

Watts New

June, 2021

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

It's hard to believe, but by the time this hits your mailbox, 2021 will be nearly half over! It has certainly been an interesting ride over the last year and a half! We will see what comes of the rest of the year!

As I write this, it is a beautiful spring day! Temperatures have been in the upper 60's and low 70's for several days. We have had some rain, but no flooding that comes with an excessive amount. The seasons were hot and dry last year, and very wet the year before. Thus far it has been a pleasant spring and we are hoping for a more normal summer. Time will tell.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to attend the annual meeting for the Laramie Peak Fire Zone. It was a great day to go visit with our REA members located more remotely than most. We always enjoy visiting with them, and hearing their concerns and challenges. They are great people and very resilient! I would like to thank the Laramie Peak Fire Zone, and everyone there for making us feel welcome and providing a wonderful lunch! Thank you!

A quick update on Tri-State and our interaction with the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). We have joined with all of the other Wyoming Tri-State members to intervene at the CPUC regarding Tri-State's filed Electric Resource Plan (ERP). As I previously mentioned, Colorado passed a law in 2019 requiring Tri-State to file a plan that reduces power plant emission 80%. Under Tri-State's filed plan, this would require taking less power from the Laramie River Station (LRS) and moving this to other sources such as solar and wind. We have several concerns with this concept. One of the main concerns is reliability. Just a few months ago the nation saw what happens when it gets cold, the wind doesn't blow, and the sun is not shining. The power goes out. We must have power sources that are dependable and available when you need them, not just when the weather is nice. A similar situation happened last summer, only it was heat instead of cold, and the results were the same. The power went out. While I love Mother Nature, she is not reliable when it comes to power generation.

Another concern we have is cost. I do agree that the cost of renewable energy is coming down significantly. I continue to question if all costs are included, financial as well as the environmental impacts from cradle to grave, as it is said. How much of this low cost is related to subsidies? To my knowledge, LRS remains one of the lowest cost resources financially, as well as one of the cleanest fossil fuel plants in the country.

Still another concern we have is with the economic impact to, not only Platte County, but the state of Wyoming. Colorado has imposed what they are calling the "Social Cost of Carbon" (SCC) on anything that generates carbon dioxide (CO2). Under Colorado law, this SCC must be applied to the power generated from a plant. I question whether the economic impact costs will be applied in a related fashion.

Those are some of the main reasons we felt the need to intervene at the CPUC. We cannot sit back and allow Colorado to define Wyoming's future! We must ensure that our voice is heard, not just for our members, but for Wyoming! We will keep you posted as things progress.

On a positive note, we are moving forward with the construction of a new substation that will deliver power to a new pumping station near Guernsey. We are having discussions with other companies that are interested in new stations as well. These new loads allow us to sell more kilowatt hours, which help put downward pressure on your electric rates. I cannot say to what extent the pressure will be, as the stations will not be on-line for a year or two, and it will depend on how they perform. What I can say is, this is a good thing from an energy sales perspective!

I hope everyone is planning and preparing for fair season, which is just around the corner! I hope to see everyone out and about this summer! As always, please let us know if you have any questions. It is a privilege to serve the wonderful members of Wheatland REA. Thanks! Have a great summer!



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2154 South St.
Wheatland, WY 82201
www.wheatlandrea.com
(307) 322-2125
(800) 344-3351

Tammy Gonzalez, Editor

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(307) 322-2125
(800) 344-3351
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From the office of RKA....

Here it is, spring 2021! What beautiful weather we have been having! Time is sure flying by as the kids are out of school, graduations are done, and people are making plans for the summer!

This is the time of the year when the cooperative gets ready for our annual audit. Our audit will take place the latter part of June. As always, when the audit is complete, I will share with you the results of the final report.

When you read this article, our tree trimmers and pole testers will be in the cooperative territory. We post their locations on Facebook and our website, www.wheatlandrea.com, so that you are aware. It is important to keep up on tree trimming and pole testing. For the tree trimming, it really "saved our bacon" during the March snowstorm. Had we not been tree trimming, can you imagine the amount of tree limbs that would have been hanging over our lines? We would have suffered more damage, if we had not been doing our due diligence with trimming. Pole testing helps to keep the system more reliable and safer by replacing old poles that are no longer structurally sound, rather than waiting for them to rot and fall. Both activities are a safety measure to our cooperative.

June 16th is the Wellness Fair Blood Draw for the members. It will be held at the First State Bank conference center. Please remember to bring your blood draw voucher that you received at our annual meeting last March. Also, remember that you can get additional tests completed that day at your cost. Any questions, please give the office a call.

Next month, you will receive a colored form with your bill. This form is to update your telephone/contact information for us. In a previous article, I mentioned that during the March blizzard, we tried to get a hold of a few members and the telephone numbers that we had on file **were not good ones**. Please fill out the form and drop it by the office, mail it to us at your convenience, or submit it with your payment. It is very important to have good telephone numbers for all our members. We never know when we will need to contact you, and a good example of that was the March storm, and our need to get ahold of some of our members.

Because of the awesome weather we have been having, I have been able to do quite a bit of fishing. It seems to be picking up little by little. Different presentations have worked for us, but I cannot say because I would be giving the secrets away! LOL!!! I could be like a "real fisherman" and tell you a lie!!

We are enjoying our patio, but the hubby has not quite come up with an idea for a fire pit. Hopefully, we will have one soon as our evenings are calm and cool. I guess I could bring out a space heater and plug it in. Maybe that would be a motivational tool!!!

Until next month.....



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There were 375 contest entries this year.

FIRST PLACE:

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FIRST GRADE- DAMON ESLICK, LIBBEY ELEMENTARY

SECOND GRADE- EMILY PINDELL, GLENDO

THIRD GRADE- TRA BAUDER, GLENDO

FOURTH GRADE- MADALINN MAY, WEST ELEMENTARY

FIFTH GRADE- LEAH EATON, HOMESCHOOL

SIXTH GRADE- KAIDYN KASIN, WHEATLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL



YOUR REA IS CLOSED JULY 5TH

IT'S FIREWORKS TIME!

It's time for the annual fireworks display, brought to you by the Wheatland Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD)! Fireworks sold at the WVFD stand (by the Sinclair gas station, on the west side of exit 78) pay for the explosive showcase we all enjoy every 4th of July. It is truly one of the best displays in the region! If you purchase fireworks this year, please buy them at the WVFD stand.

The show starts at dusk, at the Platte County Fairgrounds.

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY, SO JOIN US!

2021 Scholarships

In the scholarship list in April's insert, we inadvertently left out one recipient.

That student is Samantha Heckel.

She will receive the \$200 Wheatland REA Employees Scholarship.

We wish Samantha all the best, and apologize for this error.

ETS Members

SUMMER IS A GREAT TIME TO HAVE YOUR ELECTRIC THERMAL STORAGE FURNACE AND ROOM HEATERS SERVICED SO THEY ARE READY TO GO IN SEPTEMBER. CALL US FOR INFORMATION.

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