



Co-op News from Wyrulec Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 
The power of human connections

January 2012

From your manager

New facilities



Miller

As you may have noticed we have begun the “dirt work” for our new headquarters facilities. Ken Farrier, better known as Goshen County Construction, with help from TDS on the excavation and Landscaping Plus on the chain link fencing have completed the pad for the new building and a portion of the exterior chain link fencing. Our plan is to secure the site and then begin to move the existing pole yard north and east to its new location.

The contract with Goshen County Construction includes a timeline. We anticipate a completion date in mid-December of this new year. Obviously the weather will impact the construction progress for the next couple of months but we fully expect to be in the new building by the end of the year.

Oneok Pipeline

Oneok is planning a natural gas liquids (NGL) pipeline extending north to south through our service territory. It will pass near Fort Laramie and about 10 miles west of LaGrange. As part of that pipeline project we have been approached about supplying power to a pumping plant west of LaGrange. The pumping plant is located about eight miles from our nearest transmission line.

I am happy to report that we have executed an agreement with Oneok for a \$2.6 million project involving the transmission line and a new substation at the pumping plant. If operated as projected this should be a very nice addition to our load portfolio benefitting all members.

As part of this project, several miles of distribution line will be upgraded. Improvements in the delivery of quality, reliable power in that area will result. We have contracted with an engineering firm to complete the design of the line and substation and we are in the process of acquiring the right-of-way needed for the new line. This project is totally funded by Oneok.

We hope you have a happy and prosperous new year. It will be an exciting one for your electric cooperative. As always if you need to reach me please call the office or I can be reached almost anytime on my mobile at (307) 575-2435.

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Michael L Wollert

Save energy:



- * Manage use of the clothes dryer
- * Install a programmable thermostat
- * Eliminate drafts
- * Use interior doors wisely



Affordable electricity is key to economic health

Across America, nearly every facet of our lives depends on electricity. Electricity doesn't just power homes, schools, and businesses here in the West—it energizes entire communities and drives the economy.

Take a quick look around. Everything in your home or workplace is either powered by electricity or produced with the help of electrical power. Allen Hunter* Of course this includes your computer, phone, and kitchen appliances. Electricity is also the power behind the clothes

you wear, the food you eat, and the heated or cooled air you breathe.

Electricity is crucial to modern agriculture in the West. Most cropland is irrigated, often by electrically powered pumps. So even small increases in energy prices can make a big impact on what it costs to get dinner on the table. That's why it's so important to keep electricity affordable.

Affordable electricity matters. And so does your voice. Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, the electric cooperative

which supplies Wyrulec Company with wholesale power, has launched a campaign to keep electricity affordable. In conjunction with electric cooperatives in Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico, Tri-State is asking everyone to help increase awareness of the policy and regulatory decisions which directly affect electricity rates.

Sign up today, at www.keepelectricityaffordable.org, to stay informed on how we can work together to keep electricity affordable in your community.

Electric bills reflect weather patterns

Electric bills vary with the seasons and are driven by weather and consumer use patterns.

"Weather matters," stresses Chad Reisenauer, key accounts/energy conservation coordinator at Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a generation and transmis-

sion cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, N.D. "When it's cool outdoors, family members generally want the house warm. When it's warm outside, air conditioners make living areas pleasant."

Many features affect temperature

How much weather affects your electric bills depends on many factors, including your home's original construction materials, insulation, and air leaks. Personal comfort plays a role too, as does the difference between the thermostat setting inside and the temperature outdoors.

Degree difference, personal comfort

"When a house stays at 68°F, but the outdoor temperature varies from -20° in winter to more than 100° on a muggy summer's day, demand for heating and cooling can be significant," Reisenauer notes. "Cooled air leaving a home essentially wastes the money spent to cool it. Wanda Meloon* The same is true for air a homeowner has paid to warm."

Pick high R-value for the money (saved)

R-value offers a way of measuring insulation's effectiveness (a higher R-value indicates more effective insulation). For example, on a 28° day, heat loss from a residence set at 68° could hit 2,464 BTU per hour even through an 80 ft. x 10 ft. exterior wall packed with R-13



NRECA

For those who pay rent AND utility bills, weather can be a budget-breaker. You may want to educate your landlord about energy-efficiency improvements.

Electric bills reflect weather patterns

insulation. Reverse that situation on a scorching day—100° outside—and heat gain indoors will still reach 2,464 BTU per hour.

To save money, set your thermostat five degrees closer (higher in summer, lower in winter) to the outdoor temperature. This simple change could result in a savings of 90 watts per hour of electricity—about 197 kilowatt-hours (kWh) in three months. At a national average of 10 cents per kWh, this adjustment keeps an extra \$19.70 in your pocket.

Electric co-op can help

Contact Wyrulec Company and ask for an energy audit. An energy specialist at Wyrulec might be able to save you hundreds of

dollars by uncovering energy waste and making recommendations to improve energy efficiency.

In the meantime,

- ▲ Adjust the thermostat,
- ▲ Keep blinds and drapes on the sunny side of your home closed in summer and open in winter.
- ▲ Find mysteriously “hot” or “cold” spots in the house and eliminate them by installing gasket seals around outlets and weather stripping along doors and windows, replacing old windows, and upgrading insulation. Robert A. Post*
- ▲ When practical, adjust landscaping to provide shade for your property in summer and sunlight in winter.

Take action for comfort

Weather doesn't have to play havoc with electricity bills. “There are a variety of tools, appliances, and resources available to solve all sorts of energy challenges,” Reisenauer stresses. “Some, such as new windows or a roof, require significant financing. But there are a lot of options that are inexpensive and simple to benefit from.”

Find more ways to save at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Sources:

Jim Herritage, CEM, Energy Auditors, Inc.; *Residential Energy: Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings* by John Krigger and Chris Dorsi. Sande K. Grebe*

Will malicious code crack the grid?

Threats from cyber hackers—the curious, mischief-minded, and terrorists alike—are an increasing concern for the electric utility sector, including electric cooperatives. While computer and telecommunications technologies allow electric utilities to serve consumers more reliably and efficiently, they also open up potential gateways for “cyber-tage” of critical electric systems.

Efforts underway for years

While news reports about the potential for cyber attacks (including the complex “Stuxnet” computer virus) have raised public awareness about the issue, there are no documented instances of a cyber assault damaging North American power facilities. Why? In part, because utilities, including electric co-ops, started addressing these

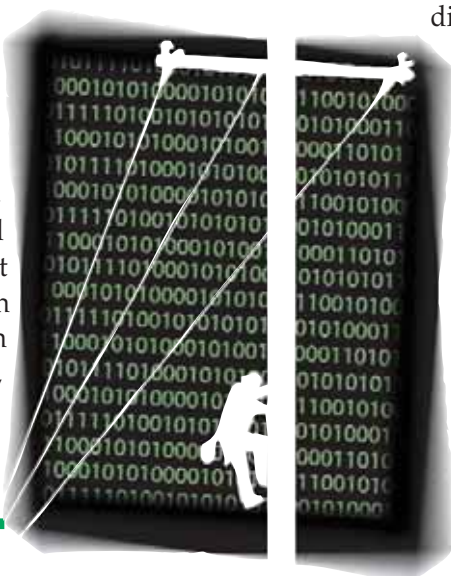
issues years ago by working with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), the nation's electric grid watchdog, and federal agencies to update procedures, standards, and alerts that contribute to protecting the grid from physical and cyber incidents as well as natural disasters.

Danger doesn't go away

The ever-real possibility of a hacker undermining digital technologies used by utilities, however, has Congress, the White House, and regulatory agencies considering the right balance of cyber security safeguards and emergency response initiatives. At present, federal law does not enable the government to order utilities to take steps when an imminent threat exists.

Security mandates proposed

As a result, several congressional bills have emerged that would increase federal authority during emergencies to protect “critical infra-



Will malicious code crack the grid?

structure” like the electric grid. Co-ops argue that most of these proposals go too far in expanding Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) emergency powers. FERC already has authority to instruct NERC to develop or modify reliability standards, including those focused on cyber security.

No argument during emergency

Electric co-ops agree, however, that in limited cases where cyber threats are so severe and close at hand that NERC cannot issue instructions to utilities in time, a federal emergency back-stop may be appropriate until the situation is mitigated, ends, or until NERC can adequately address the hazard through standards and/or alerts. Co-ops also want federal agencies to more routinely provide actionable, timely intelligence about cyber threats and vulnerabilities to utility industry experts.

Co-ops on the forefront

Fortunately, electric co-ops are moving forward to erect cyber defenses and fashion robust plans for addressing current and future dangers. At the same time, co-ops recog-

nize that in a rapidly evolving cyber environment, there’s no such thing as perfect security. Risk mitigation must become an ongoing process requiring constant adaptation and evaluation.

Important step is also voluntary

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Cooperative Research Network (CRN), through its groundbreaking nationwide CRN Smart Grid Demonstration Project, has created the Guide to Developing a Risk Mitigation and Cyber Security Plan—a set of online tools that will help co-ops strengthen their cyber security posture with a particular focus on smart grid technologies. This effort, heralded by the U.S. Department of Energy as a model for other utilities to follow (and endorsed by the head of grid security at IBM), marks the first approach to advancing cyber security at the distribution level and recognizes that electric cooperatives have pioneered a broad range of solutions to keeping electricity flowing reliably and electric bills affordable.

Delightful New Year

Don’t RETURN that compact fluorescent lightbulb! It will likely fit a household socket and is sure to save you money.

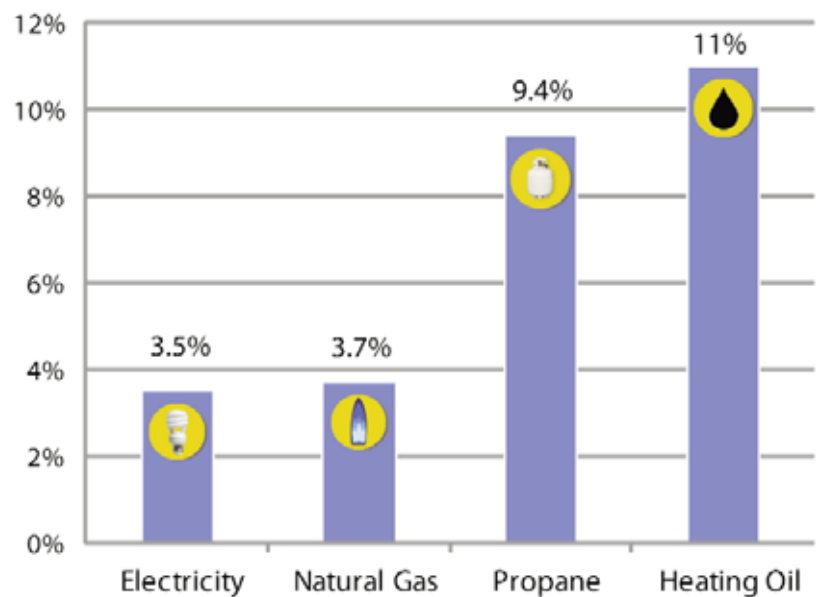
We have CFLs in stock that are 100-watt replacements. They operate at 23 watts but provide light equal to a 100-watt bulb. When you need more, stop in. The bulbs are \$1.00 each.

An auspicious beginning

Each month we hide 5 names in this newsletter. Find yours and we’ll give you \$25 to keep your chin up during these short cold days. Call 307-837-2225 for your winnings.

Electricity prices remain stable

Compared to other types of home heating fuel, electricity prices have remained the most stable over the past 10 years. This graph shows the average annual price increase from 2000 to 2010 for each fuel type.



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) September 2011 data