



# Co-op News from Wyrulec Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives   
The power of human connections

June 2009

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## From your board president



**Hageman**

As your board president, I'd like to share with you some of the issues we're watching on the national level. If you attended the annual meeting in March, you know that we're concerned about the cost of legislation purported to manage climate change. We're still concerned that Congress may choose to enact a carbon cap-and-trade program or carbon tax program, but there are additional considerations.

### Energy Efficiency Resource Standard

A proposal has been made to mandate energy efficiency. It's called an energy efficiency resource standard (EERS).

*\*Eugene Springer\** This doesn't sound bad, but it is.

First of all, this EERS would be in addition to the carbon tax or carbon cap-and-trade program. The EERS would unnecessarily complicate whichever carbon program is enacted.

### Unrealistic standards

Second, the EERS, as proposed, calls for efficiencies that researchers at the Electric Power Research Institute believe aren't realistic. The EERS calls for 4.5 percent savings by 2015, 15 percent by 2020, and something higher, although the number won't be set at this time, beyond 2020.



The Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) has said that ambitious energy efficiency and demand response programs can, by 2020, save this country five percent of the electricity sold. EPRI says the maximum savings achievable is just over ten percent.

EPRI is a well-respected institution. It's voluntarily funded by most of the electric utilities operating in this country but it acts independently. We trust what EPRI says and the prospect of Congress writing into law something that EPRI says isn't achievable causes our brows to wrinkle.

My third point about the EERS is that it penalizes utilities for actions consumers take. In the co-op world, this means all co-op members will have to pay higher rates if some co-op members don't use energy efficiently.

### Small percentages add up

Wyrulec Company would have to report its baseline energy sales each year. *\*Julie A. Onken\** Then, starting in 2012, we'd have to show that we shaved one percent of those sales off thanks to energy efficiency. The following year, we'd have to show that we kept the one percent off from the previous year and shaved another one percent off.



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## From your board president

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The one percent is a number subject to change depending on the Dept. of Energy. They'd be in charge of setting the size of the mandated savings and collecting the reports each year.

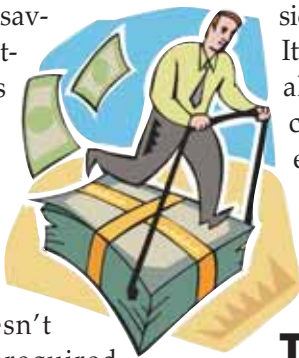
### Fines shared by all

If Wyrulec doesn't shave the required amount from its energy sales, Wyrulec has to pay a fine. The fine suggested is \$50 per megawatt-hour (MWh). A megawatt is a thousand kilowatts. For an average home, using 750 kWh per month, the fine for not saving one percent would be \$37.50 per year. The fines wouldn't be assessed house by house, I just gave that as an example of how financially painful this could be for Wyrulec members.

Wyrulec Company would be required to collect the data and pay the fine. Wyrulec's costs would be distributed equitably across the membership, just as they are now.

### Energy efficiency is important but...

We think it's our job to inform you about energy efficiency, answer any questions you ask, and help you choose the most cost-effective route to saving energy.



We don't think it's our job to force you to be energy efficient. We don't want to. We don't even think it's possible.

Energy efficiency is one consideration when making a decision. It's important, but it doesn't stand alone. Other things have to be considered, too. Penalizing the entire Wyrulec membership when one or more members don't make decisions based solely on energy efficiency is absurd and irresponsible.

### The right efficiency?

The fourth point I want to make about this proposal is that not all efficiency savings would count toward the one percent. Some customer facility savings wouldn't count. If Wyrulec reduces line losses, some of that efficiency gain wouldn't count. If larger customers installed combined heat and power units, some of those efficiency gains wouldn't count. If the county changed the building codes and the result was lower energy costs, some of those savings wouldn't be counted.

### What's the rationale?

I'd like to say there's a sensible reason for all this. But I can't think of one. Calling some savings worthy to be counted but not all just goes to show you that not every political action is lofty and pure. Some just want to punish the other guy. \*John A. Borelli\* In this case, our past efforts toward energy effi-



ciency wouldn't count. This seems a little punitive for legislation that's billed as "good for us."

### We need your help

As you heard at the Wyrulec Company Annual Meeting, we could sure use your help talking with Congress. Our delegation, Senators Enzi and Barrasso and Representative Lummis, understand these issues and agree with us. But they need numbers to show their peers. The best way to do that is to communicate with them.

When our representatives are in the state, talk with them. Or you can stop at the Wyrulec office and fill out a postcard. We'll use the postcard information to send an e-mail on your behalf to the delegation. Or you can send it yourself to senator [enzi.senate.gov](mailto:enzi.senate.gov), senator@barrosso.senate.gov, and [cynthia.lummis@mail.house.gov](mailto:cynthia.lummis@mail.house.gov). Or you can log onto [ourenergy.coop](http://ourenergy.coop) and send it through that website.

We do everything we can to keep rates low while maintaining reliability and service. But the political pressures are heavy right now. We could really use your help.



# Using CFLs safely

BY CHRIS GRAMMES

There's no doubt that compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are better for the environment—and our pocketbooks—than traditional incandescent bulbs. ENERGY STAR® qualified bulbs use up to 75 percent less electricity than incandescent bulbs, last up to 10 times longer, cost little up front, and provide a quick return on investment.

However, concerns over the mercury in CFLs have raised questions about the proper disposal of them. CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury—an average of 4 milligrams—sealed within the glass tubing. By comparison, older thermometers contain about 500 milligrams. Mercury is an essential part of CFLs: it reacts with the coating on the inside of the glass tube to produce light using very little electricity.

Mercury is toxic, so follow these tips to safely handle, dispose of, and clean up a bulb should it break in your home:

## Handling

- ★ Always take care when removing the bulb from its packaging, installing, or replacing it.
- ★ Hold the bulb by its base and not the glass part.
- ★ Never forcefully twist the CFL into a light socket. If it breaks, follow the tips below.

## Recycling or disposal

- ★ The Environmental Protection Agency recommends that consumers recycle CFLs. Local recycling options are listed at [www.epa.gov/bulb\\_recycling](http://www.epa.gov/bulb_recycling) or [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org). \*Barbara A. Haynes\* Home Depot also accepts intact light bulbs for recycling.
- ★ If the state or local agency allows consumers to put CFLs in the garbage, the bulbs should be sealed in two plastic bags and put into the outside trash or other protected outside option.
- ★ Never put a fluorescent light bulb or other mercury-containing product into an incinerator.



- ★ If the bulb burns out before it should, contact the manufacturer. ENERGY STAR qualified bulbs are required to offer at least a two-year warranty.



## Cleaning up if a bulb should break

- ★ Open a window and have people (including you) and pets leave the room for at least 15 minutes.
- ★ Shut off the central forced air heating/cooling system.
- ★ If the bulb is broken on a hard surface, carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar (with metal lid) or sealed plastic bag.
- ★ Use sticky tape to pick up any remaining pieces and powder.
- ★ Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. \*Steve Streeks\* Place wipes in the glass jar or plastic bag.
- ★ Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.
- ★ Immediately place all clean up materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area for trash pickup.
- ★ Wash your hands after disposing of the materials.
- ★ Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states require broken and unbroken mercury-containing bulbs be taken to a recycling center.

For additional tips on cleaning up broken bulbs from carpeting, bedding, and clothing, visit: [http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change\\_light/downloads/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Mercury.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change_light/downloads/Fact_Sheet_Mercury.pdf)

—Sources: Environmental Protection Agency; [Energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

## Fort Laramie American Grill serves up specials

With over 50 items on the menu, and 5-6 off-menu specials a day, it's difficult to say whether there's a favorite item at the Fort Laramie American Grill, aka

"FLAG." "Everything on the menu sells," says founder and owner Alexander Jankewicz, "otherwise it wouldn't be on the menu."



Jankewicz and his wife Donna are professional caterers by trade, and they fulfilled a lifelong dream to run a neighborhood restaurant when they opened the FLAG cafe for business in May 2005.

They are originally from Massachusetts and, after 12 years in Colorado, decided to head north to Fort Laramie. By the time this newsletter is delivered, the FLAG cafe will have served its 40,000th customer.

From the codfish sandwich to the "Philly-style" cheese chicken dinner, each dish is prepared fresh and reasonably priced. The daily off-menu specials, for example, usually cost between \$5 and \$8.

A variety of fresh desserts are available, and many customers cite the coconut cream pie as the best they've ever tasted. "We usually go through about three a week," says Jankewicz, noting that this is quite a lot for a restaurant their size.



Those looking for a special night out can give the FLAG's once-a-month special dinner a try. The last Sunday of each month, the FLAG cafe presents a full-course dinner by reservation only. "In December, I flew in fresh Maine lobster," says Jankewicz.

The FLAG cafe is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner Wednesdays through Saturdays 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sundays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. all year long. It is located at 302 Pioneer Ct. at the junction of highways 26 and 160 in Fort Laramie. Reservations can be made by phone: (307) 837-2324, and the full menu and more can be found online at their website: <http://www.flagcafe.com>.

## Employee Spotlight ❖❖❖ Jason Scott

**Q:** How long have you lived in Wyoming?

**A:** I grew up in eastern Nebraska and have been in Lingle 15 years.

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

**A:** I was an equipment operator for Pathfinder Irrigation.

**Q:** What is your job title at Wyrulec?

**A:** Apprentice.

**Q:** What brought you to Wyrulec?

**A:** The chance to learn a trade.

**Q:** Describe your family.

**A:** My wife Mandie and I have been married for 6 years. We have two daughters, 4-year-old Taylor and two-year-old Addison. We're foster parents, and have helped several kids over the past 4 years.

We also have a dog and a couple of cats.

**Q:** Do you have any hobbies?

**A:** My family and I like camping, riding horses, and four-wheeling. We have a camper and go to the lakes in this area or to the mountains. The kids really love it.

**Q:** Words of advice you would share?

**A:** Travel plenty.

**Q:** Why do you enjoy working for Wyrulec?

**A:** I've always been interested in electricity and I like working outside, so Wyrulec is a good fit. My crew is great, and the work is intellectually and physically demanding.



### 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.