



**HIGH
PLAINS
POWER**

NEWS

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative
The power of human connections



MEMBER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010

Manager's Message

Dear Members: _____ *by Jeff Hohn*



Well it seems that summer has finally arrived. After a long, wet spring we are seeing hotter temperatures and longer days.

With that, the irrigation season is in full swing for some of our High Plains Power members. We have been receiving phone calls from some of the irrigators about the horsepower charge. With the wet spring, a lot of you did not run any irrigation systems in May and part of June. However, you still received a billing statement from High Plains Power for a horsepower charge even though you did not use any kilowatt hours.

As always, the horsepower charge is billed May through August regard-

less if you used your pumps or not. The horsepower charge is based on the size of your motor for your irrigation system.

In years past, before your irrigation system was energized your total horsepower charge had to be paid up front. We have made it easier on the members by dividing that charge into four months, thus the charges for May, June, July and August.

I hope you all have a safe and happy summer. I know August seems like the end of summer especially with school starting this month.

As always, if you need to contact me for any reason, please feel free to contact me by phone or you can email me at jhhpp@wyoming.com

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Congratulations to our New Journeyman Linemen!

Congratulations go out to new High Plains Power linemen, Chancy Boeser, from the Casper office, Ramsey Allen, from the Thermopolis office and Ray Huggins of the Riverton office.

It's a long road to becoming a journey level lineman. Apprentices must complete four years of "on the job" training that includes operating bucket trucks, digger trucks, backhoes and wire and cable handling power equipment. Apprentices practice the physically demanding task of climbing poles in all kinds of weather, summer and winter,

rain, snow or shine. Techniques for working on energized high voltage lines are learned and practiced while learning to install and maintain specialized power utility equipment. They must also master technical skills such as the proper use of sophisticated electrical testing equipment.

In addition to on the job training, apprentices attend many schools dealing with specific pieces of utility equipment while they complete a four year correspondence course. The Merchant Job

Training and Safety Program is a correspondence program administered in training linemen in 38 of the United States.

Apprentices learn to operate as an integral part of a team. Teamwork is the name of the game for linemen who work in crews that depend on each individual member to maintain safety and efficiency in a hazardous work environment. We're proud to count Chancy, Ramsey and Ray as new additions to the list of fine High Plains Power linemen.



Above: Left to right - Line foreman Sid McDonald presents journeyman certificate to Ramsey Allen.



Above: Left to right - C J Caress, line Foreman presents credentials to Ray Huggins.



Chancy Boeser accepts his journeyman certificate from Rich Lobdell, Safety Coordinator.

The Big Green Box

Transformers need to be left alone

- **Never let anything grow closer than 10 feet from a pad-mount transformer. (The access panel is marked by a handle, lock, and sticker on the front.)**
- **Never enclose a pad-mount transformer with fencing, shrubs, or anything else with less than a 10-foot-wide gate or opening.**
- **Never allow children to play near pad-mount transformers.**

Never pour waste oils, chemicals, or other liquids on or near a pad-mount transformer. These liquids can seep into the ground and damage underground cables



By Megan McKoy-Noe

They're big. They're often green. They generally sit on concrete, often within housing developments. Some folks don't like these "electrical boxes" (a common nickname for pad-mount transformers) and try to hide them with bushes, fences, or flower beds. But stay clear: even small additions around pad-mount transformers create hazards.

To improve aesthetics of new neighborhoods, developers often put in underground power lines. While this eliminates utility poles and overhead wires, it requires installing pad-mounted transformers in some front yards. Unfortunately some homeowners, concerned about curb appeal, attempt to screen pad-mount transformers from view—creating an unsafe situation for all concerned.

We realize landscaping represents an investment of time and money. We respect the effort and care our members invest in making their properties attractive. However, landscaping around electrical equipment interferes with our ability to deliver reliable power.

High Plains Power recommends leaving at least 10 feet of clear space in front of pad-mount transformers. Linemen repair units while they are energized so homeowners don't experience an interruption in service. To ensure safety, they use an 8-foot fiberglass hot stick that requires about 10 feet of "elbow room" in front of the access panel.

In some cases, consumers may leave plenty of space in front of the transformer, but grow vegetation on the other three sides. This invites other problems. For example, plant roots can interfere with its op-

eration. Overheating is another big concern that can cause service interruptions when air circulation is compromised.

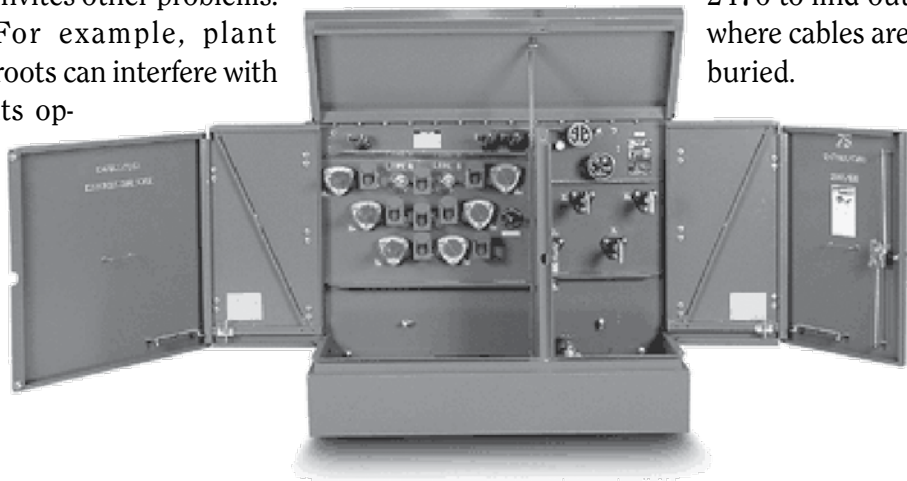
Pad-mounted transformers surrounded by vegetation or a structure may overheat and cause service interruptions when the air circulation around them is compromised. Allow at least three to four feet of space on both sides and behind the transformer.

Members should also be aware that plantings along rights-of-way—strips of land owned by a member on which the co-op places poles, wires, and other equipment like pad-mount transformers—could be damaged by co-op vehicles.

Occasionally, we may need to repair a transformer, and eventually transformers must be upgraded and replaced. To perform this work, line trucks must be driven into the right-of-way and the transformer lifted out. Although we try to minimize the impact, plants will be damaged if they're in the way.

Call before you dig!

Because underground service continues from the transformer to your home, you should never dig anywhere in your yard without first calling ONE CALL 1-800-849-2476 to find out where cables are buried.



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High Plains Power cares about kids!

It's back to school time - a time when we need to be aware, once again, of our smallest members. They need our attention and our protection, as well as our education. We at High Plains Power hope you and your children have a safe school year.



High Plains Power

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