



The Life of a Lineman

They wake before the sun, pour steaming cups of coffee, and kiss their family goodbye. After swinging by the office to get the day's orders, eight men climb into their trucks and head out. Our linemen form a solid team with one job: to deliver safe, reliable electricity. But that job can change in a million ways when rough weather steps in.

We often take power—and the men and women who provide it—for granted. Let's take a moment and stand in their boots. Linemen have to work safely, smart, and efficiently—all while 40 feet in the air wearing sturdy, thick rubber gloves. On a typical day, linemen maintain electrical distribution lines or build service to new homes and businesses. They have a lot on their plates. But

when our office or dispatch center calls crews with a problem, everything else takes a backseat.

Power restoration takes precedence on a lineman's to-do list. These brave men are always on call. We have crews standing by to serve you 24 hours a day, in the middle of the night or wee hours of the morning, weekends and holidays.

Can you imagine getting a call at 3 a.m. telling you to work outside during bad weather? Not many people are willing to face storms. Our linemen face harsh elements daily, all to serve you.

Linemen also focus on safety; the lives of co-workers are on the line. Job safety is important to everyone, no matter your occupation. But for linemen, there can be no slip ups or careless actions.

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DID YOU KNOW

Your new appliance may be eligible for a rebate!
Call us to find out more.

IRRIGATORS

Be sure to read page 2.
Annual Horsepower Charge billed this month.
If you have any questions, please call 1.800.564.2419

Board President Tom Delaney's Annual Meeting Report



I want to provide you a bit of information relative to the happenings of your cooperative for 2017 and thus far for 2018.

Rates - There was no change in your rates for 2018! Our power supplier, Tri-State Generation & Transmission has been, and continues to, work earnestly to maintain their costs and thus Big Horn did not see a rate change in our wholesale power costs. Further, Big Horn's own operations once again did not require a rate change. In the past fourteen years, Big Horn has increased its own rates only twice - once by 1.75% in 2010 and 4.93% in 2015! In comparison to the ever increasing costs we all pay for in our businesses and our personal lives, this is quite an accomplishment.

System Improvements - Part of Big Horn REA's mission is to provide reliable electric energy. To accomplish this mission, your cooperative must continually upgrade and build new line and substation infrastructure. Big Horn has budgeted \$2,105,000 for improvements in 2018. This yearly improvement amount is on track with our overall four year Construction Work Plan total of \$9,957,100.

Safety - In 2017, your employees conducted eight safety demonstrations to first responders and to school students. How-

ever, Big Horn still had over a dozen public contacts with our power lines. Each of these contacts could have ended up with someone being severely injured or killed. So please remember as you are working near overhead or underground power lines "SAFETY: Think About It."

Outages - One of the biggest causes of outages are trees coming in contact with power lines. In 2017, over \$300,000 was spent to trim and primarily remove trees. We appreciate everyone who allowed trees to be removed in an attempt to reduce outages, provide safety, and reduce future costs. If you have trees that are in our power lines please contact the office so the crew can inspect before it becomes a potentially serious issue.

New Headquarters Facility - Construction on the new office headquarters is on track to be completed by July 1, 2018. We trust our members are excited about the new building and its prominent location on main street. I want to remind our members that Big Horn will not be taking a loan to finance the building. Additionally, the new building will not be driving a need for any future rate increases! Big Horn's Board of Directors have carefully considered the decision to build the new facilities. The new facilities will be a signal that Big Horn is committed

to the communities in which we serve and to providing services to our members for many more years.

Conclusion - In conclusion let me say you the member/owners, have a financially sound electric cooperative. This is a result of dedicated management, office staff, and line crew that work hard to keep the "lights on" at an affordable cost! Thank you for attending your annual meeting.

ATTENTION IRRIGATORS:

A reminder that you will see your Annual Horsepower Charge on the bill you receive the first part of May. The minimum annual charge under the irrigation rate will be the highest of the following:

1. The horsepower multiplied by \$26.

For example - a service with a 25HP motor would be billed $25 \times \$26 = \650.00

2. A charge of \$200.00.

If you have made any changes to your irrigation, or have any questions please call our office at (800)564-2419.

General Manager Jeff Umphlett's Annual Meeting Report

DO YOU KNOW:

Big Horn REA was organized in 1937 and still operates today as a cooperative form of business. That is, Big Horn is an association that is owned and controlled by the people to meet their needs through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled business.

Every year along with the annual meeting, Big Horn REA holds several board/district meetings throughout our service area. As a member, you can provide input and receive feedback from the board members and vote for directors and ultimately help in the decision making.

Big Horn operates on a not for profit basis and any margins in excess of expenses each year are allocated to each member in the form of capital credits.

Whether Big Horn enters into a loan agreement, lease, or any other type of business transaction, it is done by the Board of Directors on behalf of, and for the benefit of, the overall cooperative and its members/owners.

Training and education is provided to board members, employees, legislators and members so they can contribute effectively to the development of the cooperative. Further training is provided to educate the public about the dangers of electricity.

Big Horn is a member of such organizations as: National Rural Electric Cooperative Associa-

tion (NRECA); Wyoming Rural Electric Association (WREA); Tri-State Generation & Transmission; and National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Big Horn's involvement with these organizations helps serve our members more effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement.

Big Horn provides scholarships to youths; sponsorship to youth leadership camp; donations to community groups, organizations and other entities -- all done with the focus and development for the members and the communities in which we serve.

Adhering to the seven cooperative principles of: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; members' economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community is what directs the goals and decision making process for Big Horn REA. It is also what makes Big Horn different than other companies.

Big Horn REA was started through the sincere and dedicated efforts of its members. Big Horn's success in providing needed electric energy - POWER - and its commitment to the communities in which it serves has primarily been accomplished by operating efficiently, providing quality

service, and maintaining a financially stable cooperative. Big Horn REA is committed to continue to "power the way" using the best practices of the principles and resources for the benefit of its member/owners.

**Thanks,
AND BE SAFE.**

Continued from page 1

Mistakes can cost a limb or life. That's one of the reasons linemen form a brotherhood. When you put your life in the hands of co-workers every day, they become more than colleagues. They're family.

That sense of family extends to electric co-ops across the nation. One of our principles is cooperation among cooperatives. We help other co-ops in their time of need, and they extend that service to us, too. It's reassuring to know if a severe storm strikes, a national team of lineworkers stand ready to answer the call.

To be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions, linemen are highly trained. At Big Horn REA, linemen go through regular training to ensure they can work safely with various kinds of equipment. The equipment gets tested regularly, too.

These highly skilled men light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives better. Today (and every day), please take a moment to thank them. Big Horn REA's eight linemen are the heart of the Co-op Nation, proud and strong.

Annual Meeting 2018 is in the books. . . .

. . . . and what a success! We had our largest crowd ever, had a great guest speaker - Joel Bladow, Senior VP of Transmission at Tri-State G & T, gave out approximately \$650,000 in capital credits, were treated to a delicious lunch, and we were done in record time! Thanks to all who make this meeting a success!!



Board members hand out Capital Credit checks.

A Record Setting Crowd!



Kiana Horsen, Dakotta Wheeler, Sam Cooley and Kayla Horsen from Meeteetse sang the National Anthem.



Long-time member Stan Flitner thanking the co-op.

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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