

October 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

From Big Horn Rural Electric Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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



From the Manager's Desk

October is National Cooperative Month

Celebrate Your Membership in Big Horn Rural Electric Company

October is recognized as National Cooperative Month. We want to remind our members that you have value, ownership, and are able to participate in the decisions and control of Big Horn Rural Electric Company.

Over the past several months, Big Horn has held district meetings throughout our service territory. These meetings are an excellent opportunity for you the member/owner to discuss issues with your local board members and become informed on issues affect-

ing the cooperative. Additionally these meetings offer a great time to visit with friends and neighbors and enjoy a fine lunch.

Big Horn appreciates those members that took the time to attend the district meetings. President Delaney informed those attending the most recent district meeting held in Burlington on August 29, 2012 some of the following items:

1. This is Big Horn Rural Electric Company's 75th year of being in business. Every member/owner should be proud of that fact. The



company was started in 1937 with the following statement: "The aim of Big Horn Rural Electric Company is to make electric energy available to its members at the lowest cost consistent with sound economy and good management". This mission statement still exemplifies how Big Horn REA operates today - that is we are non-profit, operate at the lowest possible cost while still maintaining a solid financial position and quality plant facilities.

2. As a member/owner, any margins or profits earned in excess of costs are refunded in capital credits. In the past 11 years, Big Horn has refunded in cash to its members over 2.4 million dollars.
3. Big Horn is committed to serving our members. There will be issues we must contend with. Some of these issues are government requirements, such as raptor or avian protection measures. The Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service are now generally requiring underground lines be installed. Additionally there are trees outside of our prescribed right of ways that create outages and cause damage by falling into our lines and equipment.
4. Our power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission is faced with possibly having to comply with stringent clean air standards that will drastically increase costs as coal utilization for power will be reduced.



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Keep Out the Cold with Weather Stripping

No mistaking it: winter will soon be upon us. Any drafts around doors and windows that go unnoticed during fall will soon be downright uncomfortable—and adding to your energy bills.

Weather stripping offers a relatively quick fix for drafty doors. To determine if a door leading out of your house needs new weather stripping look for daylight. If even a sliver of daylight remains visible between the door and its frame or the floor, add weather stripping.

Next, shut the door or window on a piece of paper. If you can pull the paper out without tearing it, you're losing energy.

There are a variety of weather stripping materials available, each good for fitting different types of door and window frames. Most are made of rubber, foam, metal, vinyl, or a combination of materials. To determine the right item for the job, check the area: if any old, worn material has been previously installed, take a sample to your local hardware store or expert like a contractor. If no material exists as a guide, make detailed notes about the type of gap and how the door or window is installed—someone at the hardware store or your expert should be able to make a recommendation for you.

Once you have the proper materials for the job, consult any instructions that may be on the weather stripping package. Installation techniques range from simple to technical, depending on the type of material being used. If replacing old, worn weather stripping, be sure to note

Weather Stripping Basics

While you should always consult specific instructions on weather stripping packages, here are some basic facts to keep in mind.

- 1** Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20° F.
- 2** Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- 3** Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



how it was installed as you remove it.

Here are a few basic guidelines:

- Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20°F.
- Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.

When weather stripping doors:

- Choose the appropriate door sweeps and thresholds.
- Weather strip the entire door jamb.

- Apply one continuous strip along each side.
- Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners.
- Use a thickness that causes the weather stripping to tightly press between the door and the door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

When weather stripping windows:

- Apply weather stripping between the sash and frame.
- The weather stripping shouldn't interfere with the operation of the window

From the Manager's Desk *continued from page 1*

5. Last year, it was stated Big Horn could not work past the meter to help our members when they are out of power and the outage is due to something on the customer's side of the meter. It was mentioned that Big Horn REA would work on this issue, and now with legislative efforts of our entire statewide REAs and our statewide office the

Wyoming Rural Electric Association (WREA), there was legislation passed in March 2012 that now allows us to help our members when there is an outage on the customer's equipment.

6. Tri-State Generation & Transmission is proposing to raise rates. This is currently estimated to raise the rates to Big Horn's members by ap-

proximately 3.5% effective January 1, 2013.

President Delaney concluded by noting Big Horn is proud to be your power provider. We will work diligently to control costs. We will also strive to provide reliable power. If you ever have an issue, please feel free to contact us. Big Horn wants to continue to earn our member's trust.

LIEAP and WAP

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

LIEAP is a state and federally funded program helping people pay home heating bills November through June 15. 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 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.

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 the LIEAP program are available beginning October 1, 2012 and are accepted until February 28, 2013. DFS accepts Weatherization Assistance Program applications every day of the year.

Winter 2012-2013 Application Information:

Applications will be available on the DFS website [http://dfsweb.](http://dfsweb.state.wy.us/economic-assistance/lieap/index.html)



state.wy.us/economic-assistance/lieap/index.html, 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 complete? Get it to the LIEAP Office today.

Fax: 307-778-3943

Mail: PO Box 827,
Cheyenne WY 82003-0827

Deliver: 1401 Airport Parkway,
Suite 300
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Electrical Safety in the Neighborhood

When thinking about your home or neighborhood, chances are you don't picture power lines. They're easy to overlook, stringing high above your roof, along property lines and roadways, or near trees. But the old adage, "Out of sight, out of mind," may be dangerous—power lines pose serious electrical hazards if forgotten.

Trees can be a power line's worst enemy. Strong winds, storms, and heavy ice can topple trees or shatter branches that pull down power lines and cause outages. Sometimes, even if heavily damaged, lines remain energized with the potential to electrify trees and nearby objects.

Arcing and flashovers between power lines and trees are also dangerous. In winter, extra weight from snow and ice can bend or break tree branches, bringing them close to power lines. During warm weather or when power lines are carrying heavy electrical loads, they can heat up and sag as much as 15 feet or 20

feet, dropping them toward nearby vegetation. Electric current caused by arcing or flashovers between power lines and trees in either situation can easily injure or even kill an individual nearby.

Follow these safety tips and be sure to pay attention to power lines:

- Make sure to always look for nearby power lines before you cut down any tree or trim branches. If a tree falls into a power line, contact Big Horn Rural Electric Company.
- Treat all power lines as energized. Never climb or attempt to handle a tree that has a limb caught in a power line. You may not see any visible evidence that the tree is "electrified" or dangerous.
- Make sure to maintain required clearances between equipment and power lines.
- If a fire starts from a fallen power line, notify the fire department and Big Horn REA. Stay away

from the site of the electrical hazard. Make sure others stay clear of the line and treat it as energized.

- Do not use water on or near a fallen power line.

Along with taking necessary steps to respond to an electrical emergency, you can help stop potential power line problems before they start by practicing these safety measures:

- If you notice anything such as trees or branches that might interfere with power lines or pose a serious threat, notify Big Horn REA.
- If you are planning to plant trees on your property, make sure not to plant them directly under or within at least 25 feet of power lines for short trees, and at least 40 feet away for medium-sized trees.
- Shrubs, hedges, and other plants should be kept clear of electric poles.

Co-op Connections Updates

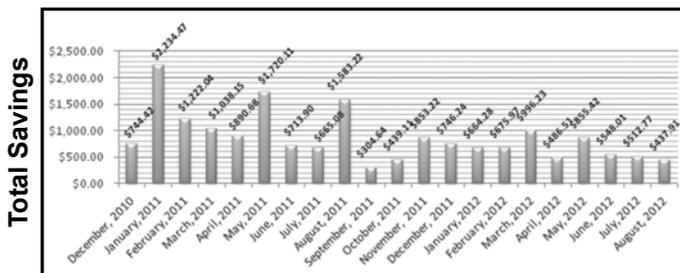
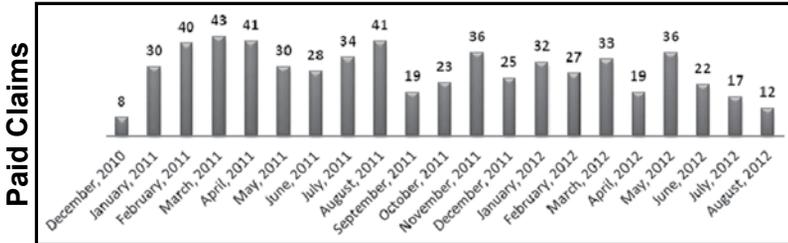
Since we rolled out the Co-op Connections cards in December, 2010, our members have saved over \$18,000.00 on prescriptions alone! This number is fantastic, when you take into account that the Co-op Connections card is provided to our members at no cost.

We would like to encourage all of our members to take advantage of this wonderful benefit of the Co-op Connections card. If you have prescription coverage through your insurance plan, please have the pharmacist check the price using the Co-op Connections card as

well. Sometimes this will be the cheaper option for you.

As you can see from the charts below, our members are saving. But, we would like to see more of you cashing in on these savings. Not only can you save on prescriptions, but on many other products and services as well. We are beginning to sign up local businesses to offer discounts to our members. The first of these businesses are Midway Clinic and Basin Auto Care in Basin.

Please check out all of your options at <http://www.connections.coop/index.php?coopID=344>.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Two degrees can make a big difference on your electric bill. Setting your thermostat 2 degrees Fahrenheit higher in summer and lower in the winter results in major energy savings. Investing in a programmable thermostat can save even more—these devices automatically lower and raise your home's temperature. Set it and forget it! Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

HIGHLIGHTS

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ELECTRIC COMPANY



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