

# Watts New

October, 2019

*From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager*

The weather folks were calling for 90° yesterday, and while I am not sure it made it, it was quite warm. Today the wind has picked up, and they are calling for a cooling trend later this week and moving forward. We will see what happens. It has not been the most predictable summer!

October is Cooperative Month, which celebrates and recognizes cooperative businesses around the country! The International Cooperative Alliance describes a co-op as "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations...". The cooperative model is centered on the members. It is owned and controlled by the members, and established for the benefit of the members. Cooperatives have been around since people started cooperating with each other; in other words, a very long time. Our passion is, of course, the electric cooperative business model. This business model came to the forefront in the mid-1930's with the passage of the Rural Electrification Act. Wheatland REA was one of the earliest electric cooperatives, having been incorporated in 1936. I believe we were the second electric co-op in Wyoming, behind Wyrulec, based in Torrington. The cooperative model is tried and true, proven over time, and it is because of the great members of the REA that this cooperative remains so strong! Please watch for events celebrating cooperative businesses!



Recently I came across an interesting article about wind power and the disposal of turbine blades. As early wind projects are coming to end of life, and in some cases, just upgraded, the equipment needs to be disposed of. While much of a turbine (such as the steel) is recyclable, the blades are a fiberglass composite material and are not recyclable at this time. They must be disposed of in landfills. According to an NPR article, researchers estimate the United States will have more than 720,000 tons of blade material to dispose of over the next 20 years. This amount does not include upgrades and larger turbines. As the article states, "It's a waste problem that runs counter to what the industry is held up to be: a perfect solution for environmentalists looking to combat climate change...". The blades for these turbines can be up to 300 feet in length. An article from Wyoming News talks about the Casper landfill taking blades from three projects in the region, and it is the only landfill in the region able to take them. The disposal problem for renewables does not apply to just wind turbines; issues exist with solar panels as well. Some of the material used to create solar panels is considered toxic waste, with no reasonable way to extract this material.

While I am a supporter of protecting the environment, I have always been concerned that the whole story of "renewable energy" is not being told. We do not see the contrary information in the mainstream media. All that is being seen is the "free" cost of the fuel. You see very little information about the true cost of renewables. What is the actual cost, financial as well as environmental, from the extraction of the material to the final disposal of the equipment? My thought is that the costs are much higher than they are being stated.

On the political front, as if the last topic was not political, we received news that the Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule that was put in place in 2015 under the last Washington administration, has been repealed. This was a commitment of the current administration early on. The second part of the commitment was to replace the rule with something more reasonable. This part is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year. While the WOTUS Rule does not directly impact the REA, it can have significant impact on some of our members. The repealed rule included language that was extremely restrictive in classifying wetland areas to the point of negatively impacting private landowners. The repeal puts the language back to the 2015 language. The planned replacement should offer clarification to some issues. I'm sure there will be more to come on this.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you! Please stop by and see us!

**Watts New is a publication of  
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From the Office of RKA....

My favorite time of the year is here...fall. Although the past few weeks, the temperature has proven to be more like summertime weather. Mother Nature seems to be a bit confused on exactly what time of the year it should be!

October is Cooperative Month across the United States. The theme for this year's National Co-op Month is "Co-ops: By the Community, For the Community." It has been celebrated for more than half a century. It is a time for cooperative businesses to reflect on their shared principles and to educate others about the value of belonging to a cooperative. Just a few fun facts about Co-op Month: Minnesota was the first state to have an official Co-op Month proclamation in 1948; Co-op Month has been a nationally recognized celebration since 1964; the first national theme in 1964 was "Cooperatives: USDA Helps Build a Better America."



With all that said about Co-op Month, your Wheatland REA will be holding an open house here on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. We hope that you will stop by and enjoy some refreshments with us. More information will be forthcoming on our website and Facebook page! Please watch for it!

At the September 2019 board meeting, the Board of Directors was presented the 2018 audit report from our auditor, Kevin Kelso, Principal of Jackson Thornton, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants. The audit was satisfactory, with no deficiencies. The Board of Directors approved the audit for the fiscal year of 2018.

Since the audit was approved by the Board of Directors, this month you will be receiving a capital credit allocation notice from us. This notice lets you know the amount of operating margins which have been credited to your account for the year of 2018, since we post the operating margins to each member's account. This notice is not an indication of what you will receive as a capital credit check in the spring. It is only a notice on what you will receive in the future, when we are ready to retire the year 2018. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

We continue to receive calls regarding not being able to get on our website to make a payment. Please, please, please, call us if you are having problems. We did some internal changes on our website, and those changes might have possibly affected you. We have an IT person who can assist you. We have also had quite a few calls about members not receiving their monthly bills. Remember, we can set your account up with an e-mail address that will send you an e-mail once the monthly billing is complete. After you receive the e-mail notification, you can go to the website, sign in, and get a copy of your monthly bill. Again, any questions about either of these items, please call the office.

My daughter is officially an RN! I couldn't be prouder of her and her accomplishments! She is working at the hospital in Cheyenne. I can't wait to see what her next endeavor will be. So it is that time of the year where the dogs know that when the hunting boots are pulled out of the closet, it is their time to shine! I don't hunt pheasants, but I love to go just to see the dogs work. It is amazing how lethargic they are at home and then when it is time to hunt, they hit the "superpower button"! Free labor.... that's me. We have been remodeling my parents' home and I "forgot" how exciting (?) remodeling an older home (1938) can be. Fortunately, my son has been coming over and helping, which is very much appreciated. If you think that this is my side career with my hubby, think again....it is not!

Until next month....

*A Quick Reminder!*  
*We started winter hours at Wheatland REA.*  
*Monday-Friday*  
*8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

It is application time for

*Wyoming LIEAP.*

This is a wonderful program to help member-owners who qualify for some extra help with their heating bill in the cold months.

For more information, visit [www.lieapwyo.org](http://www.lieapwyo.org) or call **1-800-246-4221**.

## ***HOME SCHOOL PARENTS!***

School has started, and so have electric safety classes at the schools. We teach electric safety to all grades. If you would like to schedule a class for your home school students, please give Al a call at: 307-322-2125.

**ABC**



Are you planning to upgrade the lights, and/or fixtures in your shop or barn to LED's? If so, you might be eligible for a rebate.

Contact LaRon at 307-322-2125 or [laron@wheatlandrea.com](mailto:laron@wheatlandrea.com) to see if you qualify.

## **Happy Halloween!**

**Safety Tip:** Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.

For more great tips go to: [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)



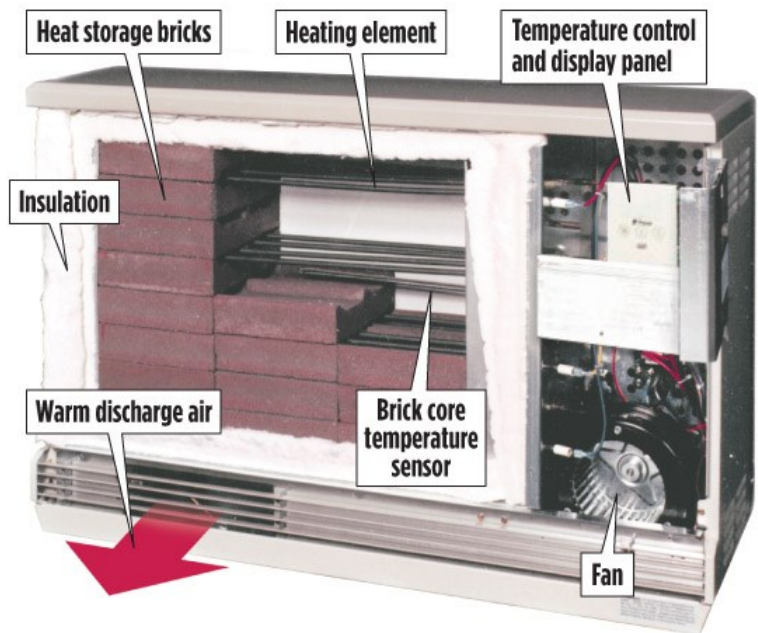
# SAVE MONEY ON *HEATING* THIS YEAR!

GO ETS FOR YOUR HOME HEATING NEEDS!

You could save approximately 51% over the cost of standard electric heat.

## Electric Thermal Storage (ETS)

is the technology of converting off-peak electricity to heat, and storing this low cost heat for use in satisfying comfort requirements of a home or business 24 hours a day. An ETS system contains electric heating elements which lie within special, high-density ceramic bricks.



## Veterans Day is November 11th

Wheatland REA is very proud of our Veterans. If you, or someone you know, has military memorabilia, we would be honored to include it in our Veterans Honor Display. Let the community see what you or a loved one did for our freedom. For more information, please call and ask for Al or LaRon, at 322-2125.

