

MARCH 2016

SPARKS

Focused on people. Built on power.

HIGH WEST ENERGY

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Teach Your Children About Electrical Safety



Brian Heithoff, CEO/General Manager

Electricity is a dynamic power source. We live our lives surrounded by it, but sometimes we forget just how dangerous electricity can be. Many home electrical fires, injuries and electrocutions can be prevented when we understand and practice electrical safety. This is especially true for our youngest co-op members.

Start at an early age, teaching them about the physical dangers associated with electrical components and how to handle

electrical plugs, outlets, switches and other devices. Keep in mind, talking to your children about electrical safety should also include fun activities and facts about the basics—what is electricity, the need to respect its power and how to use it efficiently as they study, work and play.

As we all know, kids will be kids. Getting them to show interest in some of these lessons won't be easy. Just remember that what your children learn from you today can be a lifesaver later when they encounter potential hazards like downed power lines in their path, play hide-and-seek behind those big metal electrical boxes in the neighborhood or are tempted to clamber up a utility pole.

Gather your youngsters around the kitchen table or on the front porch—some of the best teachable moments about electrical safety can happen in and around your home. Look around. There are plenty of opportunities to demonstrate safety that are as close as the electrical outlet on your living room wall. For example, show young children how plugs work, and let them know that even if they are curious about the slits of an electrical

outlet, nothing else should be placed inside. Each year about 2,400 children end up in the emergency room after suffering injuries caused by inserting objects—paper clips, pens, screws, nails, forks, hair pins, coins and more—into electrical receptacles. That's about seven children a day who sustain injuries ranging from electric shock to burns.

But this isn't the only electrical mishap that impacts youngsters. Our reliance on electronics and gadgets have left both youngsters and their parents at risk when they overcrowd electrical outlets, continue to use frayed wires, place devices near liquids or leave electronics on for long periods of time.

The Electrical Safety Foundational International (www.esfi.org) is among the many national organizations offering free kits, videos and interactive online tools that make learning and practicing electrical safety fun for you and your children. And as they grow older, remember to keep teaching them about the power of electricity and how to use it safely.



The Power of Operation Round Up

It started as a simple idea at a co-op in South Carolina in 1989—round up the co-op member's electric bill to the next dollar, and then use it to do good work in your community. Today, hundreds of electric co-ops throughout the country, including High West Energy, use this idea to help their members and those living in and around the communities they serve.

All co-ops adhere to the seven cooperative principles, including "Concern for Community." The Operation Round Up program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle. Nationwide, the average co-op member donates \$6, with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This may not seem like a large amount, but when 6650 member accounts are participating in the program, it adds up to make a significant impact.

Operation Round Up is a relatively new initiative at High West Energy. In 2015, participating members donated \$43,824.59 to the fund. In turn, \$30,291.10 was distributed to assist 53 families with a wide range of needs, including (but not limited to) serious illness, fire and unexpected tragedies.

The program is always voluntary, and at any time, members can change their minds about participating. However, once folks see the good work the program does in their community, they almost always keep contributing.

For more information, visit highwestenergy.com/operation-round-up.

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.

www.highwestenergy.com

High West Energy Adds Another Option for Paying Bills

"And finally, Winter, with its bitin', whinin' wind, and all the land will be mantled with snow." -Roy Bean

Living in this part of the country, just about everyone can agree that sometimes it's no fun running those "must do" errands. When the wind is howling and the snow is whipping across the plains, getting out of the car to run into the store, the bank, etc. is about the last thing anyone wants to do. Recently, High West Energy made it a bit easier for members to pay their electricity bill at the office. As part of the construction project completed in mid-2015, the cooperative now has a drive-up window that allows members to pay their bill without stepping foot out of the car.

While our team enjoys having the opportunity to visit with members who visit the office, we recognize that our members' time is valuable. We hope you find the drive thru a convenient way to pay your bill if you choose to do so in person.

REMINDER

As credit and debit cards expire and/or are updated to the "chip and PIN" system, it's important that members who rely on their card for automatic payment for their electricity bill contact the office to update their card information. Please call High West Energy at (307) 245-3261 and one of our member service representatives will be happy to assist you.

Ever wondered about other ways in which you can pay your electricity bill? High West Energy is pleased to offer the following methods:

Auto Bank Draft	Drop Box
Credit Card	Budget Billing
Online	Mail

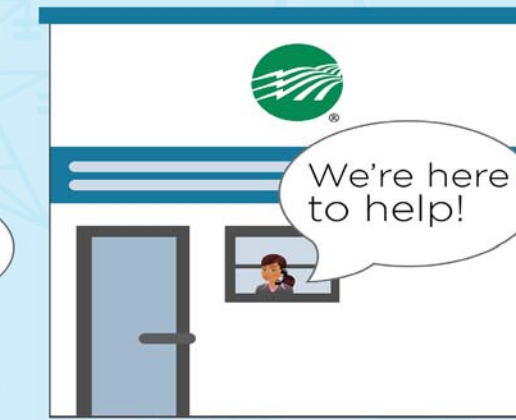


Avoid stress and unnecessary expense when replacing your water heater. Your cooperative can help you make a plan for what to do before your water heater fails.

Give us a call today!



HIGH WEST ENERGY



Avoid a Bad Decision When Your Water Heater Breaks

YOUR CO-OP CAN HELP

If you want to save money on your energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions to help the environment, a good step would be to have a replacement plan for your water heater when it fails. A key part of that plan is to get advice from High West Energy.

That helpful tip comes from an expert who's just published research showing that the increased use of electric appliances would improve energy efficiency at home and for the nation.

Keith Dennis is the senior principal of end-use solutions and standards at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). His article published in the November issue of The Electricity Journal, shows that for decades we've been using assumptions and measurements for energy efficiency that are no longer accurate. It explains that electric water heaters are a much better choice than natural gas – both for environmental impact, as well as home energy savings. And that's important. Water heating accounts for approximately 15 percent of your home's energy use.

The problem is, replacing a water heater is often a panic decision—water heaters seem to break at the worst time, and you're more likely to be thinking about the guests coming to visit the next day than the best energy efficient decision.

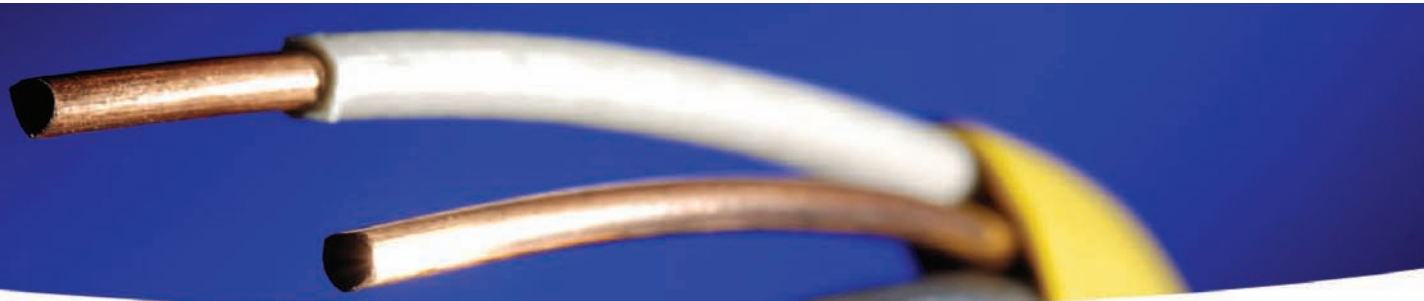
"Most people replace their water heater in an emergency situation," Dennis says. "Moving forward, utilities will be more and more involved in helping with that purchasing decision."

High West Energy has rebate and incentive programs that make it easier to buy the most effective water heater. Before purchasing a new water heater for your home, contact Joy Manning, energy management advisor, at (307) 245-3261.

Interested in converting your gas water heater to electric?

You may be eligible for a FREE water heater.

Contact High West Energy for more information on the Watt-er Wise program!



Drop by our office today or set up an appointment for us to come to you.

HIGH WEST WIRING SOLUTIONS:

A range of customers. We're using more than 75 years of experience to address the electrical issues and needs of customers throughout Southeastern Wyoming, Western Nebraska and Northern Colorado.

A variety of services. Whether you are hoping to upgrade, expand or repair, the service experts at High West Wiring have the expertise to meet the requirements of your electrical infrastructure.

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FEATURED PERSON

Curtis Lund
Digital Marketing Designer

High West Digital Solutions, a full-service IT provider offering support across a wide spectrum of computer-related issues, was founded in May 2013. It didn't take long for customers to begin asking for web design and hosting services, which is how Curtis Lund became part of the HWDS team.

A native of Cedar Falls, Iowa, Curtis has taken numerous courses in marketing and graphic/web design at Laramie County Community College, Western Nebraska Community College and the University of Northern Iowa. He has an extensive background in retail marketing and eCommerce at well-respected companies such as Cabela's, Bass Pro Shops and Sierra Trading Post. Prior to working at High West Digital Solutions, he worked for the Wyoming Office of Tourism and owned his own company, Surf @ The Beach Design.

Curtis and his wife of 10 years, Angi, have seven children: Andrew, Rachel, Quintin, Jaimee, Alexander, Emily and Alyssa. They are the proud grandparents of Zak, Emily, Lilee, Mitchell, Padric, Sophia and Lincoln. They reside in Pine Bluffs, Wyo. In his spare time, Curtis enjoys designing and building furniture, riding his ATV, hunting and fishing.