

MARCH 2015

SPARKS

Focused on people. Built on power.

HIGH WEST ENERGY

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Maintenance Matters



Brian Heithoff, CEO/General Manager

I want to share some information about how we maintain the cooperative's assets—namely lines, poles, transformers and breakers.

High West Energy has recently adopted a more rigorous program for inspecting and maintaining our electric lines and substations. We are now inspecting all overhead electric lines below 34.5 kV over a 3-year period with approximately 33 percent of the system inspected each year. Overhead lines operated by High West Energy at 34.5 kV or above will be inspected at least annually for

damage and to determine the condition of the overhead line insulators.

At the present time High West Energy has approximately 220 miles of underground cable installed on our distribution system. Underground cabinets and transformers are inspected as part of the detailed line inspection program, with all underground being inspected over a 3-year period.

High West Energy owns and operates 30 distribution substations. Each substation is inspected once a month and a substation report form is completed. Maintenance is scheduled as required.

High West Energy has a program of regular above and below ground line pole inspection and treatment, with the complete system scheduled to be inspected on a 12-year cycle, which is an improvement over what we have done in the past. The inspections are done on an area basis with all cooperative owned poles, within a given area, being inspected each year.

High West Energy has a maintenance program in which all oil circuit reclosers and sectionalizers on the system are scheduled for maintenance every three to six years

depending on whether they are vacuum or hydraulic units. The units are disassembled, inspected, repaired as necessary, filled with new oil, cleaned and painted.

High West Energy is also in the process of starting the installation of a "SCADA" system. This system will allow us to monitor voltage and current values by circuit and phase for all 30 substations. The SCADA system alarms us when voltage levels fall outside the allowable range, when fault currents are detected, and when substation reclosers have locked out. This investment, which may be installed over multiple years, has the potential to significantly reduce blinks and outages.

Since last fall when we began this more rigorous maintenance program, we have already prevented 24 outages. We recognize power reliability is imperative and are taking some aggressive steps to make improvements in this area.

As always, we appreciate your support and consider it a privilege to serve you.

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

FACEBOOK.COM/HIGHWESTENERGY @HIGHWESTENERGY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

District 11 – Troy Freeburg
Bushnell, NE (307) 287-2633

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

Lloyd Sisson, Engineering Manager

Karen Rintelmann, Chief Financial Officer

Jeff Bruckner, Operations Manager

Konnie Rask, Energy Services 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.

Help Us Say "Thanks" for Keeping the Lights On

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has declared the second Monday in April – April 13, 2015 – as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

The linemen at High West Energy have an important job: to deliver safe, reliable electricity. On a typical day, linemen maintain electrical distribution lines or build service to new homes and businesses in Wyoming, Nebraska and Colorado. They have a lot on their plates. But when our dispatcher calls crews with a problem, everything else takes a backseat. Power restoration takes precedence on a lineman's to-do list. These brave men are always on call. We have crews standing by to serve you 24 hours a day, in the middle of the night or wee hours of the morning, weekends and holidays.

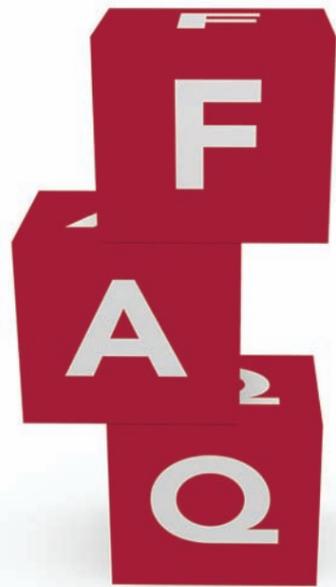
These highly skilled men light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives better. National Lineman Appreciation Day is an opportunity to thank the linemen for the work they do to keep the power on and the public safe.

Please join us in thanking the 30 linemen at High West Energy by sending a card to:

High West Energy
Attn: Lineman Appreciation
PO Box 519
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082

www.highwestenergy.com





What is the Access Charge?

As a cooperative member, the access charge is your proportional share of the cost for wires, transformers, service drop and meters that give you, a member, access to the electric grid. Unlike a privately owned utility, electric cooperatives have fewer customers per mile of line to share the costs of the infrastructure, which is why our access charge is often times higher than utilities that serve cities and towns. The access charge is a fixed cost paid every month, so everyone within a rate class contributes the same amount. The access is based upon system costs (member costs) that are incurred prior to the consumption of energy. The cost to maintain and operate our system exists even when no electricity is used.

We're Giving Away Three \$100 Bill Credits!

How do you enter? Simply verify your contact information and you'll be entered to win.

It's been a while since we've updated our records and we've found that many of the phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses we have on file are no longer valid. It's important to us that we have up-to-date contact information in case we need to notify you of a planned outage, so we can minimize the inconvenience to you.

Verify your information in one of three ways:

1. Fill out the form below and mail to:
High West Energy | Attn: Member Services | PO Box 519 | Pine Bluffs, WY 82082
2. Call (307) 245-3261 and one of our member service representatives will be happy to update your information.
3. Update online by visiting <http://bit.ly/1F3hsqu>.



Name on account: _____
see the address label of your magazine to determine what this is

Account number: _____

Service address: _____
include street address, city, state and zip code

Mailing address (if different from above): _____
include street address, city, state and zip code

Home phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

E-mail address: _____



Free Camp Opportunity for 9th, 10th and 11th Graders

Each year High West Energy accepts applications from area high school students to attend Youth Energy Leadership Camp which will take place July 13-17, 2015 at the 4-H Camp in Halsey, Neb. The five day camp is set up to give young people a better understanding of the legislative process, electric power generation and the rural electric program, while enjoying traditional camp activities such as basketball, volleyball and canoeing. Youth Energy Leadership Camp is established as an operating rural electric system and provides a "hands-on" approach to member-owned businesses. Camp expenses and transportation are provided by each sponsoring rural electric system.

Those who attend Youth Energy Leadership Camp are then eligible to attend the Youth Energy Tour, an annual, week-long, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. Nationwide, rural electric

providers from 41 states participate. In all, more than 1,500 young people from across the nation gather for this event.

Interested in attending? **Return the form below by May 15 to:**

High West Energy | Attn: Youth Camp
PO Box 519 | Pine Bluffs, WY 82082

Questions? Call Lorrell Walter at (307) 245-4337 or e-mail lwalter@highwestenergy.com



Name: _____

Age: _____ Birthday: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Parents' names: _____

Grade as of the 2014-2015 school year: _____



FEATURED PERSON

Karl Zerck Journeyman

In order to meet the demands of an increasing work load, the High West family of companies has hired more than 20 people over the past year. One of those new employees is Karl Zerck, a Nebraska native who has been with the co-op since October 2014.

Karl was born and raised in Alliance, Neb. and is a graduate of the power line construction and maintenance program at Western Nebraska Community College.

Prior to working for High West Energy, he was an apprentice lineman at Northwest Rural Public Power District and a journeyman lineman for the City of Alliance.

"I love working outside and the difference my job makes in peoples' lives," says Karl.

Karl and his wife, Elizabeth, have two children, Kooper and Ember. They recently purchased a home in Pine Bluffs. His hobbies include fishing, hunting, camping and woodworking. This summer he hopes to volunteer with the Boy Scouts by helping his dad with maintenance at Camp Laramie Peak.