



## Be on the Lookout

Winter winds and snow can damage our lines causing broken poles or broken cross arms. These dangling components are dangerous as they can remain energized. Park Electric asks that if you happen to see damaged equipment, please call us right away. Do not approach any damaged lines or green transformer boxes. The image below shows a broken pole where the power was never disrupted. It was found by a member checking on their livestock. Most of Park Electrics equipment is located in remote areas that is not easily visible by the crews. Park Electric would appreciate a call when anyone notices something that seems out of place. Be on the lookout for damaged poles, damaged green transformer boxes, or debris in the lines.



## It's Scholarship Time!

Attention High School Seniors: Park Electric is once again offering 2 opportunities to earn scholarships for college.



-The Basin/Park Electric (BEPE) Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded by Park Electric to one lucky winner for \$1000 towards their fall tuition.

-The Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA) Memorial Scholarship - This \$500 scholarship is given by MECA to 4 winners. The winners are first selected by their local cooperative, then sent to MECA for selection from winners across the state.

Students' parents or guardians must be current Park Electric members and they are encouraged to apply for both scholarships. All applications are due to the Park Electric office no later than Tuesday, January 25th. More information about the scholarships and the applications can be found at our website - [www.parkedelectric.coop/scholarship-and-application](http://www.parkedelectric.coop/scholarship-and-application), from the high school guidance counselor, or at the Park Electric office.

## Retirements and New Employees



Toni Cody, Park Electrics' former CFO, retired in December 2021 after 20+ years of service. Her dedication and knowledge of the Cooperative will be missed. Sarah

Sandberg has taken over the roll of Office Manager/Accountant. Park Electric welcomes Sarah to the office and wishes her well in her new role.

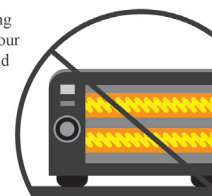
Park Electric welcomed a new lineman in December. Cole Boss comes from Southwestern Washington state to join the crew. Welcome, Cole!



### TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



Now that winter is in full swing, let's talk about the communication efforts Park Electric puts forth for the members. Sarah Ann Boyle is responsible for Communications, Payroll, Energy Efficiency programs, and coordinates our employee benefits. Sarah Ann has been a member of Park Electric for the last 15 years, and an employee for the last 6 ½ years. Prior to working at Park Electric, Sarah Ann worked for REI. In today's article we will review the multiple platforms she uses to communicate with our members.

One of the oldest methods of communication with our members is the Park Sparks newsletter in the Rural Montana Magazine that you are reading today. This newsletter has been a main source of information about the Coop since the 1940's. It was published as a stand alone newsletter and a bill insert until 2016 when we began publishing it in the statewide magazine. Sometimes you can find print ads in the Livingston Enterprise or the Big Timber Pioneer newspapers. Another medium we use is radio ads both on XL Country FM 100.7 and on AM 1450. For the most current information about Park Electric, look to our website and our Facebook page. Even if you are not connected to social media, our Facebook page is visible on our website. Sarah Ann uses all of these in an effort to connect with as many members as possible. She understands that a communicating across many platforms will try and help us reach as many members as possible.

Sarah Ann shares our goal to educate and inform our members about their cooperative. Lets talk in more detail about what to expect on a few of these platforms.

Our monthly Parks Sparks newsletter is primarily used to further educate our members on Power Supply, Member Programs, the cooperative business model, current events, and our community involvement. She uses our website and Facebook page to provide the most current content. For example, we use our Facebook page as a quick way to inform members when we have a large-scale outages. This method provides a quick way to reach many of our connected members from the time it begins to the estimated time the power will be restored. Also on Facebook, you will see pictures of staff providing electric service to our members, or our office staff being involved in community events, state wide events, and regional events. We also put tips for saving money, safety, and other fun content. Our website is the most comprehensive place to learn all about your cooperative. We have information on billing, capital credits, new service check list, energy efficiency, safety, bylaws, board member information, career opportunities, and much more.

All of this work has not gone unnoticed at the state level. Sarah Ann was recently recognized by the Montana Electric Cooperatives Association for some of her work. In particular she won an honorable mention in two categories in October 2021. The first award was for the Best Social Media Post or Presence, and her second award was for Best Print Advertisement. Congratulations are in order for her multiple awards in a very competitive environment.

We would like your feedback regarding topics of interest and the best medium to share them with you. The best way to contact us is to call the office and contact Sarah Ann or email her at [pec@parkelectric.coop](mailto:pec@parkelectric.coop).



Park Electric offers electrical safety demos for school classes and kids groups. Here, Sarah Ann is demonstrating for the LINKS program. (This photo is from a few years ago.) Contact us at [info@parkelectric.coop](mailto:info@parkelectric.coop) or call the office to schedule.

