeting a success. You can log on to our website at www.bighornrea.com and review the annual meeting reports and photos from the meeting.

continued on Page 2

Pole Damage

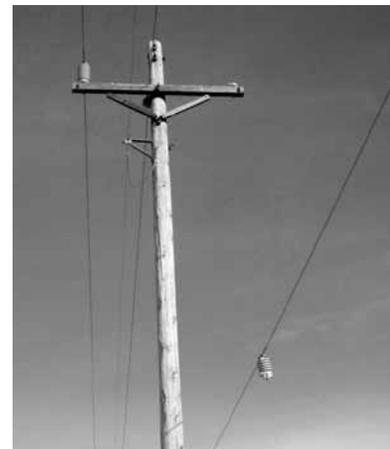
Recently Big Horn REA was informed by a concerned citizen that one of our lines had been vandalized.

When our crews arrived they found that insulators on our 34.5KV line had been shot, leaving the energized line hanging about 12-feet above the ground. While this may not seem all that dangerous, take into account that the electricity that powers your home is 110 volts. The power running through this line is 34,500 volts. This could have been deadly!

With spring comes burning season. Big Horn REA recently had several poles destroyed by unattended burning on a ditch-bank.

Damage to Big Horn REA equipment such as this costs you, the member/owner money. Big Horn does try to determine who causes this type of damage and the party will be billed accordingly.

Line Superintendent, Jeff Stocklin, states, "Not only is this a cost to member/owners, it can be very dangerous if the poles fall, leaving an energized line on or close to the ground. This could also, potentially, be deadly."



Inside. . .

811 Call Before You Dig	2
May - Electrical Safety Month.....	3
Changed Your Phone Number or Address?.....	4



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs. The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area. Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

The Wyoming State Underground Facilities Law requires all persons who are excavating underground facilities in the state of Wyoming to call One Call of Wyoming at least 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) in advance of starting any underground projects. There are instances of emergencies where locates will need to be done sooner, but these are few and far between.

Emergency Locate Requests

Wyoming State Law under the “Wyoming Underground Facilities Notification Act” defines an Emergency as follows: *“Emergency means an occurrence, including loss of communications, which demands immediate action to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public and to prevent loss of life, health, property or essential public services. Emergency shall include ruptures and leakage of pipelines, explosion, fires and similar instances where immediate action is necessary to prevent loss of life or significant damage to underground facilities or the environment.”*

Remember, an actual emergency locate request may be hampered in response time if a locator is responding to a bogus emergency locate request.

Requesting a Locate is Easy

One easy phone call to 811 starts the process to get the underground utility lines belonging to area

utility companies marked for free. When you call 811 from anywhere in the country, your call will be routed to your local One Call Center. Local One Call Center operators will ask you for the location of your digging job and route your call to affected utility companies. Your utility companies will then send a professional locator to your location to mark the utilities within a few days. Once the lines owned by the utility companies have been marked, you will know the approximation of the lines and can dig more safely, because knowing what’s below protects you and your family. The locators are responsible for locating the utilities facilities, they are not there to locate your own personal underground lines of water, sewer, gas, electric, etc.

There are standard colors which are used for each utility who locates underground facilities. These colors are as follows:

APWA Uniform Color Code (Uses ANSI Standard Z535.1 Safety Color Code)

WHITE Proposed Excavation

PINK Temporary Survey Markings

RED Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables

YELLOW Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum, or Gaseous Materials

ORANGE Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit

BLUE Potable Water

PURPLE Reclaimed Water, Raw Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines

GREEN Sewers and Drain Lines

A person who causes damage to any underground facility and does not comply with the Wyoming One Call may be fined up to \$5,000 and will be liable for all damages done to that underground facility.

For more information, please call 811 or 1-800-849-2476 or visit www.call811.com or www.onecallofwyoming.com.

Manager’s Message

continued from Page 1

Spring is certainly a busy time of year for everyone. Whether your activities involve ranching, farming, construction, yard work or recreational activities, Big Horn would like to stress for everyone to be safe. In the past several months we have had construc-

tion equipment hit our lines resulting in outages and damaged equipment. We have had numerous ditch/field burnings damage power poles. Big Horn stresses to our employees the need to practice safe work habits and practices. In 2010 we are trying to have our employees ask themselves as they do their jobs, “Is this the safest and

best way to perform this job?” We do not want our employees taking chances and unnecessary risks. Big Horn also values the safety our members and the general public. Please embrace safe work habits and practices.

Have an enjoyable spring and summer, and thanks for being a member of Big Horn REA!

Celebrate National Electrical Safety Month

May marks National Electrical Safety Month, and Big Horn Rural Electric is teaming up with the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to launch a public awareness campaign to promote the

importance of electrical safety and educate key audiences about the steps that can be taken to prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities in the home.

“Eliminating electrical hazards begins with education and awareness,” says ESFI President Brett Brenner. “National Electrical Safety Month is a time for all of us to reexamine our surroundings and determine what steps we can take to prevent the hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and billions of dollars in economic losses that occur each year because of electrical hazards.”

Electricity is the cause of over 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries, and \$1.6 billion in property damage in the United States. In the workplace, more than 300 workplace fatalities and approximately 4,000 injuries occur each year due to electrical hazards, according to a study published by the Itasca, IL-based National Safety Council.

To help raise awareness of electrical safety, ESFI will focus on a different electrical safety topic each week as part of a broader outreach effort this May:

May 2-8 - Educating Your Children: Do your children know what it takes to stay safe when it comes to electricity? Visit ESFI’s *Kids Corner*, a brand-new online resource designed as a one-stop shop for teachers, educators, parents, and students!

Kids Corner is available at www.esfi.org. Big Horn REA also has a Kid Zone on our website www.bighornrea.com.

May 9-15 - Staying Safe at Work: Electrical accidents in an office environment usually occur as a result of faulty or defective equipment, unsafe installation, or misuse of equipment. During the second week of National Electrical Safety Month, perform an electrical



MAY 2010
National Electrical
Safety Month

safety inspection of your office.

May 16-22 - Renovating the Right Way: Whether you are a first-time do-it-yourselfer or a “weekend warrior,” practicing safe habits can reduce your risk when it comes to home electrical work. Use ESFI’s *Electrical Safety Workbook* to help better understand and maintain your home’s electrical system.

May 23-29 - Remembering Electrical Safety in the Field: Use ESFI’s *Never Assume* Electrical Safety Series to give you and your co-workers the right frame of mind when it comes to safety in the workplace. From job planning to arc flash awareness, this one-of-a-kind video program is a must for anyone working with or near electricity!

ESFI’s newly redesigned website offers a variety of print, online, and multimedia resources for teachers, educators, parents, students, and anyone else interested in learning about electrical safety or teaching others about it.

Big Horn REA will be participating in the 2010 Bike & Board Rodeo which will be held on May 29, 2010 at the Big Horn Clinic parking lot in Basin. Big Horn REA will have an electrical safety display on hand and be available to answer questions you may have.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home and the workplace. ESFI proudly sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns throughout the year to prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. For more information about ESFI and National Electrical Safety Month, visit www.electrical-safety.org.

Changed Your Phone Number Or Address?

If you have changed your phone number or disconnected your land line for a cell phone, or have changed your mailing address, please call Big Horn Rural Electric Company immediately.

Why should I call Big Horn REA?

There are several reasons why you need to call Big Horn REA if you have changed your contact information.

- If you are on oxygen or other life-support systems which rely on electric power to operate and a scheduled outage is planned, we will not be able to notify you.
- Big Horn REA is a non-profit cooperative and since you share ownership in the cooperative, any excess capital is returned to you when the capital credits are retired, provided you had electric service with us during the year for which the Board decides to pay said capital credits.
- Notifications are mailed to members on occasion, such as for Annual Meeting, District Meetings, outages, etc.
- Also, if the county or town where your service is located has changed your physical address, we would like to know of this change for our records.
- Big Horn REA may need to contact you in an emergency situation.

If your contact information has changed, or if you are not sure we have the correct information, please call Big Horn REA and confirm your information. You can reach us at 568-2419 or 800-564-2419.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Properly hooking up your clothes dryer can help save on energy costs. The outdoor dryer exhaust door should close when the dryer is off. Check to make sure the dryer vent hose is tightly connected to the dryer and also to the inside wall fitting. The vent hose should not be kinked or clogged.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives.

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).