




Co-op News from Wyrulec Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 
The power of human connections

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From your manager



Miller

Nominating committee looking for District 5 candidates

Recently the board selected representatives from each of the five districts to solicit director candidates for District 5. The District 5 director's seat is up for election this year at the annual meeting. This district includes the communities of Huntley and LaGrange and basically begins a few miles south of Torrington and is east of Highway 85 over to the Nebraska border. The Nominating Committee is comprised of Jack Revelle, Robert Ward, Diana Guest, Doug Frederick, and John Patrick. We are grateful for the effort these individuals put into the Nominating Committee functions.

Join us for dinner & prizes at the Annual Meeting



The Annual Meeting of Wyrulec Company will take place on March 31st with registration beginning at 4:30, dinner at 6:00 and meeting beginning at 7:00. *Mary A. Svaldi* We will provide financial, power supply, and other reports on the overall status of your cooperative. We'll be passing out some handy member gifts at the door and also will be having drawings for several cash prizes as in the past. We certainly hope you can attend this function and support your cooperative.

New additions to the Wyrulec team

Beginning the first of the year we have two new faces amongst the employees here at Wyrulec. Jason Scott and Ben Hager were selected to fill the open apprentice linemen positions. We had over 120 applicants for these two positions. Joe Kinnan, Gene Prickett, and Willy Milner had their work cut out for them. I am happy with the work they put into evaluating the candidates and their recommendations. Ben comes to us from the City of Torrington where he worked as an apprentice lineman. Jason recently worked for Pathfinder Irrigation District. Both will make very good additions to the staff. Their profiles follow on the next page.

Safety accreditation

Although safety of our employees is a number one concern, we haven't been safety accredited through our national organization for a number of years. *Sherry L. Allison* We are working to change that. Hopefully in the somewhat near future we will again be amongst those systems that are safety accredited. Safety accreditation involves not only operating in a safe manner but also having the equipment and facilities clean and clear of debris, and maintaining the OSHA-required safety documents in a clear, concise, and organized manner. The safety of our employees has always been the highest priority at Wyrulec— accreditation just confirms our commitment.

Welcome Wyrulec's newest employees

Ben Hager



Ben's lived all 26 years of his life in Wyo. The chance to work outside and tackle the challenges of the trade motivated him to apply at Wyrulec. He's excited to take advantage of the training and other great opportunities that Wyrulec has to offer.

Ben is married to Laura and they have two daughters. Hope is one and a half and Aftyn is three months old. Ben enjoys hunting and fishing and he and Laura also raise bucking bulls. He urges everyone to "live life to the fullest" and promises to work hard to keep the power on.

Jason Scott



Jason's lived in Wyo. for 14 years, and before coming to Wyrulec worked for Pathfinder Irrigation District as a ditch rider and equipment operator. When he learned of the open position at Wyrulec, he jumped at the opportunity to learn a trade.

Jason and his wife Mandy have two daughters, four-year-old Taylor and two-year-old Madison. He enjoys camping and other outdoor activities in his free time.



Winter storm safety

BY CHRIS GRAMMES

Snow and ice storms are an inevitable part of the winter season, however, they can lead to downed power lines and outages. Remember the following tips to stay safe and warm

should you find yourself in the dark after a severe winter event:

- ☛ In the event of an outage, an alternate heating source—such as a fireplace, propane space heater, or wood stove—may be used. Extreme caution should be taken.
- ☛ Plan to stay in an area of the home where the alternate heat source is located.
- ☛ Fuel- and wood-burning heating sources should be vented. Be sure to follow manufacturer's directions.
- ☛ Make sure carbon monoxide detectors and smoke

detectors are working properly.

- ☛ Do not use a gas or charcoal grill inside the home. Do not use charcoal briquettes in the fireplace.
- ☛ Never connect generators to power lines. The reverse flow of electricity can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Ideally, your family will stay warm until the power comes back on. But keep an eye on family members for signs of hypothermia. These include shivering, drowsiness, and mental and physical slowness. The elderly and young children are particularly vulnerable to hypothermia. Call 911 immediately if you notice these symptoms. *Kirk Rutt* At least one telephone in the house that does not depend on electricity should be available in case of a power outage.

—Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission;
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
National Ag Safety Database

Energy efficiency? Just a click away.

Have you ever wanted to know just how much energy you're consuming? Wondering what you can do to become more energy efficient? Want to assess your own energy consumption? Look no further than www.wyrulec.com. Just click on the 'Energy Library' link to get started. The many tools available help assist you to use energy more wisely.

Wyrulec's power supplier, Tri-State

Generation and Transmission Association, also has numerous tools available on the website.

If you're in the market for a high-efficiency water heater, heating or cooling system, and much more, Wyrulec and Tri-State also have credits available to help with your purchase. Just give the Wyrulec office a call and ask for Colleen to get all the details.



High-tech thermostats offer potential savings

Keeping your home hot or cold—depending on the season—accounts for a big chunk of your annual budget. In fact, the average U.S. homeowner spends \$2,500 a year on home energy with 56 percent, or \$1,400, going toward heating and cooling costs.

Adjust to save

Not surprisingly, savings can add up in a hurry when heating and cooling systems are tweaked for maximum efficiency.

You can easily trim your energy bills in winter by setting the thermostat at 68° F while you're awake and back a few degrees when you go to sleep or are away from home.

Even better, turning your thermostat back 10° to 15° for eight hours can save 5 percent to 15 percent a year on your heating bill—about 1 percent for each degree.

Robert A. Leaf Savings may be even greater for homes in milder climates.

Location, location, location

The location of your thermostat can greatly affect its performance and efficiency. Place thermostats away from direct sunlight, drafts, doorways, skylights, and windows.

Read the manufacturer's instructions to prevent "ghost readings" or unnecessary furnace or air conditioner cycling.

Program efficiency in

Installing a programmable thermostat can take the thought out of saving energy. Your heating and cooling system will ramp up or switch off according to a preset time of day or even day of the week. Most models let you manually override the schedule without affecting the rest of the daily or weekly program.

Programmable thermostats are generally not recommended for heat pumps. In cooling mode, a heat pump operates like an air conditioner, so turning up the thermostat will save energy and money. But when a heat pump works in its heating mode, setting back the thermostat can cause the unit to operate inefficiently, thereby canceling out any savings achieved by lowering the temperature. Maintaining a moderate setting is the most cost-effective practice.

To automatically manage electric resistance systems, such as electric baseboard heating, steam heating, or radiant floor heating, you will need to purchase a programmable thermostat specifically designed for the task. Of course, when shopping for a programmable thermostat, always look for the ENERGY STAR® label.

More information on what may be right for your home can be found at energystar.gov.

—Source: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy



Table Mountain Vineyards truly homegrown

When the Zimmerer family first began farming near Table Mountain three generations ago, they may not have suspected that a vineyard and winery would one day take root in their soil.

But in 2001, after completing a senior thesis on establishing vineyards in Wyoming, Patrick Zimmerer convinced his family to plant some grapes. Three years later, he and his sister Amie hammered out a business plan, entered and won the University of Wyoming College of Business 10K Business Plan Competition, and by August, Table Mountain Vineyards became a full-scale winery. "Planting a vineyard in Wyoming is a challenge,"



Zimmerer says. "The weather, the pests, the extreme seasons present a tough challenge for the vines," but the rewards are well worth it.

These days, the vineyards span about 11 acres (11,000 vines), and along with the contributions of 20-30 growers throughout southeast Wyoming, the winery produces 15,000-25,000 bottles of wine a year. These include grape, and a variety of fruit wines. All the grapes and fruit used in production are Wyoming-grown, for a 100percent authentic Wyoming vintage with every bottle. Folks across the nation understand the appeal—Table Mountain

Vineyard has had visitors from, and shipped bottles all over the U.S., and their Cowboy Reserve was chosen as part of the Copia Wine Institute's "Wine America Exhibit."

Stop in to the Table Mountain Vineyard tasting room southeast of Huntley, WY anytime to sample some popular selections, such as the white Wyoming Gold or the S.O.B. Raspberry Wine, or check your local retailer to see if Table Mountain Vineyard products are sold. Table Mountain Vineyard can also ship directly to customers in Wyo. and select other states. More information, as well as ordering details can be found at <http://www.tablemountainvineyards.com>.

Employee Spotlight ❖ ❖ ❖ Jeff Sinkular

Q: How long have you lived in Wyoming?

A: I'm still working on it, temporarily living in my camper.

Q: What did you do before you came to work for Wyrulec?

A: I worked for Roosevelt Public Power for three years and Cherry Todd Electric for six years.

Q: What is your job title at Wyrulec?

A: Journeyman Lineman.

Q: What brought you to Wyrulec?

A: I wanted a better opportunity for my family.

Q: Describe your family.

A: My wife is Mandy, and we have two kids, Jacob and Kaelee.

Q: Do you have any hobbies?

A: Hunting and drinking energy drinks.

Q: Words of advice you would share?

A: Treat others as you want to be treated.

Q: Why do you enjoy working for Wyrulec?

A: I love the outdoors, helping keep the lights on when the weather changes, and the crew I work with.



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 \$1.60 each. We have plenty.