

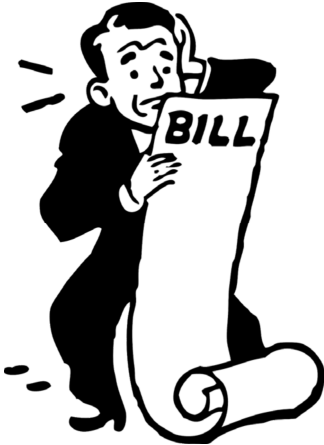


PARK SPARKS

DECEMBER 2019

PARK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

 Touchstone Energy Cooperatives



Help is Available!

Are you or someone you know struggling to make ends meet? Please don't wait until its too late. Many people who are struggling don't contact us until they are in jeopardy of being disconnected or have been shut off. Here are some options for anyone in need:

LIEAP-(Low Income Energy Assistance Program) This program helps eligible households with their winter heating costs, whether that be gas, wood, propane or electricity. Qualification requirements exist, so please contact HRDC for more information. 406-587-4486 or www.thehrdc.org

Energy Share of Montana-This program may provide a no interest loan to households in energy related "emergencies." These might include disconnection of power, lack of funds to purchase heating fuel, no heat or damage to a furnace. Contact HRDC for more information. 406-587-4486 or www.thehrdc.org

USBP Grant- Park Electric is happy to provide an in house grant program to folks in need. We offer grants based on household size, space/water heating type and need. A link to the form can be found at www.parkedelectric.coop/content/forms-and-applications or you can call the office at 222-3100.

Looking for a way to help someone in need? Park Electric offers the **Gift of Energy**; anonymous bill credits in any amount. We can send the person a note, or just surprise them on their next bill.

E Bill Users: We sometimes experience issues with our e-billing system. We have been notified that some people are not getting their bills and that other people have been having a hard time viewing the link to their bill inside the email. Please remember, you can always log into your account online and view your bill from there. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Laundry Tip: Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter clothing. You'll spend less time drying the lighter-weight items.



*Happy Holidays from Park Electric!
Our office will be closed Tuesday,
December 24th, Wednesday, December
25th and Wednesday, January 1st.
Have a happy and bright season!*

Managers Comments *by Matt Haggerty*

I want to thank all of you that came to the Park Electric 80th Annual Meeting at the Park County Fairgrounds. This year was one of the best attendance records we have had! I enjoyed getting to meet many of you before and after the meeting. If you were unable to make it, you missed a presentation by our independent auditor who reviewed the financials, noting that everything is in great order and we are doing very well. Not that I ever thought any differently, it's just nice to get conformation from an independent party.

Mike Warren gave the President's Report commenting on everything from our pole change outs, bird protection efforts, to the number of new services installed this year, which was 81 services and 8 miles of new line. Matt Wolfe of Stillwater mining company was our guest speaker, and he gave an insightful look at the operations, history, and the future of the company. I learned a lot from his speech, Matt thank you for speaking at our Annual meeting.

Next up was our elections, Perry Anderson of region 7 was re-elected to the Board of Trustees. For region 2 Dan Skattum was elected to the Board of Trustees. In my Manager's report I went over changes being made to improve communication with the membership. One way we have been doing this is by adding outage notifications, outage restoral estimates, and energy efficiency tips to our Facebook page. Also, we post photos of projects we are working on. So, if you have interest in being more informed please like or follow our page.

On the operations and maintenance side I reviewed our pole change out program, as well as the installation of trip savers on our lines. Trip savers are an electronic sectionalizing device that helps minimize the number of members out during an outage. They also help crews narrow down where an outage has occurred. We have 45 of these scheduled to go onto our system, with 15 of these already installed this year.

I addressed the causes of outages in the Paradise Valley area and our plan to fix them over the next year. To help with reliability in Paradise Valley we have teamed up with NorthWestern Energy to have our transmission feeds replaced from our Livingston sub to our Chico sub. This work should be completed by summer of 2020. We also play a shell game with substation transformers. The

transformer in our Chico substation will get changed to a larger one. The Chico transformer will be moved to our Pine Creek sub and the Pine Creek transformer goes to Dailey sub. We expect to change out the transformer at Chico substation in early spring of 2020. All of these will GREATLY help the membership.

Lastly, I had the privilege to give out a 30 years of service plaque to Dan Franck who is a Line Crew Foreman. Then a 35-year plaque to Bob Goodwine who is a Journeyman Lineman. Collectively that is 65 years of experience between these two. Thanks Dan and Bob for your service and your commitment to the Co-op.

For several years now we have been able to hand out ten \$1,000 scholarships at our annual meeting. We call them "Luck of the Draw" scholarships. All you need to do to win one is to have your name drawn. (Okay, there

are a couple of other requirements.) The winners are either high school seniors that plan to attend college next year or current college students that will be returning next fall. The student's parent must be a Park Electric member and



attend the meeting. I think it's important that people understand where this money comes from. As most of you know Park Electric uses the revenue we collect above our operating expenses, called margins, to fund capital improvements. These margins are referred to as capital credits. After fifteen years we refund those capital credits back to the members we collected them from in the form of a patronage refund. Think of it as a 15-year loan with no interest. Sometimes we are unable to locate the members from whom we collected those capital credits. If we can't find them, the State of Montana says those funds become unclaimed capital credits and must be either given to the State or the coop can use them for educational purposes. The Luck of the Draw scholarships fall under that category. It's also a very nice way to help out parents and students that we serve.

I will end this with another piece of information. We do not expect a rate increase in 2020. As many of you already know we have not had a rate increase since 2012. Park Electric's staff and board of trustees work very hard to continue to provide electricity at the lowest possible cost.