

HIGHLIGHTS

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Look for us online @ www.bighornrea.com

OCTOBER 2021

National CO-OP Month

October is national co-op month. We celebrate our community coming together in 1937 and forming Big Horn REA to provide reliable and affordable electricity to you.

How is Your Co-op Different?

As October is National Co-op Month, Big Horn Rural Electric would like to educate and inform you, our member-owners, a little bit about co-ops. One item we would like to educate you on is the difference between a cooperative and an independently owned utility (IOU). The following seven principles describe why you should be proud to say you're a member of Big Horn REA.

- One: Voluntary & Open Membership**
Cooperatives, like Big Horn Rural Electric Co., are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities or membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.
- Two: Democratic Member Control**
Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Big Horn's board of directors is comprised of its members and is elected by the membership. Members have equal voting rights – one member, one vote.
- Three: 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 margins above expenses and reserves belong to the members and are called capital 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.
- Four: Autonomy and Independence**
Cooperatives are self-governing organizations controlled by their members. If Big Horn enters into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, we do so on terms that ensure democratic control by our members and maintain our cooperative autonomy.
- Five: Education, Training and Information**
Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, board members, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of cooperatives. Big Horn educates its members through the use of the monthly "Highlights" newsletter and its website.
- Six: Cooperation Among Cooperatives**
Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures. Big Horn is a member of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
- Seven: Concern for Community**
While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development for their communities through policies accepted by their members. Big Horn invests in our communities through Youth Leadership Camp, scholarships, economic development and safety demonstrations.



October is National Co-op Month.

Defined by Principles

1. Voluntary & Open Membership
2. Democratic Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy & Independence
5. Education, Training & Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

Big Horn Rural Electric Company is a member of Touchstone Energy®, a national alliance of local, member-owned electric cooperatives providing a high standard of service to customers large and small.

In order to qualify as a Touchstone Energy® cooperative, electric cooperatives must be active members of their community and be dedicated to serving all customers with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to their community.

A word from Tri-State on Rebates

As part of supporting you, our members, Big Horn provides incentives for different equipment or tools that use electricity.

How about new, battery-powered outdoor tools?

If you are looking to purchase an electric snow blower this

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winter or snag a deal on an end-of-season lawn mower or weed trimmer, Big Horn offers up to 50% off the purchase price (\$100-\$300 per item) of these battery-powered tools. This includes electric snow blowers, lawn mowers, weed trimers, chainsaws and just about any outdoor power tool on the market. These rebates are good for equipment purchased locally or online and each account can get up to \$600 in incentives. *Looking to upgrade your kitchen?*

Big Horn REA offers a \$700 rebate for an induction cooktops or induction ranges in new construction or homes that are replacing gas or propane cooking appliances. Induction cooktops not only cook faster, but are safer for your family. The cooking element stays cool to the touch and because it's electric, there isn't potential for gas leaks. If you already have an electric range or cooktop, we will still provide an incentive of \$200 for switching to an

induction cooktop.

Are you worried about the cost of propane and heating your home this winter?

Modern air source heat pumps now operate efficiently in cold climates. A properly sized, and installed air source heat pump can make your home more comfortable while reducing your energy spend. Ask your contractor or look for models with a SEER greater than 17 or HSPF greater than 9.5 and Big Horn will rebate 50% of your equipment costs up to \$900 per ton. For heat pumps below 17 SEER, we will provide a rebate of \$600 per ton. Another benefit of heat pumps is they cool your home while filtering air in the summertime. So, while you may not need air conditioning, heat pumps can improve your indoor air quality on smoky summer days.

Contact Big Horn REA for more info on incentives.

One of our cooperative principles is concern for community. Big Horn recently title sponsored two local events, Outdoor Day at Medicine Lodge Archaeological Campground & Bad Medicine Bike/Race/Tour.



It's YOUR Company!



We look forward to talking to you!



Big Horn Rural Electric Company

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TOWN HALL MEETING

*Join Big Horn's power supplier
CEO Duane Highley of Tri-State G&T*

OCTOBER 27, 2021

Duane will be speaking from 10:30am to 11:30am. Questions can be sent to heather@bighornrea.com beforehand or members can access the chat box during the meeting. The meeting will be held via Zoom and members are asked to join with the access code and/or phone number below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2952511857>

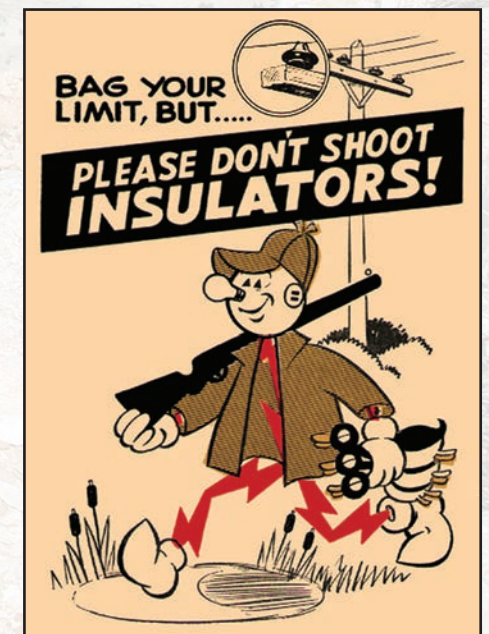
Or by phone 253-215-8782 and enter meeting ID 295-251-1857

Hunting Electrical Equipment is Never in Season

As fall approaches along with various Wyoming hunting seasons, please remember that electrical insulators, conductors, and electrical equipment are NOT on the Wyoming hunting season list.

Big Horn Rural Electric encourages hunters to be aware of electrical equipment while enjoying the great outdoors this season. Repairs can be costly in both equipment and outages to our members.

Big Horn REA recognizes the majority of hunters practice safe hunting and understand the potential risks when discharging a firearm. We encourage experienced hunters who are familiar with the area to identify the locations of utility properties and equipment to young or new hunters in their group and remind them to avoid shooting toward these facilities. Enjoy the great outdoors. Just be sure to hunt only what's in season.





Manager's Message

Thanks to all those who completed the survey that had recently been mailed to each member. The completion of the survey was one of the objectives to help accomplish the Strategic Planning Goal of Expand Member Engagement. Some of the items noted were: --- not everyone is aware of the rebates that is offered on electric products; most everyone agrees the employees provide excellent customer service; there is an interest in renewable energy; and communicating with members is important.

And speaking of communicating it was interesting to note the number of responses relative to rates and costs. Big Horn and our power supplier

(Tri-State Generation & Transmission) strive to be efficient in our operations and control costs. In fact, Big Horn has not had a rate increase since January 2017. That is nearly four full years without an increase to your electric bill! I am confident that there is probably not one product that you use on a daily basis and one that provides value to your way of living like electricity does that has not increased in four years. While the prices for such things as: vehicles; fuel; insurance; materials and other items needed for the day to day operations of Big Horn have increased, Big Horn has not increased the rates. Better yet, in response to a few questions from the survey wondering what will the

rates do in the next year, Big Horn does not project a rate increase in the year of 2022.

There were also questions relative to our power supplier, renewable energy, the electric grid, and climate change. You will have the opportunity to hear from the CEO of Tri-State Generation & Transmission as Big Horn will be hosting a "town hall meeting". See article in this newsletter.

Big Horn is committed to providing our members with reliable electric energy while at the same time managing costs in an effective manner. Our dedicated employees will also provide quality customer service.

Thanks for being a member of Big Horn REA and BE SAFE.

HIGHLIGHTS

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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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