



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections

NEWS

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

October 2017

Manager's Message

Dear Members: _____ *by Marlene Morss*



As I write this article, it is only the later part of August as the staff at the WREN magazine has moved up the deadline for the submission of articles by about two weeks, so I am trying to fast forward my thinking for the October issue. It is after August 21st and we survived the solar eclipse. According to the local news, more than 500,000 traveled to the wonderful state of Wyoming via automobile. That's pretty incredible as the population for the whole state is about 586,000. I must admit, watching the eclipse was pretty surreal and mystical and what made it even greater....I got to witness it from my own backyard!

Since it is still August, I don't have the official figure for a rate increase from Tri-State. As I stated last month, Tri-State will approve their budget at the September board meeting and it will be after that time that I get the official figures. I will be sure to pass this information to you next month.

October is cooperative month. High Plains Power is celebrating National Cooperative Month in October along with about 40,000 other cooperative businesses serving more than 120 million people nationwide. There are about 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states that all share the common goal of trying to meet the needs of their member/owners, rather than generating returns for distant investors.

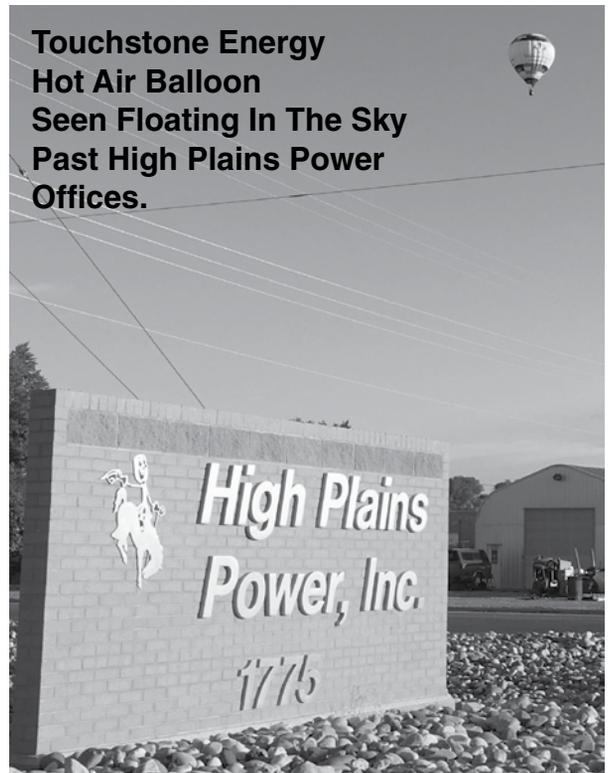
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Watch for Trick or Treaters!

Individually wrapped candies make great Halloween treats. Sausage or potted meat on a cracker? Not so much.



Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon Seen Floating In The Sky Past High Plains Power Offices.





Rich Lobdell (bald guy on right) fields questions from BLM firefighters.

Ross Smith prepares to electrocute a frankfurter for a group of 6th graders at Riverton's Rendezvous School. HPP does safety demonstrations for schools, fire departments and other interested groups.



Generator Tips

A while back we were asked to put a few guidelines for generator use in the newsletter. Good idea! Many people have generators to furnish power to camp trailers which can also be used to power a portion or all the electrical needs of their home if sized correctly. A generator's a real handy thing to have when the lights go out due to a storm or accident or any of a long list of possible issues that might interrupt electrical service. However, there are a few things to keep in mind to operate safely and get the most out of your generator.

Get the generator away from your house. It'll help to lessen the noise level from the engine but most importantly carbon monoxide can dissipate before infiltrating your house. NEVER, run your generator inside a building or attached garage. Even running your generator under the eaves of your house or under your covered patio is NOT a good idea. Carbon monoxide may infiltrate soffit vents and find its way inside.

Get a transfer switch. When it comes to connecting your generator, there are all kinds of terribly unsafe plans to be found on the internet. Most involve back-feeding power into your home via a power cord with two male ends. Back-feeding without a transfer switch can result in damage to the generator and premises wiring and, in the worst case, could end in the electrocution of a family member, a neighbor or a lineman. Hire a licensed electrician to install a transfer switch. It's the safe way to use your generator.

Make sure the power cord is adequate to the task. Most extension cords are only 16-gauge wire which is fine for a light or two but not heavy enough to provide good voltage to your appliances. Running appliances on light duty cords may cause low voltage which can damage refrigerator motors. Use heavy gauge cords and limit the length of the cord to keep a healthy voltage flowing to your appliances.

Take care in fueling your generator. Best practice is to allow your generator to cool down before refueling. Take care not to overfill the fuel tank, for obvious reasons, spilling fuel on a hot engine exhaust is dangerous. Store your extra fuel away from the operating generator and don't store fuel in your home or attached garage. Also, don't keep excessive amounts of fuel on hand. Gasoline is notorious for going stale and even diesel fuel doesn't last forever. Stale fuel is the leading factor in gas engine starting problems.

Exercise your generator periodically to ensure reliability. Start it up once a month and let it run until properly warmed up to keep stale fuel from settling in the fuel system. Unfortunately, an exercise program won't keep the fuel in the tank from going stale. Fuel stabilizer additives can help extend the shelf life of your fuel but the best policy is to use it or drain it and burn it in your car or truck.

Run your generator on a level surface. Combustion engines rely on splash or pressurized (or a combination) lubrication to provide oil to the moving parts.

That's what keeps the engine healthy. When the surface is level the crankshaft can splash into the oil pan to pick up oil or the pump will be submersed and thus able to push oil to the internal rotating parts. Operating on a slope can throw a monkey wrench into the whole scheme by depriving the rotating internal parts of the engine of their share of the oil. That ain't good!

Power up freezers and refrigerators separately. Your generator may not have adequate output to power what you need in the house plus your refrigerator and/or freezer (check nameplate wattages and compare to the generator output wattage) but by rotating the power you can get by. Run your refrigerator until the compressor turns off then unplug it and run your freezer until the compressor shuts off. Don't open the doors unless you really need to and most freezers and frigs will be OK for hours at a time.

Sizing a new generator. This gets a little tricky. You can check the nameplate wattage on the essential appliances, add them up and then compare to the rated wattage of your generator. The load you want to power should amount to no more than 80% of the generator rating to ensure proper voltage at the appliance. The problem with this method is that you may end up with a generator that is larger than needed since everything will probably not run at the same time. Another method is to measure the actual current used by those items, convert to watts, add 20% and select a generator.

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ECLIPSE GAZING

Linemen at High Plains Power in Thermopolis enjoying the Great Eclipse of 2017.



Manager's Message

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Looking back on the history of High Plains Power, back in 1998 two cooperatives – Riverton Valley Electric Association (RVEA) and Hot Springs Rural Electric Association (Hot Springs REA) came together and cooperated to merge into a strong and viable cooperative – High Plains Power. Your cooperative still operates on behalf of the member/owners and committed to provide your 12,500 square miles of territory with affordable and reliable electricity.

Looking at tomorrow, we understand that technology will continue to change at a rapid pace, but our commitment to you will not. Thank you for allowing us to serve you. Happy Fall and have a safe and bountiful harvest.

Generator Tips

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You'll probably need an electrician for this method unless you have the proper meter and knowledge to do it safely. If you need to power your entire house an electrical contractor can perform a load calculation to properly size a generator and automatic transfer switch. The equipment senses loss of utility power and automatically fires up the generator and safely transfers the load to generator power and back to utility power when it becomes available. This option is quite expensive but you will have a minimum of down time when the power goes out.

Hope that helps!

High Plains Power

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