



Missoula Electric Cooperative Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Putting the *You* in Utility

MISSOULA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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General Manager

Mark Hayden
Editor
Vickie Sutton

Manager's Report — *By Mark Hayden*

The power of cooperatives

One of our seven guiding principles at Missoula Electric Cooperative is “Cooperation Among Cooperatives.”

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative way of business by working together through local, regional, and national structures.

Missoula Electric Cooperative works locally with many other cooperatives as part of our effort to serve you effectively.

Energy Partners LLC (EP) was formed in 2001 and is jointly owned by MEC and Mountain West Cooperative. Today EP is a leading supplier of propane to homes, farms, and businesses throughout Western Montana.

Another local effort is the Electronic Educational Equipment (Triple E) program. Since 1989, MEC and Blackfoot Telephone have demonstrated their commitment to improving the learning experience of our area’s children by purchasing electronic equipment for schools through this important program.

Regionally, MEC is a member of the Montana Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) as well as the Western Montana Electric Generating and Transmission Cooperative

(WVG&T).

The MECA provides legislative representation, safety and loss control training, the *Rural Montana* magazine publication, and a variety of other educational opportunities for both members and employees.

The WVG&T cooperative represents seven Montana distribution cooperatives on important regional power supply issues that directly impact our members.

A portion of the money we use to construct new electric facilities or upgrade older equipment is borrowed from the Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC is a national cooperative formed in 1969 by rural energy cooperatives to provide a source of funds to supplement the financing provided by the Rural Utility Service (RUS), formerly the REA.

Today, CFC has over \$20 billion in total assets and with its high financial ratings provides Missoula Electric with a stable financing alternative at a time when credit markets are tight and financial support from the RUS is decreasing.

The Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange is another national cooperative we do business with. Federated was formed years ago to provide insurance to the co-ops at a time when we could not get insurance at a



reasonable price from other insurance companies.

Today Federated provides competitively priced insurance to electric cooperatives nationwide with a minimum of claims issues.

I mention all this because October is National Cooperative Month, a time when cooperative organizations nationwide join together to celebrate and to thank their members. By working together with all of these other cooperatives, locally, regionally and nationally, we at Missoula Electric Cooperative can serve you more effectively and competitively. Stop by the office during the month of October and help us celebrate by enjoying some refreshments in the lobby.

The only reason Missoula Electric Cooperative exists is to serve you, our members, and this is a little way of saying thanks for all that you do for your cooperative.

I hope to see you during National Cooperative Month.





The Seven Cooperative Principles

Principle #1- Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

Principle #2 - Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The board of directors is elected by and accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

Principle #3 - Non-Profit and Return of Capital Credits

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. They do not issue stock. Surpluses are margins, not profits.

The cooperative allocates margins, in excess of any amounts needed to operate the cooperative, to members' capital credits accounts. Unlike IOU's, margins are retained locally - not sent off to distant stockholders as dividend payments.

Principle #4 - Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are not governmental organizations. They are privately owned, autonomous corporations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

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Help with your utility costs

For our Members who may need assistance with their power bills there are 2 programs that are available.

LIEAP benefits are government funded and are for your main heating source for the winter months. This benefit covers only the energy usage and does not cover the monthly base charge, deposits or any fees. This program begins October 1 and cannot be used for bills prior to that date. LIEAP applications for the heating season 2009 - 2010 will be mailed to the address on file used for heating season 2008-2009. If your address has changed please contact the HRC office in Missoula.

ENERGY SHARES is a privately funded program used for electricity or heating emergencies. You must have received a disconnection notice and been denied for LIEAP assistance to apply. Energy Shares can be used for all heating types - electricity, wood, gas, propane and diesel fuel. You may receive Energy Shares once in a heating season and there is a lifetime benefit of \$700. Since this program is funded by donations, a recipient is asked to repay if possible. If a recipient does repay their benefit, they become eligible once again for the lifetime benefit.

For more information, please call Human Resource Council at 728-3710.

How efficient are your appliances? Kill-A-Watt — Now available for check-out

This simple device plugs into any electrical outlet. Then, plug an appliance into the Kill A Watt to find out how efficient your appliances are. The screen displays the amount of energy the appliance uses by the Killowatt hour.

Deciding which appliances to unplug between uses can cut your electric bill significantly! You can also monitor your power's voltage, line frequency, and power factor. This will help you decide if it's time to buy a new, more energy efficient appliance.

Missoula Electric Co-op has donated two handheld Kill a Watt power meters

to each of the libraries in our service territory. So the next time you go to the library you can get the books you want and also a meter to check your appliance energy usage.

A Kill A Watt can be checked out from any of the locations below:

Missoula Electric Co-op, Seeley Lake Branch Library, Swan Valley Community Library, Frenchtown Community Library, Mineral County Public Library, Alberton Branch Library and Ovando School Library.



Be safe with propane at your hunt camp

Welcome to another great hunting season! Throughout this hunting season please keep propane cylinder safety a high priority for you and your crew while at camp.

- Here are a few tips to remember:
- Always transport and store a cylinder in a secure and upright position so it will not fall, shift, or roll.
 - Always proceed directly to your destination and immediately remove the cylinder from your vehicle.
 - Never store or place a propane



cylinder indoors or in an enclosed area such as a basement, garage, or tent.

- Do Not smoke or have any ignition sources such as flames or spark producing electrical tools in the area while using or handling cylinders
- Never under any circumstances try to repair or modify your cylinders valves, or regulators, or any part of your propane appliance.

Energy Partners wishes you a safe and successful hunting season!

Use portable space heaters safely

With the weather getting colder, portable space heaters are being used again. Keep the following safety tips in mind when using a space heater.

- Portable space heaters are not for heating the whole house, but should be used to provide temporary heat only for single rooms.
- Plug the space heater directly into the electrical outlet. Do not use an extension cord to power a space heater.
- Check the power cords to make sure they are not frayed, cracked or cut.
- Make sure your space heater has an automatic shut-off in the event it tips over.
- If the heater is running on fuels such as gas, kerosene or wood, follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.



Make sure carbon monoxide detectors are installed. Keep chimneys and flues free from corrosion or blockages.

- Curtains, draperies, loose paper and upholstery should be kept several feet away from the space heater.
- It is very important to turn off your heater when you leave the room.
- Do not use your heater to dry clothes, not even a pair of wet socks.

Save energy this winter



According to the Department of Energy the average American household spends \$1,900 a year on power bills. Almost half of that energy goes to heating and cooling your home. We can all do things to reduce the amount of energy we use this winter.

- Replace your furnace's air filter before the heating season begins. A dirty filter will reduce air flow which makes your system work harder to deliver air to the registers.
- Be sure your ducts are delivering all the warm air they can. If you can see the duct seams where the metal comes together, seal these joints with a duct sealant.
- Remove the duct registers in your rooms and check the connection between the duct and the drywall. If you see a gap, this gap allows heated air to escape into the walls. Cover this gap with foil tape or fill it with

duct mastic.

- If you have any ducts that run into the attic or through a cold basement or crawl space, be sure the ducts are well insulated. If the insulation is missing or falling off, be sure to replace or repair the insulation.
- Call a heating contractor to service your system. Fall is a good time to have a service technician look at your heating system to make sure that it is running properly.

Source: www.energystar.gov

MEC Energy Tip: **Fall is coming...** **Is your house ready?**

Drafty windows and doors, cold walls or ceilings, high energy bills and poor insulation are all symptoms of air leaks (usually in the attic and basement). Seal air leaks, add insulation and choose Energy Star-qualified windows when replacing old ones.

You'll improve the comfort and durability of your home, save energy and help protect the environment.

Source:
Energy Star



Principles

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Principle #5 - Education, Training, and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation. CFC has a cooperative education fund to support this.

Principle #6 - Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

Principle #7 - Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



Visit our website at
www.missoulaelectric.com
to learn more about
your electric
cooperative.



D'Angelo Photography



Energy Sense™

Together we can...



Together we can make a difference for *their* generation. We started our Energy Sense campaign this summer to empower our members to make common sense choices about energy. Energy conservation is a priority at Missoula Electric. We care about our members and as a local cooperative we have a vested interest in the future of energy in our community.

Over the next several months our Energy Sense campaign will be available to help members find ways to use energy more wisely. But we can only go so far and do so much; the real choice is yours. Will you use the programs and services available to take control of your energy bill? Are you willing to eliminate that extra refrigerator that you might not need or change your light bulbs to compact fluorescents?

Missoula Electric is ready to make a difference for their generation. Are you?

Visit our website at www.missoulaelectric.com or call us at 541-4433 to learn more.