

MWEC

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Open House

October 4th, 2018

Come celebrate with us as we open the doors to our new facility.



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MWEC Mountrail-Williams
Electric Cooperative

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11:00AM-7:00PM
218 58th Street W
Williston, ND
58801

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- **Youth Tour is amazing experience**
- **Hunt safely!**
- **Meeting minutes ... and more!**

Teaching youngsters important lesson of energy efficiency

BY ANNE PRINCE

Electronic and mobile devices, TVs, computers and gaming stations have become ubiquitous fixtures in our homes, particularly those with children.

Consumer electronics coupled with the proliferation of smart home appliances, technology and electric vehicles have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles.

This ever-connected world is the modern environment in which children are growing up. And with lifestyles increasingly reliant on technology and in turn, energy consumption, teaching youngsters to save energy is an important life lesson.

The why

But before parents can teach their children how to save energy, they must first answer the question, “what’s in it for me?” As most parents can attest, convincing kids to care about energy efficiency is a hard sell. Parents need to explain why it’s important to save energy and how it benefits the child – otherwise they will not understand the need to change their habits and will be less motivated to do so. In the simplest terms, less money spent on an electric bill can mean more money used for fun activities (that’s something children can relate to!).

Less tangible, but just as important, using less energy means running your home more efficiently, conserving natural resources and helping the environment.

Learning by doing

Because “saving energy” is an abstract concept for children, be specific about energy efficiency actions and set an example. We know that children learn by observing what their parents do. Even if they don’t say anything, children are processing your actions. When you turn off the lights when leaving a room or unplug the phone charger once the device is fully charged, they will notice.

Learning about energy efficiency doesn’t have to be a boring lecture. Make it fun for greater impact.

For younger kids, turn energy efficiency into a “treasure hunt” game to locate all the things in your home that use electricity. Depending on the age of the children, challenge them to count and group the items into categories: electronics, appliances or lights. If age appropriate, have



them create a list. Ask which gadgets and appliances could be turned off or unplugged to save power every day.

For older children, show them how to program the smart thermostat and appliances. Shop with them for LED lights and discuss ENERGY STAR-rated appliances. Show them the electric bill so they can see the costs, energy use and how their actions impact the bill.

Kids of all ages can learn a few simple energy-saving habits that can last a lifetime:

- Turn off lights, devices, computers and video consoles when not in use.
- Open blinds and curtains during winter days to let warm sunlight in and close them during summer days to keep your home cooler.
- If your children are old enough to run the dishwasher or wash their own clothes, teach them to run these appliances only with a full load and during off-peak energy hours.

Rewards

Offer rewards for agreed upon milestones. Rewards provide positive reinforcement on energy-saving actions. The idea is to create a habit of being energy efficient. And for parents, this could mean less nagging about turning off the lights!

Teaching your children about saving energy is not only a creative way to spend time with them; it helps your home to be more energy efficient and can instill good habits that will benefit your child long into adulthood. ■

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.



Electrical safety lessons for kids

BY MEGHAAN EVANS

We all know electricity plays a major role in our everyday lives, and it is a powerful resource that should be respected. Unfortunately, our children often do not understand the dangers of electricity. At Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC), we encourage you to share electrical safety tips and lessons with your little ones as often as possible. We also understand their attention spans run short, so here are a few creative ways to get them involved.

Depending on the age of your child, consider designating an “electronics deputy.” The deputy should be responsible for pointing out electronics in your home that are not in use and keeping appliances safe from liquids. Reward your deputy for pointing out overloaded outlets or other potentially dangerous situations.

Emphasize the importance of fire prevention with your children, and create a family fire drill plan as an extra precaution. Incentivize your children by rewarding those who followed the plan and made it safely out of the home.

While it is fun and engaging to turn safety into a game, it is important to ensure your children understand the risks they are facing if they do not practice electrical safety.

One of the most important safety tips you can give your kids is to avoid any downed power lines. In fact, it is best to avoid power lines, transformers and substations in general. A downed power line can still be energized, and it can also energize other objects, including fences and trees. Make sure your kids understand the potential dangers of coming in contact with a downed power line or low hanging wire. And, if they encounter a downed power line, ask them to tell you or another adult to call MWEC.

Here are a few other safety tips you can share with your kids:

- Never put metal objects in outlets or appliances.
- Do not overcrowd electrical outlets.
- Never mix water and electricity.

No matter how you choose to get your kids interested in staying safe around electricity, MWEC is here to help. ■

Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



Youth Tour is amazing experience

BY CHASE GLUECKERT

This summer, I got an amazing opportunity to go to Washington, D.C. It was a ton of fun. I was able to meet new friends across North Dakota, Montana and the country. We were able to learn about the cooperative world and how our government works. As delegates, we got to see the greatest monuments and treasures in the country. I was excitedly nervous meeting people at orientation (after that it got a lot easier) cruises, parties and just walking around. Beckie Fradiani, the chaperones, and Michael (the best bus driver in D.C) made the trip better. I am privileged and honored to represent Williston, and above it all, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative. Now to those people who are thinking about applying, do it just do it, you will never regret this decision. It is truly a life changer! ■



Chase Glueckert



DID YOU KNOW...

- Uncovered foods or liquids in your refrigerator release moisture, causing the compressor to work harder. Cover or wrap items to reduce compressor use.
- Use rubber or wool dryer balls, which help separate clothing in the cycle, providing better airflow and a shorter drying time. Wool dryer balls can help absorb moisture, which also reduces drying time.
- Properly insulating your home reduces heating and cooling costs, and improves comfort
- Make sure your refrigerator door seals are airtight for maximum energy efficiency. Test the seal by closing the door over a piece of paper (so that it's half in and half out). If you can easily pull the piece of paper out, your seal may need to be replaced or the latch may need to be adjusted
- Looking for an easy way to make your home cozier? Try using an area rug to increase the insulation levels of your floors. Area rugs are stylish and can keep cool air from entering through your floors. Your toes will thank you!
- When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours and save around 10 percent a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature – set it and forget it! ■

AS WINTER NEARS, OPERATE GENERATORS SAFELY

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. When the power goes out, a portable generator can be a lifesaver. However, generators that are improperly installed or operated can become life-threatening.

Your local electric cooperative recommends following these precautions to avoid dangerous situations:

TO AVOID CARBON MONOXIDE HAZARDS:

Generators exhaust carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that can be deadly. So, always use generators outdoors, at least 25 feet away from your home's doors, windows and vents.

- NEVER use generators indoors or inside enclosed spaces, even with ventilation. Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- Even outside, make sure a generator has at least four feet of clear space on all sides and above it to ensure adequate ventilation.

TO AVOID FIRE HAZARDS:

- Before refueling the generator, turn it off and let it cool. Fuel spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.

JUST REMEMBER:

Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a double-throw transfer switch to prevent backfeeding, which could electrocute lineworkers making repairs.

TO AVOID ELECTRICAL HAZARDS:

- Keep the generator dry. Operate it on a dry surface. Do not use it in rain or wet conditions. If needed, protect a generator with an open-sided canopy with plenty of clearance on all sides. Never manipulate a generator's electrical components if you are wet or standing in water.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cord. Check the wattage use of each appliance plugged in and make sure the total does not exceed the cord's wattage rating. Make sure the entire extension cord is free of cuts or tears and the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin.
- Ensure your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload a generator. A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.
- Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.
- Read and adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.





ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IS NEVER IN SEASON!

HUNTING SAFETY TIPS:

- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of power lines and equipment on land where you shoot.
- Damage to the conductor can happen, possibly dropping a phase on the ground. If it's dry and the electricity goes to ground, there is the possibility of electrocution and fire.
- Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Do not use power line wood poles or towers to support equipment used in your shooting activity.
- Take notice of warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment on the poles can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- Do not shoot at, or near, birds perching on utility lines. That goes for any type of firearm, including pistols, rifles or shotguns.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Anything attached to a pole besides utility equipment can pose an obstruction – and a serious hazard – to electric cooperative employees as they perform utility operations.

As various North Dakota hunting seasons approach, please remember that electrical insulators, conductors and electrical equipment are NOT on the hunting season list.

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative encourages hunters to be aware of electrical equipment while enjoying the great outdoors this season.

Hunters and other gun owners should not shoot near or toward power lines, power poles and substations. A stray bullet can cause damage to equipment, could be deadly to the shooter, and potentially interrupt electric service to large areas.

Be aware of what's behind that big buck or it might cost big bucks. Repairs can be costly and damages cause outages to our members. As a nonprofit cooperative, owned by the members, we all share in this expense.

We recognize the majority of hunters practice safe hunting and understand the potential risks when discharging a firearm. We encourage experienced hunters who are familiar with the area to identify the locations of utility properties and equipment to young or new hunters in their group and remind them to avoid shooting toward these facilities. Enjoy the great outdoors. Just be sure to hunt only what's in season.

July 24, 2018

Directors present: Grant, Hartsoch, Johnson, Jorgenson, Ludwig and Sorenson.

Directors absent: Lalim, Lahtinen and Lynne.

Others present: Manager Haugen, in-house counsel Johnson Ellis, attorney Foust and staff members.

The meeting was called to order at 8:28 a.m. The agenda was approved as presented. Minutes of the June 28 board meeting were approved as presented.

CFC FINANCIAL FORECAST: Steve Kettler and Sara Bullock from Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) went through a historical review of the cooperative's growth since 2005 and presented the updated financial forecast for the cooperative.

BASIN REPORT: Director Jorgenson discussed some of the financial challenges Basin Electric Power Cooperative is facing and some of the plans being considered for their financial forecast. Manager Haugen reported on the MAC meeting he attended and discussed thoughts he had on Basin's financial forecast.

OPERATING AND FINANCIAL REPORT: Jodi Collings presented the operating report for the year to date and for the month of June. The total margins and capital credits for the year to date was \$14,967,247. OTIER is 2.77; MDSC is 2.48; cooperative equity is 25.28 percent; and SPP equity is 35.8 percent.

CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENTS: The board approved the retirement of the following capital credit accounts for July:

Kay Skadeland estate.....
Violet Schenk estate.....
Larry Frisinger estate.....
John Lindseth estate.....
Tillie Walker estate.....
Carole Berg estate.....
Judy Conners estate.....
Emerson Meyers estate.....

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: In-house counsel Johnson Ellis provided an update on a landowner settlement agreement that was reached. Johnson Ellis and attorney Foust discussed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Legal Seminar they attended in Chicago, Ill.

MANAGER'S REPORT:
SAFETY – The board watched a video on the commitment to zero contacts.

RELIABILITY AND OUTAGE REPORT – Jerry Rehak presented the reliability and outage report for year to date and for the month of June. There were 216 outages in June, with one main storm causing most of the outages. The year to date SAIDI is 63.57.

SOUTHWEST POWER POOL – Manager Haugen discussed the 2019 transmission formula rate annual update that was held on July 12. One interested party had prepared written questions and the cooperative will follow the protocol requirements for responses to those, as well as any other questions that may be presented.

MWEC BUILDING UPDATE – The board plans to have the August regular board meeting at the new building. The cooperative received a very good report from the air barrier testing PIE conducted on the new building. The board reviewed the bids received for the fuel island and campus generators. A motion to accept the bids as presented for the fuel island building and two generators were approved.

MWEC OPEN HOUSE – Cooperative staff provided an updated expected number for attendance and the plan for guest tours.

CREMATORIUM – The board approved a RDLG loan, subject to appropriate approvals.

MEETING REPORTS:
UPPER MISSOURI – The General Manager Update from July 20 was made available.

North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC)

– The unofficial minutes of the July regular board meeting were made available. Director Grant commented on how well the bus tour went from the July meeting.

Director Grant reported on the statewide meetings he has attended and discussed how different meetings operate, commenting on the different booths, election process and scholarship awards from various meetings.

The mid-year reports on member services, communication and government relations, finance and operations, *North Dakota Living* and safety were made available. Director Grant also provided an RDFC meeting update.

BASIN – Director Ludwig was selected as voting delegate, Director Grant as alternate and Director Hartsoch as second alternate for the upcoming annual meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ■

MOUNTRAIL-WILLIAMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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