

FEBRUARY 2016

SPARKS

Focused on people. Built on power.

HIGH WEST ENERGY

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

The Electric Cooperative Purpose



Brian Heithoff, CEO/General Manager

In 2012, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the premier trade association representing approximately 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states, released a report entitled, "The Electric Cooperative Purpose - A Compass for the 21st Century." The findings of the blue ribbon task force comprised of a dozen co-op leaders from across the country were that an electric cooperative's purpose is to, "Power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives."

High West Energy is a member of NRECA and firmly believes that you, our members, need to be at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the fact that we are different from investor-owned utilities, where the primary purpose is to generate profit for their stockholders. Many of those stockholders don't live in the communities served by the utility. While High West Energy must of course generate enough revenue to cover our costs, profit is not our primary motive. Serving you and your neighbors is our number one priority.

As the Electric Cooperative Purpose report noted, "Our story is about ordinary people that banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it." While providing electricity is a pillar of our organization, we have evolved over the past 75+ years, but our purpose is still to serve you, our members.

Cooperatives enjoy the support of people from all walks of life. We operate in every type of business from agriculture, housing, finance, health care, technology, small business, food

and many more. Co-ops can be found in the most rural to the most urban areas.

One thing you can absolutely count on from your locally owned electric co-op: we will never be moving to Mexico or China like you hear of so many other companies doing. We will always be local – right here and ready to serve our members.

www.highwestenergy.com

HIGH WEST ENERGY, INC. • PO BOX 519 • PINE BLUFFS, WY 82082-0519 • LARAMIE COUNTY (307) 245-3261 • TOLL FREE (888) 834-1657 OUTAGE CALLS 24 HOURS A DAY



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board meetings are typically held on the fourth Monday of each month.

District 11 – Michael Lerwick
Albin, WY (307) 630-1277

District 12 – Gary Smith
Carpenter, WY (307) 649-2375

District 13 – Ed Prosser
Cheyenne, WY (307) 632-6068

District 14 – Jerry Burnett
Hereford, CO (970) 895-3386

District 15 – Dan Acheson
Kimball, NE (308) 235-2300

District 16 – Jamie Fowler
Cheyenne, WY (307) 214-9191

District 17 – Russ Nielsen
Potter, NE (308) 250-4262

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Brian Heithoff, CEO/General Manager
Jeff Bruckner, Operations and Wiring Manager

Dave Crouse, Chief Information Officer
Lindsay Forepaugh, Chief Financial Officer

Konnie Keehnen, Energy Services Manager
Lloyd Sisson, Engineering Manager
Lorrell Walter, Public Relations and Marketing Manager

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Closed weekends & holidays

CHEYENNE SERVICE CENTER

3302 I-80 Service Road
Cheyenne, WY 82009
Open Monday – Friday
10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.



How to Clean Refrigerator Coils

...AND WHY IT MATTERS

Your refrigerator is one of the largest, most-used appliances in your home. It requires only minimal maintenance – just simple cleaning of the condenser coils, which disperse heat. If the coils are covered with dust, gunk or pet hair, they cannot diffuse the heat properly and will not run efficiently. A bigger problem can result if the compressor burns out from having to run constantly because of the grimy coating. This can be an expensive problem. The bottom line? A minor investment in time once a year can save you cold cash down the line.

1. Locate the refrigerator's coil, a grid-like structure, or fan that will likely have a covering or grate protecting it. The coil is usually concealed behind the front toe kick or in the back. Some newer models have internal coils, so if you don't find them in the front or back, this may be the case with your fridge.

2. If the coil is in the back, slide the refrigerator away from the wall, removing the plug from the electrical outlet when possible. You may also need to disconnect the line to the water dispenser or icemaker to allow enough room to work.

3. Gently vacuum and clean the coil. Using the brush or crevice attachment, carefully vacuum the dust and dirt wherever you see it. If you have pulled the fridge out, vacuum and wipe down the sides and back of the fridge and the floor.

4. Once the floor is dry, plug in the refrigerator and rearrange the power cord and supply lines so they don't get a kink or stuck under the weight of the refrigerator. Slide the refrigerator back into place. Be sure to replace the toe kick panel if this was removed.

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Volunteering is the High West Way

"Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more."
 – H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Cooperative Principle #7 is "concern for community," a principle that is actively demonstrated by many High West employees. One doesn't need to spend much time in the office to realize that High West employees are giving of their time. From youth athletics to church, scouts to sportsman organizations, and service organizations to community events, members of the High West team actively support the communities they live in.

Last year, High West Energy created a volunteerism committee to track the volunteer hours of its employees in an effort to recognize and celebrate the spirit of volunteerism. As a family of companies, the cooperative set a goal of 3,500 volunteer hours for 2015. At the end of the year, High West Energy's employees donated a total of 3,955 hours to their communities, well exceeding the goal.

It is clear that youth athletics are a passion for many employees, with 762 hours of time spent in that area. It is no surprise that sportsman organizations are also important to the staff, with 617 hours of time donated. A handful of employees are first responders, serving their communities via fire and rescue, for a total of 538 hours. Rounding out the top five are church (511 hours) and community celebrations (429 hours).



Save the Date - Telephone Town Hall

Presented by Brian Heithoff, CEO/General Manager

Monday, February 22 at 7 p.m.

Topic: A general update on the financial strength of the cooperative.

Event moderators will call High West Energy members prior to the event. If you are not at home, but would like to access the conference, please contact Susan McGaugh at (307) 245-4305 to request a call-in number prior to the Town Hall meeting.

Energy Efficiency Tip

Consider purchasing rechargeable batteries – and an ENERGY STAR charger for them – which are more cost effective than disposable batteries. In the U.S. alone, more energy-efficient battery chargers could save families more than \$170 million annually. Source: energy.gov



Manning Earns Certified Energy Manager Certification

Joy Manning, High West Energy's energy management advisor, recently received the Certified Energy Manager® (CEM) credential. The CEM has specific education and experience requirements and tests candidates across a comprehensive body of knowledge via a four hour examination.

According to Al Thumann, P.E., C.E.M., Executive Director for the Association of Energy Engineers, "The CEM program is the most recognized credential for energy managers, recognizing individuals who have demonstrated high levels of experience, competence, proficiency, and ethical fitness in the energy management profession."

Of the approximately 14,000 people who actively hold a CEM certification, approximately 13 percent of them are women, placing Joy among an elite group of females who have earned this certification in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Congratulations, Joy!



FEATURED PERSON

Ardith Cushing

Member Service Representative, Retired

Ardith (Ardie) Cushing began her career at High West Energy on November 1, 1983. Initially hired to provide janitorial services, she demonstrated a desire to take on more responsibility, and was promoted to member service representative in 1997. As the sixth most tenured employee at the cooperative, Ardie has been a firsthand witness to the organization's evolution over the past three decades.

When she first began working in the office, it was "simpler, more basic." People paid their bill by cash or check, either by mail or in person. "Today, there are so many more ways for people to pay their bill," she says. "It's gone beyond me," she laughs.

In her final days working at the co-op, Ardie acknowledged that the thing she liked most about her job is her co-workers. "They are my friends. We support one another in times of need and we are here for each other."

Ardie and her husband, John, have three children and five grandchildren. In her retirement, she plans to do more of the things she enjoys: baking, gardening (vegetables and flowers), traveling and enjoying time with family. Congratulations and best wishes, Ardie!

The employees donating the most number of hours are:



Valerie Eastman
High West Energy
451 hours



Dave Crouse
HWDS
425 hours



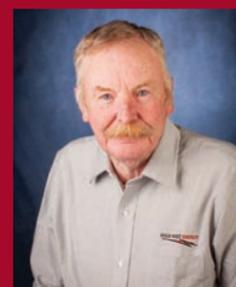
Brandon Wheeler
High West Energy
333 hours



Joe Shogrin
High West Energy
327 hours



Lorrell Walter
High West Energy
239 hours



Doug Elgin
High West Energy
236 hours



Rachel VanDeMark
High West Energy
174 hours



Alan Strauch
High West Wiring
121 hours



Mike Rotert
High West Energy
97 hours



Bret Steger
HWDS
79 hours