



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections

NEWS

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

Manager's Message

Dear Members:

by Marlene Morss



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Summer Safety Tips:

- Stay Hydrated
- Keep sunscreen nearby and use it
- Check the forecast beforehand
- Don't stay in the sun too long
- Keep covered up
- Beware of heat-related illnesses

Our new automated metering infrastructure is almost completely deployed. There are about 600 meters left to install. We had a bit of a delay of receiving some equipment, but it has now all been delivered and ready for installment. We are getting a read rate of about 99.9% of those AMI meters that are in operation. I reviewed the 2016 expenses for the meter reading account, and we spent over \$331,000. For 2020, \$169,500 was budgeted for meter reading and presently we've expended \$63,635 for that account. What a huge cost savings and we are not even fully deployed!

In August we will begin the 2021 budget plan. This is about a three-month process for us as we scrutinize past, present and projected plans, developments and elements that make up the budget plan. The plan will not be complete until we receive rate information from Tri-State which is usually in September or October. As mentioned before,

about 83% of our expenses goes to Tri-State for purchased power so this has a significant impact on the budget. Tri-State generates and transmits the power that we purchase and distribute to you, our members. 2021's plan will be interesting as we try to compare 2020 expenses which include COVID-19 unexpected costs and then incorporate costs to fit the new "normal" post pandemic. Hopefully, it will be post in 2021!

What will the new "normal" be? We are trying to emerge into some kind of normal. We are back to having in person safety meetings and board meetings. Our crews are no longer working staggered shifts. We continue to follow health guidelines and the Governor Gordon's Public Health Orders.

As stated in July's newsletter, High Plains Power has established a COVID Relief Fund. If members are directly affected by COVID-19, they may qualify for some monetary assistance.

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High Plains Power would like to say thank you to all the Frontline Heroes! We appreciate everything you do!

WE HAVE POWER!!!

The professional, 'well-oiled machine' of a crew from High Plains Power was out to finish installing our poles and power lines. It was something to watch, these

guys are amazing! We are in good hands with High Plains.
We appreciate you!"
- Connie Craft Gustafson



Photos by Connie Craft Gustafson



Manager's Message

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Application forms are available on the website or call and request a form to be mailed to you. This program has limited funds and is dispersed on a first-come-first-serve basis.

When school resumes, let us be positive for our children and our teachers. They too are trying to adapt

to these unprecedented times. We at High Plains wish students and teachers a successful and healthy school year.



With School starting soon please keep these things in mind.....

Sharing the Road with School Buses

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus

Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

According to research by the National Safety Council, most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are 4 to 7 years old, and they're walking. They are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic
- In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the crosswalk or intersection
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign

- Take extra care to look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas
- Don't honk or rev your engine to scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right of way
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians
- Always use extreme caution to avoid striking pedestrians wherever they may be, no matter who has the right of way

Bullying and Cyberbullying

With everything going on in the world stress, tension, and anxiety are high. Bullying is repeated aggressive behavior that can be physical, verbal, or relational, in-person or online. It is not limited to just school aged children and can threaten a person's physical and mental safety as well as have an impact on their social and academic success.

Bullying is associated with negative outcomes for those who are bullied, including substance use, suicide, and impacts on physical and mental health. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) "almost 45,000 deaths occur from suicide each year. There are about 100 attempts of suicide to every 1 successful suicide. A little over 14% of students in high school consider suicide and approximately 7% of them attempt suicide." In a 2017 study about bullying, 20 percent of students aged 12-18 said they were bullied at school. Thirty-four percent of youth report being cyberbullied in their lifetime.

We are all in this together so please remember to just be **KIND!**

High Plains Power



is an official publication of High Plains Power, Inc., PO Box 713, Riverton, WY 82501.

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This is a monthly publication made available by High Plains Power, Inc., with the Wyoming Rural Electric News. Ideas, questions and comments are welcome.

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