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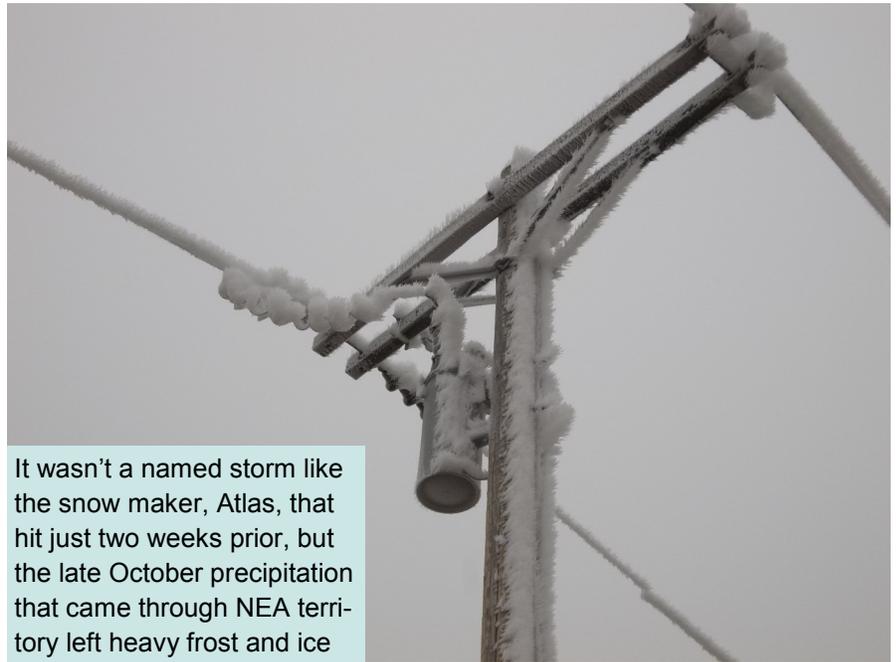
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NEA will be closed for the Holidays on Wednesday, December 25th & Wednesday, January 1st.



It wasn't a named storm like the snow maker, Atlas, that hit just two weeks prior, but the late October precipitation that came through NEA territory left heavy frost and ice accumulations which took a tremendous toll on poles and power lines.





October Storm damages

As of the writing of this article, estimates on combined totals from the two storms in October stack up like this:

100 cross arms repaired or replaced

400 poles repaired or replaced

Approximately 15 miles of restrung or replaced wire

These are large numbers to be sure, but just numbers until you stop and appreciate the extensive hours of labor and the accumulative miles on vehicles and other equipment involved to accomplish the work, during inclement weather, both on and off the roads, through ravines and over hillsides. The challenges faced in October were no small task for operators or machines.

Crews worked night and day assessing, repairing and replacing damaged equipment all over the NEA system during two major outages that each took days to recover from. As tirelessly as our own crews worked, the recovery and completion of repairs could not have happened with the speed it did without the cooperative support of our neighboring systems. We are ever grateful for the contributions of High West Energy's two crews, High Plains Power's two crews, Wheatland Rural Electric's crew, Wyrulec Company's crew, North West Rural's crew, Titan Electric's contract crew and the help of Royce and Pete from the Town of Lusk.

The weather in Wyoming can be quite harsh and unpredictable however, some power packed storms like Atlas was are predicted well in advance. We urge consumers to pay attention to advisories and to always do their part to be prepared.

Whether there is ample warning or not, it is comforting to know you have backup at home. After experiencing outage times due to severe damage in October, we have had many consumers interested in generators and we certainly encourage consumers to investing in quality generators and to have them installed properly.

NEA has a team of electricians who can take care of properly installing your generator by determining your service size and providing the accompanying double throw switch. We stress the need to take this step because the protection of a double throw should not be underestimated.

The switch's purpose is to isolate your generator from NEA power. This isolation provides protection for our line crews from power the generator produces and it will keep your generator from being burned up when we ground the line.



Graduating seniors and returning college students, NEA is happy to announce that we will be releasing our scholarship application in early January so you have plenty of time to put together your information and meet the Thursday, February 20th submission deadline. Applications will again be available online at the NEA website, in both Sioux County High School and Niobrara County High School, or at the NEA main office.

At NEA, we are committed to helping as many of our member's children as possible through the scholarship program. Each year we are encouraged by the large number and high quality of applications we receive and are thrilled to have the opportunity to ease the financial burden on a young person with high educational aspirations.



www.niobrara-electric.org
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NEA NEWS is a publication of Niobrara Electric Association, Inc

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Touchstone EnergySM

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

7:30 am—5:00 pm

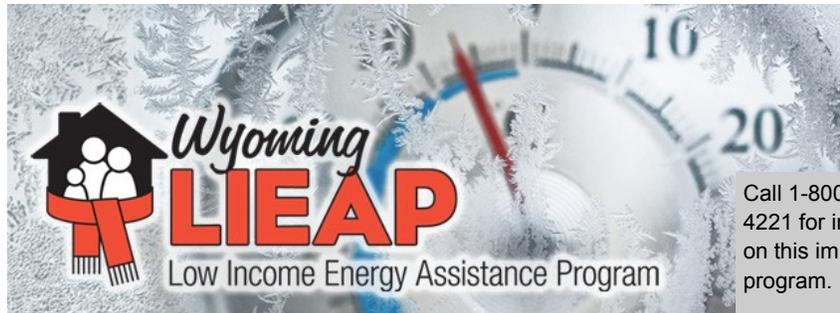
**Fridays 7:30 am—
4:00 pm**

Electricians Department

7:00 am—5:30 pm (M-F)

Outages1-800-322-0544
or 307-334-3221

Phones are answered 24 hours a day. Phones will be answered by Niobrara Electric Association during office hours and the Niobrara County Sheriff's office will take all other calls and dispatch NEA personnel.



Call 1-800-246-4221 for information on this important program.

This thought may be one month late, but I am thankful for many things.

In light of recent activities, I am thankful to have members that have patience, a sense of humor, and backup generators! Mother Nature got us with a one two punch, first the snow in early October, then the ice and freezing fog/rain at the end. She got nearly 400 poles, plus put even more wire on the ground. Nearly 25 miles total if it was all in a row.

I am thankful for the tremendous effort put forth by the NEA line crew and office staff. They worked extended hours taking only brief time in the night to rest up and get ready for the next day. Some of them taking on duties that are not a part of their normal job, just to help get the power on.

I am thankful to be a part of the family of cooperatives that power much of the states we are located in. At one point we had crews from 6 other companies lending a hand, working long days just to help us restore the power to your homes and locations.

I am thankful that there wasn't more damage done. Yes, it could have been worse. We didn't see nearly the losses as South Dakota. I saw one report from South Dakota, over 6000 poles down total, just from the blizzard, not to mention the livestock. We didn't lose the main feed in from Tri State like in 1998, so the town of Lusk stayed on and we could get fuel, food, and lodging easily.

I am thankful that all of our work has been done safely. We have not had any significant injuries this year, despite working in adverse conditions.

I hope your Thanksgiving was a good one, and you have a Merry Christmas

General Manager Kenny Ceagske

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Kenny DeGering	2	Lusk, WY	
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JD Wasserburger	2	Lusk, WY	Vice President

Boardroom News

October Board Meeting

- Attorney Skavdahl reported on collections and discussion was held on creating a policy for online billing & electronic payment methods.
- Line Superintendent Rick Bridge reported on storm damage, ONEOK progress, tree trimming in Harrison, & Belle Fourche Pipeline upgrades.
- Director Greer reported on WREA issues. Director Keener reported on NREA happenings. Director Hammond discussed Tri-State business.