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LOCAL BUSINESSES PARTICIPATING
IN THE CO-OP CONNECTIONS ®

SAME AS IT ONCE WAS - 10% off store items.

HERREN BROTHERS - 10% off True Value items not otherwise marked for discount.

THE FINE GRIND LLC - 10% off.

MILLER SOAP COMPANY LLC - 10% off products (does not include shipping)

COUNTRY CORNER HAIR SHOP - 10% off products.

LICKETY STITCH QUILT SHOP - Free pattern with purchase.

Help us recruit local business by encouraging your favorite business to contact us to learn about joining the program. There is no charge to the business and all advertising is done through us - it is a FREE service to connect businesses and members for a mutual benefit!



Attention, non-traditional students, college students and graduating high school seniors. NEA, Basin Electric and Tri-State G&T join together each year in giving away scholarship money.

The applications will be available on our website, on our Facebook page and in both the Sioux County and Niobrara County high schools by January 1st.

Applications will be accepted until Monday, February 22nd, 5:00 p.m.

We do not have a newsletter insert in the WREN during January so, your next reminder will come on-line (Facebook), and in print next in the February WREN.

If you have questions concerning the application process, call the office (307-334-3221) and speak with Twyla.

2016 Nominating Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet on Wednesday, February 17th. Prior to the meeting, we post notice of meeting specifics on Facebook and advertise in our service territory area newspapers.

For those of you who expressed interest via the survey on this committee and its function, our Bylaws state:

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than sixty (60) days nor more than one hundred and twenty (120) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which Directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of nine (9) members. Three (3) members shall be selected from each district so as to insure equitable representation. A minimum of five (5) committee members must be present at any meeting of the committee to constitute a quorum. No Director may serve on such committee.

The committee, keeping in mind the principle of equitable representation, shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least forty five (45) days before the meeting a list of nominations for Directors which shall include at least one (1) candidate for each board position to be filled by the election.

The Secretary shall be responsible for mailing with the notice of the meeting or separately, but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of Directors to be elected and the names, addresses, and districts of the candidates nominated by the committee on nominations. Any fifteen (15) or more members acting together may make other nominations by petition and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. Nominations made by petition, if any, received at least thirty (30) days before the meeting shall be printed on the ballot."



Want to know more about Power, Electric Co-ops, get news from Basin Electric or Tri-State G&T?

<http://www.powerworksforyou.coop>

<http://www.kidsenergyzone.com>

<http://www.basinelectric.com/index.html>

<http://www.tristate.coop/NewsCenter/news.cfm>

Check out many more **links** to Co-op news and related interests on our website:

<http://www.niobrara-electric.org/content/links>

www.niobrara-electric.org

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Late 2015 has brought a lot of activity from the EPA. Rules were finally passed on what is commonly called the Clean Power Plan, or Section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act, a 3000 page rule regarding emissions from power plants. The original proposal had a challenging and some would argue unattainable goal of 19% reduction in carbon emissions from 2005 levels by 2030 in Wyoming. To many people's surprise, that goal got increased to 44% for Wyoming, similar but not as high in Nebraska.

Given the amount of power in the state that is coal generated, this will become a challenging and costly goal to meet. The greatest frustration in looking at these requirements is how much Coop based generation companies have already done to make improvements in capacity, efficiency, and emissions in the past years, including addition of wind and solar resources. Part of the rule does not allow recent changes to be credited to the systems. The increases or credit for many of the renewable projects at Tri-State and upstream to Basin G&T's fall in a window of time that they are not allowed to look at to satisfy the rules.

Another disturbing fact of the rules is that many of the states hit hard get their coal from Wyoming, so we may see a double whammy, our plants and mines being hit with reductions and closures.

Continued on last page of insert

Based on the survey responses we received, the responding membership is overwhelmingly satisfied with our current payment options of EFT, SmartHub, Security Bank deposit, US postal service and office walk-in.

Most of our irrigators have now moved to EFT as the preferred form of payment. This has dramatically cut down on late irrigation payments. We encourage anyone considering EFT to go ahead and take advantage of this option.

SmartHub can be used in a couple of ways. Member use for online bill pay and for checking out account information is surging, as is Co-op use when a member calls and pays with a check over the phone. Your checking information can be stored for convenience, but does not have to be stored. Also, you can offer different checking information as you choose even if you do have stored information on file.

If you have more than one account or are paying an account not listed in your name and you deposit in Security Bank, we encourage you to give them the corresponding bill stubs along with your deposit. This ensures the amount you deposit is properly distributed across the proper accounts.

Keep in mind when sending bills by mail that the **postmark date is not the same as date of receipt**. Bills are due by the 3rd of the month. If you mail your bill on the 3rd thinking you will not be late on your bill, you are mistaken. A bill postmarked the 3rd will not be received by NEA on the 3rd. Depending on where you mail from, it can take from a couple of days to several days for us to receive it.

When you stop by the NEA office after hours, drop your payment in our payment drop slot. Please seal your envelope so cash, coin and even checks, do not become separated from your bill stub.

If you have questions about payment options, call and visit with Billing Clerk Julie Hageman.

The NEA will be closing at 3:00 p.m. on both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve.

We will be closed on Christmas Day and New Years Day.



www.niobrara-electric.org
www.facebook.com/NiobraraElectric



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Touchstone EnergySM

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

7:30 am—5:00 pm

Fridays 7:30 am—
4:00 pm

Electrician 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.

To put it in a local perspective, imagine if a rule was passed that eliminated the use of pickups, lets say just ones that get less than 20mpg unloaded. Small pickups (Rangers and S-10's) and cars are still allowed (required). Now, we out here know that for many of the loads we move: feed, bales, welding and tool trucks, not to mention all of the things we haul in trailers, a one ton just makes sense, especially if it is hauling at capacity most of the time.

Now look at the inefficient use if you were limited to the smaller capacity, making multiple trips. Or look at the reliability of pushing the truck beyond its capacity on a regular basis. How many cows could you move with a Ford Ranger? How many times before reliability of the truck becomes an issue? If you can haul 8 cows one trip at 5 mpg versus 1 cow per trip, 8 trips at 20 mpg, the efficiency and environmental argument goes out the window.

At this point, the coal plants are like that 1 ton, with the exception that they get cleaner and more efficient and more reliable when run fully loaded. But now imagine you are required to buy a car, a small pickup and you still have the 1 ton, with a few years of payments left and good life left in it. This is where it starts to get expensive. You have value in the pickup, you owe money on the pickup, you still have to license and insure the pickup, but they won't let you use it. This is where the power plants may be, they have useful life left in them, and money owed on them, but they won't be able to produce electricity without major, expensive, and some currently not available, investments in emissions technology. With a requirement to add other generation to the fleet to replace what they own but can't run.

The other generation sources, both renewables and natural gas sources still have a very viable place in the fleet, like cars and smaller pickups, which make sense for people movers and hauling smaller loads. High usage (peaking) and general supplementing the existing needs is a great use for them. Until a good reliable storage system is in place, many of the renewables don't support the usage patterns of our world. On average, solar peaks at mid-day and wind peaks in the night, neither are very strong in the evenings when load peaks. Coal and natural gas carry us through the evenings.

You can see that making a sweeping change to the system comes with many complications and should be well thought out. There are many holes in the EPA's plans that have not been answered. These are in the lawsuits that are being fought by both States and power companies over the next few years.

Manager Kenny Ceagske

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|----------------|
| John Hester | 1 | Keeline, WY | President |
| Andy Barnette | 2 | Lusk, WY | |
| David Keener | 3 | Marsland, NE | Sec./Treas |
| Bill Wilson | 3 | Harrison, NE | |
| Jack Hammond | 1 | Lance Creek, WY | |
| Jim Dunn | 3 | Harrison, NE | |
| Kenny DeGering | 2 | Lusk, WY | |
| Andy Greer | 1 | Lance Creek, WY | |
| JD Wasserburger | 2 | Lusk, WY | Vice President |

October Board Meeting

- Director Greer reported on WREA business.
- Director Hammond reviewed Tri-State business.
- Director Keener spoke concerning NREA business.
- Manager Ceagske reported on positive margins, personnel updates, policy updates, upcoming budget and rates, and RFP for new auditor.
- Line Superintendent Rick Bridge reported on the Harrison water wells, high loads and pole change outs.