

Watts New

October, 2018

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

Britania Fire! Just to make sure everyone is on the same page, on Sunday, August 26th, a fire was started by lightning on Britania Mountain, west of Wheatland. Due to weather conditions the fire moved rapidly south and east. Throughout the next two plus weeks, over 500 fire fighters came from 26 states to assist in fighting the fire. This was a huge undertaking for everyone involved. Before I get into how this affected your REA, let me say, "THANK YOU", to all the fire fighters and other first responders. They worked very long hours, in difficult conditions, to minimize the damage this fire caused. Containing the fire to 32,000 acres was a huge feat! That is not to say there were no losses from the fire. Several homes and cabins were lost, as well as other buildings, equipment, grass and trees. However, it would have been worse if it had not been for all of those who worked so diligently. Again, thank you!



On August 27th, we met with fire officials and were told they were going to try to hold the fire at Palmer Canyon Road, which happens to be the right of way for one of our main lines that feeds toward Rock River. This line runs through some very difficult terrain! If it were damaged, it could have taken weeks to restore power to the members served by this line. In working with the fire officials, they provided us with some fire retardant wrap to attempt to protect our poles. Our dedicated crews spent about four hours wrapping 92 poles, and the payoff was spectacular!

The picture to the far right shows an intact pole that was wrapped with the fire protective material.

The picture directly to the right shows a pole with heat damaged wrap, and the wrap pulled back to show that the pole is still good.

The bottom left picture shows a pole that had been wrapped, however, the fire got above the wrap and damaged the rest of the pole; the part of the pole that was wrapped is still fine! Of the 92 poles that were wrapped on the main line, only four will need to be replaced, whereas we lost about 16 of the poles that were not wrapped.



This fantastic job was completed by the REA, working with the fire fighters! Over-probably saved the REA hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs due to the fire. Again, it could have been much worse. In addition to the avoided repair costs, we were able to restore power to most of the members as soon as the fire was past our line and the fire fighters gave us the go-ahead. This avoided several days, if not weeks, of outage time! Next time you see one of our employees, tell them thanks for their devotion and resourcefulness! I cannot tell you enough, what a pleasure it is to work with such dedicated people!

markable employees at the all, this preventive action sands of dollars! Even with will still have over \$100,000

A special thanks to all of the wonderful members of this cooperative, several of whom called in, not to complain about the outage, but rather, asking how they could help! I thank you all for making Wyoming, and specifically. This area, such a great place to live and work! Thank you! As always, it is a pleasure to serve you!



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From the Office of RKA.....

October is here and that means autumn is here also! I am honestly looking forward to some cooler temperatures, as September seemed pretty darn hot! I am a big fan of fall. I look forward to all the colors, smells, and activities during this time of year.

By now, you should have received a capital credit allocation notice. This allocation is for the 2017 margins, and it shows the amount credited to your capital credit account for 2017. It is NOT a notice telling you how much your next capital credit retirement check will be. Capital Credit retirement checks are issued annually, in the first

quarter of each year, upon the approval of our Board of Directors. If you have any questions about the allocation notice you received, please call our office.

October is also the month we start preparing our budget for 2019. Our challenge, as always, is to budget for items and purchases needed but at a manageable cost basis. The hardest part of the budget is the revenue portion. As I am only an accountant and not a weather forecaster, this part makes me lose sleep at night. What kind of weather conditions will we have next year: blustery snowstorms, wet spring, drought? I am still waiting for someone to give me that crystal ball that I so need!

I want to take the time now to give our linemen a HUGE SHOUT OUT for the job they did on the Britania Fire last month. Every lineman worked endlessly, without any complaints, questions, etc. The hours they put in were phenomenal. The only thing on their minds was to get the power back on. Two of our linemen, along with Jason Wright, took a fire safety course over the Labor Day weekend so they could get back up the mountain to start checking our power lines. I also want to give "kudos" to Jason as he put in more hours than you would imagine. THANKS TO ALL OF YOU GUYS!!

I also want to thank ALL the firefighters, not only our loyal local men and women, but also the firefighters who came to Wheatland to assist. If you didn't get a chance to go out to the 4-H building when they had their camp out there, you missed quite a sight. I attended a morning meeting and was so impressed with the organization, the people in charge, and the way all aspects of the fire were being handled. Again, thanks to all.

If you weren't aware, I love to read any and all kinds of books. I just recently finished a book entitled, "*I Didn't Sign up for This; Finding Hope When Everything is Going Wrong*". This book talks about the many powers that can change our lives dramatically—loss, fear, betrayal, failure, etc. When everything goes wrong in life, it's so easy to give in to the pain, frustration, and anger that threaten to overwhelm us. The author, John Westfall, says, "It's often in the face of fear and loss that we truly learn to live with courage, faith, and surprising joy". This book really was appropriate for me at a time when changes in my personal life, and the lives of my family, are occurring. I would recommend this read to all. My home front right now is looking a little different, as my husband has a bit more time on his hands. He would rather have me pick up a fishing rod than a book! Maybe with a little more time on his hands, he will read the recipe for "Rhonda's Favorite Casserole" and make it!!!

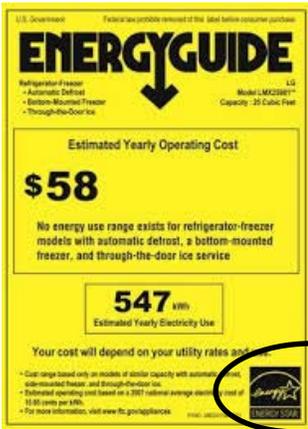
I will keep you posted...





ENERGY STAR REBATE PROGRAM

When you are buying those new appliances, don't forget that Wheatland REA gives rebates for Energy Star rated appliances. Just look at the yellow energy guide on your appliance to find out if it qualifies for a rebate.



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- WHEATLAND RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!
PLEASE WATCH FOR TRICK-OR-TREATERS AND REMEMBER TO CHECK THEIR CANDY.**



Platte County Career Fair

Golden Opportunity



Jobs



October 23rd,
4-H Building
10:00am-2:00pm



Value

Team



Britania Mountain Fire



The guys checking out one of the generators going to the mountain.



Jared Call and Jason Wright discuss some of the components of the generator.



The Linemen making a plan, on how to handle the power lines.



What we could see from the REA parking lot.



The Linemen are getting ready to wrap the power poles.



Helicopter hauling water in to the fire.

