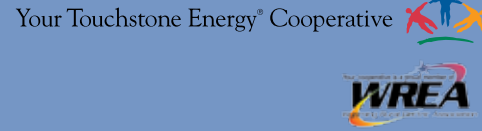


# Manager's Message



## Big Horn's Mission - Still The Same

**In** 2015, as in years past, Big Horn REA will make every effort to provide reliable electric energy with quality service to you, the member/owner. Big Horn's board members and employees are cognizant that the cooperative was founded to serve our members. The decisions and goals that Big Horn implement are based upon the best interest of the entire membership.

During the past several months, the board has been reviewing information and making decisions to ensure the cooperative is serving its mission, is financially

sound and adhering to the cooperative principles.

The board has recently reviewed such items as: cost of service study; long range financial forecast; financial results for the year of 2014; budget for 2015; long term loan analysis; completed construction projects; and maintenance items. One of the cooperative principles, Members' Economic Participation, will be spotlighted at the upcoming annual meeting on March 14, 2015. That is, there will be a cash refund of \$750,000 in capital credits! Capital credits are margins or profits in excess of expenses

from previous years.

Big Horn will also be working throughout the year to provide line upgrades, tree removal, pole inspection, and other maintenance items to improve the quality of line facilities, power reliability, and safety. If you notice something that seems unsafe (trees near lines, arcing of wires, blinking lights, broken hardware) please contact us.

To learn more about your cooperative, please plan on attending the annual meeting on March 14, 2015. Your involvement is important.

### SCAM ALERT

Please be advised that there is a phone scam involving utility customers receiving phone calls from perpetrators warning of immediate disconnection if there is no payment over the phone. Big Horn REA does not disconnect customers without mail and phone contact.

#### WHAT TO DO

If you receive a phone call from a person representing themselves as a Big Horn REA employee and you suspect it is a scam, hang up. Do not give the caller any personal information. Be especially protective of your social security number, bank and credit card numbers, and driver's license number.

You should also not assume that you can trust caller ID to let you know where a caller is located. Because scammers may use Internet calling technology, the area code you see may not reflect where they really are. Jot down the person's name, then hang up

and call Big Horn REA at 1-800-564-2419 to verify the call.

If someone appears at your door claiming to represent Big Horn REA, you can call us at 1-800-564-2419 to verify the visit. Never let anyone into your home unless you have scheduled an appointment or unless the person has proper identification. The Big Horn REA logo should appear on hardhats, shirts, and vehicles. If you suspect someone is impersonating a Big Horn employee, do not let them into your home and call the police immediately.

Co-op members should be aware and know that these phone calls or door-to-door visits are not valid. Members can safely make payments through Big Horn's website or by calling us at 1-800-564-2419. Our office is open from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Finally, please warn neighbors, friends and relatives who may be susceptible to these types of scams.

#### Staff and Crew

John Balch  
Clint Getzfreid  
Todd Herman  
Carrie Hunt  
Sheila Kampbell  
Bill Phillips

Kyle Reimer  
Fred Sherburne  
Gael Sosa  
Ron Tilley  
Kendal Wambeke

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.

#### Board of Directors

Tom Delaney ..... President  
Greybull • 765-4732  
tomdelaney@bighornrea.com

Kathy Gilbreath ..... Vice President  
Meeteetse • 868-2261  
kathygilbreath@bighornrea.com

John Joyce ..... Secretary  
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### HIGHLIGHTS

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# HIGHLIGHTS

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Look for us online @ [www.bighornrea.com](http://www.bighornrea.com)

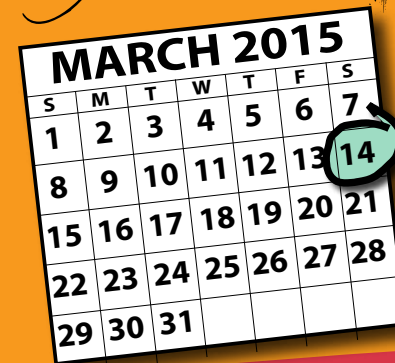
February 2015



## New & Improved Annual Meeting Your Vote Counts

Plan on coming to the Annual Meeting!

We would certainly like to see you at the annual meeting on March 14th! If you've never been to an annual meeting before, give it a try! It's your chance to be involved in the business YOU own. Plus we serve a nice meal, have childcare for the kids, and give out a Grand Prize of a \$500 bill credit! See you there!!! More information coming in your next newsletter and in your mailbox - be sure to check it out.



## Annual Meeting Coming March 14, 2015

**T**he theme for this year's meeting is "Co-operation - Together We Have Power". Registration for the Annual Meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. There will be displays featuring new and innovative energy products. Members will be able to visit with directors, employees and one another until the business session begins at 10:30 a.m. The business session will include information on the cooperative's financial status, speeches from director candidates and a presentation from our power supplier Tri-State Generation & Transmission. We will be giving away a grand prize of a \$500 energy bill credit.

We listened!!  
"The meeting is too long."  
"The same people win all the prizes."

#### Shorter Registration

9:30 am to 10:30 am

#### Shorter Meeting

10:30 am to 12:00 noon

#### No Door Prizes/ Registration Handout

No slowing down the meeting.

No more unfairness.

#### Everyone Wins

Every member that registers will receive a \$50 bill credit

#### Have lunch on us

Lunch served at noon

### INSIDE

Director Election ..... 2  
Capital Credits ..... 2  
Thinking of Generating  
Your Own Power? ..... 3  
Manager's Message ..... 4

### QUOTE

"Nothing truly valuable  
can be achieved except by  
the unselfish cooperation  
of many individuals."  
- Albert Einstein

### CLOSED

Big Horn  
REA offices  
will be  
closed  
February  
16th in  
observance of President's Day.



# Annual Meeting Stuff

## Director Election

During the meeting you will elect one director to represent you on the board. The 2015 Nominating Committee has nominated Carl Bair and Willie Bridges as candidates for director in District 5 - Lovell, Deaver and Frannie areas. Look for their candidate profiles in next month's issue of Highlights. You are encouraged to carefully read the candidate statements so that you can make an informed decision when voting.

## Registration Gift

Each member that registers will receive a \$50 energy bill credit! The meeting will conclude with a meal of ham, cheesy potatoes, salad, rolls and apple pie.

During the week of February 23rd, each member will receive in the mail their complete Annual Meeting brochure and proxy. Make plans now to attend!!

## Capital Credit Refund Checks Will Be Available at Annual Meeting

**\$750,000 refunded to members**

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 to the members and are called capi-

tal 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 December 19, 2014 board meeting, Big Horn's directors approved a refund of \$750,000 in capital credits to the membership. Refund checks will be handed out to members that attend the Annual Meeting scheduled for March 14, 2015 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 years yet to be determined. Check your newsletter next month to find out the years to be refunded.

## Capital Credits and YOU

Electric co-ops operate at cost, so any excess revenue is returned to members as Capital Credits. Big Horn REA will be returning Capital Credits to our members at this year's Annual Meeting.

- 1 Big Horn REA tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year
- 2 At the end of the year, Big Horn REA completes financial matters and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins
- 3 The amount of Capital Credits you receive is based on your use of electricity during the year
- 4 When Big Horn REA's financial condition permits, your Board of Directors decides to retire (pay out) the Capital Credits.

Since 2003,  
**\$3.29 million**  
returned to members!



- 5 Members can pick up their Capital Credit checks at the Annual Meeting or checks will be mailed after the meeting.

Big Horn's board members, employees, and Annual Meeting Committee members are dedicated to bringing you and your family an interesting and informative meeting. We are counting on you to make this annual meeting a success.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Did you know that 90 percent of the energy used to operate a washing machine comes from using hot water? A simple switch from hot to cold can save a great deal of energy! Also, consider air drying or even line drying to save even more household energy.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

## Thinking of Generating Your Own Power?

Make Sure You Contact Big Horn REA First

Today's changing energy landscape is bringing more attention to renewable energy resources, including wind and solar. Big Horn REA's Board of Directors has put into place guidelines for those who are interested in generating their own power and connecting it to Big Horn's lines.

### Interconnection with your cooperative

Whenever generation is connected to the electric grid, the safety of cooperative employees, member-owners and the general public must be given top priority. Big Horn Rural Electric Company has a mission to provide safe, reliable, and competitively-priced electric energy to our member/owners.

### Investing in wind or solar

Before investing in a wind or solar system or connecting it to the power grid, you should meet with Big Horn REA to gain

an understanding of the expectations for both the co-op and member-owner. Big Horn will work with you to complete the interconnection application - *Application for Operation of Customer-Owned Generation* and submittal of the *Interconnection Agreement*. A \$1,000.00 application fee shall be paid by the member-owner.

### Member-owner's responsibilities

Any proposed owner, operator, customer, producer, or provider of a generating facility/qualifying facility that is to be interconnected with the Big Horn's system will be responsible for all costs relative to the proposed interconnection project. These costs will include labor, expenses, overheads and other related costs for such things as: review of application; feasibility study; consultant costs to review/monitor proposed project; costs incurred by Big Horn's wholesale power supplier for evaluation; system upgrade; meter and metering costs; attorney fees; testing of interconnection; etc.

Payment for all estimated costs relative to the proposed interconnection project will be the responsibility of the interconnection customer and are due and payable before the project can begin. The non-refundable



application fee will be applied to the total cost of the project when completed and will be retained if the project is withdrawn. Cost estimates will be valid for forty five (45) days.

### Cooperative's responsibilities

Big Horn REA is your partner in providing you with safe, reliable electric service. Big Horn will make reasonable efforts to process and analyze the interconnection application and project within ninety (90) days of receiving said application and necessary related items.

Consideration of an application and possible purchase of energy from an interconnected customer must be in compliance with Big Horn's policies, rules and regulations and prudent business practices.

### Steps You Must Take:

1. Notify Big Horn REA.
2. Complete *Application for Operation of Customer-Owned Generation and Interconnection Agreement* and submit to Big Horn REA.
3. Pay \$1,000 application fee.
4. Pay estimated costs of installation of net metering and all related equipment.