




Co-op News from Wyrulec Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 
The power of human connections

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How to reach us

Wyrulec Company
500 Main St. • PO Box 359
Lingle, Wyoming 82223

307-837-2225

800-628-5266

Fax: 307-837-2115

E-mail: wyrulec@wyrulec.com

Website: www.wyrulec.com

Office hours: 7:30 am–4:30pm

Board of Directors

Dewey Hageman
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From your manager



Miller

"Red flags" rule

Some of you may have heard that the federal government has implemented a few new rules related to security and privacy of certain data. *Gerald Krakow* As part of that we are being required to identify what are called "red flags" where certain data could be obtained and possibly manipulated by someone other than the rightful owner of that data. Subsequently we must take necessary precautions to mitigate those red flags problems.

For instance, we no longer keep any credit card data permanently. We utilize it at the members request and promptly dispose of it. We also must properly identify the individual asking for certain data to make sure they are the owner of the data.

We will no longer be allowed to answer certain questions related to an account over the phone unless we have taken adequate measures to determine the account holder's identity. One of those measures is to put a password system in place. The member provides us with a password. The password works as a key to access or change that member's account information.

New accounts cannot be established via the telephone and new members must provide identification in person. Things just got a bit tighter for all of us but, for the most part, I think they are good things. We certainly do not want members' personal data, including any electricity usage data, in the "wrong" hands.

Proposed office/warehouse facilities

As we have reported in this and other forums, the board and staff are continuing to explore options for replacement of our existing office and warehouse facilities and incorporating our material and equipment storage into one location.

The existing facilities were constructed in 1951 and are very inefficient. They are also in need of significant repairs/upgrades. During the April meeting, the board approved purchasing a portion of vacant land just east of Lingle along Highway 26. Our warehouse and office facilities will all eventually be at this new location.

Preliminary plans and survey/soil boring work has been completed by Baker and Associates. These new facilities are intended to be a showcase of energy efficiency, incorporating a ground source heat pump for HVAC, advanced energy-efficient lighting designs, and efficient insulation measures. The mission of this project is to provide efficient, functional, long-term facilities using conservative design and construction approaches. Stay tuned for more information as we proceed.



By GARY WESTPHAL, P.E.
general manager
Butler Public Power District
David City, Neb.

The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) makes the claim that Nebraska is ranked 4th in the U.S. as a potential wind power resource. Number one is North Dakota. Most Nebraskans are environmentally focused with a desire to go 'green'. *William Y Hubbard* Some even think that wind farms can save the day! Let's see how wind claims stand up to common sense reality.

Wind ahead in the polls

It was recently reported that 79 percent of Nebraska voters favor requiring electric utilities to use renewable energy sources for at least 20 percent of the power they generate. The basis for this conclusion was a poll that was conducted

Can wind claims

by the Center for Rural Affairs, AWEA, and Wind Coalition and Energy Foundation.

As you might guess, these organizations are strong advocates for federal renewable portfolio standards, in other words, a policy that requires those who sell electricity to have a certain percentage of renewable power in their generation mix. When we talk about renewable energy in Nebraska we really mean wind power.

Haven't seen questions

I don't know whether the poll questions were phrased in a way that led to overwhelming support of those polled to favor such a large portion of power coming from renewable energy or wind power, but I'm guessing the poll respondents were not made aware of the fact that there are substantial cost considerations involved when incorporating wind into the generation mix—costs that the respondents will eventually have to pay.

Lots of additional costs

In addition to the high capital costs of wind farms by themselves, other costs have to be paid, including:

- * millions of dollars for new transmission lines that need to be built when wind farms are far from where the electricity is ultimately consumed
- * the cost of government subsidies
- * additional operating costs of the other power plants that need to respond to the significant variability and unpredictability of gen-

erating electricity from wind

- * the extra power that generating companies would need to set aside in reserve to meet reliability requirements

Also some unknowns

These items all need to be accounted for. On top of this, the useful life of today's wind turbines, as well as their lifetime operation and repair costs are unknown.

Higher costs are guaranteed

The point of these facts is that a 20 percent renewable energy standard will definitely drive up electric bills, which is contrary to one of the reasons given by the Center for Rural Affairs as to why poll results turned out the way they did.

Hiding some facts

Concern over rising energy prices was cited as one issue that



stand up to reality?

drove support for the 20 percent renewable standard.

No independence

The other issue was the nation's dependence on foreign oil. Using more wind energy in Nebraska will do little or nothing to lessen our nation's dependence on foreign oil since less than 1 percent of the electric generation in the state uses oil as a fuel source. These issues should also be recognized and addressed.

Make way for turbines

Consider that Nebraska wind turbines are expected to generate about 30 percent (avg. of 20-40 per-

cent) of the time. To make up the balance, most energy is generated by fossil or nuclear plants. *James Wyatt* Using 30 percent as an example, to replace one 1,000 MW plant you would need 2,000-3,000 wind turbines.

The wind may have velocities less than what is capable of turning the rotors at times (in which case no number of turbines can replace the 1,000 MW plant), and if you want electricity at those times, you still need to maintain that original plant to use as standby.

A place for wind

Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) is investing in wind as a



potential hedge to climate change or environmental legislation. NPPD has a strategic goal of generating 10 percent of its electricity from renewable resources by 2020, so they will continue to develop renewable resources.

Without question wind energy will be a piece of our energy solution, but it will not come without a cost. When contemplating how much wind power to install, we need well-thought-out and reasonably priced options.

Give the gift of safety this Father's Day

Father's Day is coming up on June 20 and every year people everywhere scratch their heads wondering what to get the father in their lives who seems to have everything. Instead of buying something at random, consider purchasing electrical safety prod-

ucts for your loved ones. You can surprise them with a gift that says "I care about you" all year long!

Some items that protect your home, family and other loved ones from electrical shock and fire include:

✓ **Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI)**— These devices should be professionally installed on outlets in wet areas of the home—kitchen, bathroom, laundry, and basement. GFCIs stop the flow of electricity instantly if there is a problem. When properly used, they save lives. It's important to know how to test and re-set GFCIs.

GFCIs can be purchased from

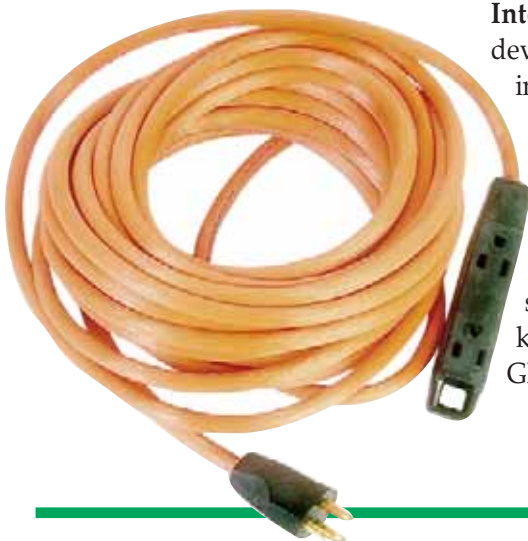
any store that offers electrical supplies, or from your neighborhood electrical professional.

June 20

✓ **Portable GFCI drop cord**— GFCIs should also be used on outdoor outlets. If your outdoor outlets are not GFCI equipped, consider purchasing a portable GFCI—a must have for the do-it-yourself project person on your list.

✓ **Heavy duty extension cord**— Often the tools or equipment necessary for larger projects are energized through extension cords that are inadequate for the

Continued on page 4



Gift of safety this Father's Day

Continued from page 3

heavier electrical load. Make sure the cord used is appropriately rated for the electrical load to which it will be connected.

✓ **Power strip with built-in circuit breaker**—

Designed for safety, the built-in circuit breaker prevents overloading of the power strip. This device often comes with the added feature of surge protection/surge prevention.



tion/surge prevention.

✓ **Smoke detector**— Most homes could use more of these inexpensive safety devices. Since the primary job of a smoke detector is to awaken sleeping persons to warn them of fire danger, put a battery-operated detector in each sleeping room and place additional detector(s) in the hallway or area by the bedrooms within five feet of the doors to these rooms. *Marie Blocker* In a house with bedrooms upstairs, one additional detector should be placed near the top of the stairs to the bedroom area.

✓ **Batteries for smoke detectors**— This is a simple but impor-

tant gift, one that reminds the recipient of the importance of replacing batteries in smoke detectors twice a year. Fresh batteries save lives. Be sure to test smoke detectors regularly.

✓ **Circuit breaker fault detector**— This small hand-held device safely detects faults in the circuit breaker panel and eliminates the guesswork of which one has tripped.

These are just a few of the gift possibilities aimed at improving electrical safety. *Michael H. Booth* A quick trip to the home improvement or hardware store can provide additional options. Keep in mind only electrical items that are accepted by independent testing laboratories such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL) are recommended.

Be sure to read all manufacturer directions prior to installing or plugging in any electronic devices. Check and replace any electrical components that have worn, cracked or frayed cords and only use appliances in good condition.

Make sure your safety and the safety of your loved ones tops your list this Father's Day. Remember: safe and happy memories will last a lifetime. For more information, visit



www.SafeElectricity.org.

Safe Electricity is a program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting electrical safety and energy efficiency. Safe Electricity is supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities, educators and other entities committed to promoting safe use of electricity.



Don't miss a word

Each month, we will be hiding the names of five members, one from each district, in this newsletter. If you see your name this month, please call and we'll give you a \$25 bill credit.

❁ No need to stand around in the dark ❁

We have CFLs in stock that are 100-watt replacements. They will fit into any light fixture rated over 23 watts (anywhere a 60- to 100-watt incandescent bulb is now). They operate at 23 watts but provide light equal to a 100-watt incandescent. They are \$1.00 each. We have plenty.