

Watts New

March, 2017

Tammy Mills, Editor

From The Desk Of... Don Smith, Manager

Greetings from wintery Wyoming! Yep, it looks like we have winter this year. Having lived in this region of the country for most of my life, I have seen quite a variety of winters. Some bitter cold, some extreme winds, some both, some quite warm, and long ago I learned there is no "typical" winter. We cuss and discuss the weather and then we just deal with it.

Even though it is winter and some activities around the area have slowed down, staff at the REA is frantically getting ready for your 80th Annual Membership Meeting on March 15th! We hope to see everyone there! For the "Business Items" at the meeting, there are two Director positions up for election, and By-Law changes to consider. Please come and enjoy the lunch provided by the Slater Women's Group, take advantage of the health fair and cast your votes for your cooperative!

Another area that has been keeping us busy is within the Wyoming Legislature. There are several bills that we have voiced our concerns on during this session. One bill would have required us to buy our power, essentially from sources other than renewables. Some in the media outlets actually referred to this as an "Anti-Renewable Bill." While at first blush this may sound like a way to support Wyoming resources, there are many things to consider. The first of these is the fact that legislative mandates limit our decision-making ability at the local level. We need to be able to look at all opportunities and ensure we have an energy supply that provides the most economical and reliable electricity for our members, and not worry about penalties imposed due to legislation. This bill was turned back to an interim committee to review, and come up with a solution that supports Wyoming resources while not imposing an undue burden on utilities. We will see what the future brings on this concept.

Another bill that we provided input on was one that would have increased the limit on net metering from 25kW to 50kW for each installation. This is another bill that on the surface may appear insignificant, but as they say, "the devil is in the details". The original net metering concept was set up to allow homeowners a way to supplement their personal usage with renewable generation. When you figure that the typical home does not use more than 15kW, the 25kW is already in excess of typical home usage. To install a 50kW project is then done with the intent to generate power to the market for sale. This goes beyond the original intent of the net metering concept. In addition, the bill puts some of the cost burden on the utilities for system improvements required for the 50kW projects. This means that the rest of the membership would be required to pay to upgrade lines so that the one person installing a 50kW system would be able to sell their excess power for their own profit. We did not feel this was in the best interest of the membership. This bill died in committee.

The last bill that I will mention is the "Move Over Bill". This bill is a safety measure for our crews working alongside roadways and requires vehicle traffic to move over and/or slow down when passing utility workers. This is already required for police and similar vehicles, but is not currently required for maintenance workers. We supported this bill, and at this time, the bill is continuing to move forward. We value our working crews and support ways to create a safer working environment. As you can see, we don't just have to watch what goes on at the national level, but at local levels as well. To ensure our voices are heard, we need to speak as one voice. With the bills I mentioned above, it was not just Wheatland REA that got the message to the Legislators. The Wyoming electric cooperatives spoke as one. (Continue on pg. 3)



Watts New is a publication of
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From the desk of RKA.....

As I am writing this article, I am watching the snow come down so softly and pretty!!! I say that because it is not coming down in a horizontal direction!! If it was, you and I both know what came along with the snow.

It is March 2017 and we are gearing up for our Annual Meeting. In the past, we have had the meeting in February. Due to conflicts with other important events and dates, this year's Annual Meeting will be Wednesday, March 15th! Please mark your calendar! We will again have a Wellness Fair, beginning at 7:00 a.m. In your March 2017 electric bill, you should have an insert regarding the Wellness Fair. If you did not get the insert, you can go out to our website and print a copy of it, pick one up at the office, or we would be happy to put one in the mail.....just give us a call!

Also, we will be handing out capital credit retirement checks at the Annual Meeting. We are paying the remaining margins for year 1999, all of the margins for the year 2000, and a portion of the margins for the year 2001. For Tri-State capital credits, we will be paying out the remaining portion of the year 1997 and a partial year of 1998. If you have questions about capital credits, stop by and I would be more than happy to explain them to you.

Speaking of the website, if you don't receive your bill or would like to look at it before you get it in the mail, you can now go out to the website and look at it. The instructions on how to view and print it are there also. If you are having any difficulty, please let us know and we will be happy to walk you through the steps! I think this is such a great feature as we all know how the mail system is not as reliable as we would like it to be. Also, it is so convenient for those that may be "snowbirds" or travelers!

The first of the year is always busy for me as there are so many governmental entities that require year end reports. I always wonder if all the "number crunching" that I do to complete their reports is even looked at or analyzed, but I am sure that the one time I forget to complete a section of any report, I will receive a telephone call from somebody!!!

On the home front, I have once again successfully avoided the veterinary office for the month, although I really shouldn't talk about it because that will probably mean something is going to happen to the pup! My young adults are hopefully completing their final semesters of college with my daughter continuing on for her BSN. Seriously, where has the time gone? I remember writing articles talking about my kids playing high school sports, getting ready for prom, graduating from high school, etc.... It just doesn't seem possible!!

Until next month.....

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BUDGET BILLING

Reminder from the billing department...**Budget billing begins in April.** In order to qualify for budget billing, you must have a year's history at your current location and your account must be paid in full. For further information, please call 307-322-2125 or 800-344-3351. Ask for Jill.

From The Desk Of...(Continue from pg. 1)

We used our network to call and email our elected officials, to ensure our message and concerns were heard. This is one of the benefits of a cooperative system, being united and working together. While we are individual companies, and each of us is small when compared to the investor owned utilities, we don't carry a lot of weight on our own, but together we speak with meaning. This is one of the benefits of being in the cooperative community.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you! Thanks for being great members and thanks to the fantastic staff and Board at Wheatland REA! If you ever have any questions please feel free to call or stop in! Hope to see you all at the Annual Meeting!



Tips to Save Energy Today

1. Install a programmable thermostat.
2. Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
3. Turn things off when you are not in the room.
4. Plug home electronics into a power strip; turn the power strip off when not in use.
5. Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120 F.
6. Take a short shower instead of a bath.
7. Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
8. Air dry clothes.

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ENERGY STAR REBATES

Rebate Incentives

- Full-size Energy Star® Certified Refrigerators and Freezers \$30 per unit 
- Refrigerator and/or Freezer Recycling \$60 for recycling a refrigerator or freezer
- Energy Star® Certified Clothes Washers \$40 per unit for front load washers \$30 per unit for top load washers
- Energy Star® Clothes Dryer \$30 per unit for clothes dryer \$90 per unit for hybrid clothes dryer (ventless)
- Energy Star® Certified Dishwashers \$20 per unit 

VIEW BILLS ONLINE!

Are you tired of waiting on your bill to arrive, losing the bill, or are you going to be on vacation?

Well we have your problem solved! Wheatland REA now offers the ability to view your bills and payment history. Visit www.wheatlandrea.com or call us at 322-2125 and we can walk you through it.



80TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



March 15, 2017
4-H Building
59 Antelope Gap RD
Wheatland, WY



Wellness
Screening
7:00 am to 10:00 am



AGENDA

11:00 AM

Call to order
Pledge of Allegiance
Read Notice of Meeting &
Proof of Publication
Minutes of 2016 Meeting
Report of Nominating Committee
President's Welcome
Treasurer's Report
Manager's Report
Leadership Camp Students Address
Membership

12:00 PM

Invocation/Open Ballot Box
Lunch



1:00 PM

Introduction of Guests
Recognition of Retirees
Presentation of Tenure Pins
Unfinished Business
New Business/General Discussion
Drawing of Door Prizes
Adjournment

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