



PARK SPARKS

JUNE 2020

PARK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Turbulent Times

The last few months have been unlike anything we have ever experienced. It seems we don't know from one day to the next what the world will throw at us. One of the few things we continue to count on is reliable electricity. As a not for profit rural electric cooperative we work hard, even during times of crisis, to maintain that power supply. In order for the coop to continue to provide reliable, affordable electricity, we count on our consumers to pay their power bills in a timely fashion. As a not for profit cooperative, we set our rates to cover our expenses. Any excess revenue generated is returned to our members in the form of capital credits. If the cooperative was suddenly faced with a significant loss of cash flow from unpaid bills, the cost of doing business would definitely increase-and that would affect all our members.

During times of hardship or job loss, we understand that paying the bills is difficult. For this reason, Park Electric, and many other coops across the state, suspended the cycle of disconnects and fees for our residential members during the last few months. While we may not be sending out disconnect notices or charging late fees, please understand that the bill for your energy use has not gone away. As we start to emerge from this crisis, months of unpaid bills are not something anyone wants to face. If you are unable to pay your entire bill, please make an attempt to pay at least a portion.



We cannot help you if we don't know you need help. If you are in need of assistance, there are options available and we encourage you to reach out.

Energy Share of Montana, administered by HRDC, is a program that provides assistance with energy related emergencies. Energy Share offers funds to people in a time of need and gives you the choice to repay those funds during good times.

Another program available, also administered by HRDC, is the Low Income Energy Assistance

Program or LIEAP. This is a federally funded program that is run by the state of Montana. Right now, this program is encouraging people to apply regardless of income. They have funds available due to the COVID crisis that can help get the bill caught up. Application deadlines for LIEAP have been extended to September 30th, 2020. For more information on both these programs contact HRDC 406.587.4486 in Bozeman or 800.247.4778 in



HRDC
BUILDING A BETTER COMMUNITY



ENERGY SHARE of MONTANA
1 ▲ 888 ▲ 779 ▲ 7589

Billings.

Finally, Park Electric offers our own in house grant program for members or renters who may need help paying their bill. Please reach out for help before the bill becomes unmanageable.

Managers Comments *by Matt Haggerty*

Since the start of COVID-19, Park Electric's management team and staff have made many adjustments in how we operate to get through these trying times. These changes are to ensure our customer needs are met while safeguarding our staff. These changes have been put into place to ensure that we stay healthy, and that we will be here when you need us.

One major change was closing the front office to the general public. We are encouraging our members to use one of our two drop boxes, one is located in Albertsons, and the other is located in front of our office. You can also mail in your bill or pay online for a to our residential members for now, but I don't want members to misinterpret this grace period, ultimately the balances created will still be due and disconnects will be completed when the outlook for COVID-19 improves. If you need help with your bill, please call into our office or visit our website for more information. I would also like to mention steps we have taken inside our building. We have



segmented staff by putting measures into place to minimize exposure to other employees. Our line crews now meet in our truck barn to provide enough room to social distance while receiving their work and loading materials in the morning and evening. They have also been driving separate vehicles to their work sites. If you see our lineman out working in the field and you need to talk to them, please exercise social distancing of at least 6 feet for their safety and yours. Our staking department also requests that you use social distancing when you meet them for a site visit. During these visits most paper work will be handled electronically to minimize risk for both parties. Our last adjustment has been how we handled our monthly Board meetings with our trustees. We have been conducting our meetings via conference call, and we look forward to meeting in person in the near future. At Park Electric our goal is to keep the lights on, and keep our membership and staff safe during these challenging times. We all look forward to when we can see you face to face again, and return to normalcy.



SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Congratulations to Scott Tatum, our 2019 Basin/PEC Scholarship winner! Scott was chosen from a fantastic group of applicants to receive this honor. He is a senior at Park High and in the fall, he will be attending Midland

University in Nebraska where he plans to study business management and digital marketing and play baseball. In his spare time, Scott enjoys fly fishing, tennis and floating. He has been employed by Sage Lodge for the past 2 years and hopes to use his degree to work for their parent company Columbia Hospitality in Seattle.

AVOID SCAMS

Do not provide your PayPal account info, Social Security number or bank account number.



Unfortunately, crisis can bring out the worst in people. Scammers thrive in an environment of uncertainty. If you receive phone calls or emails that are threatening or harassing, please hang up and disregard them. Park Electric would never demand immediate payment over the phone or make threatening statements. Please report these incidences to us or the local authorities so we can help shut them down.