



24th year 8th Issue

August 2012

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REMINDER...

CASH YOUR CAPITAL
CREDIT CHECKS AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE, AS
THEY DO VOID AT
YEAR'S END.



Welcome two new NEA Board Directors, Jim Dunn (top photo) of Nebraska and Andy Barnette (bottom photo) of Wyoming.

Both gentlemen are long-time residents of their respective districts and were voted into their new leadership/service roles by the membership at this year's Annual Meeting.





In the middle of the exceptionally hot and dry weather we experience during late June, a NEA transformer in the Van Tassell Substation blew three high-side fuses. Unable to properly function, the substation was off-line. The town of Harrison ended up utilizing their town generator, while power to other services fed from the Van Sub were re-routed; some load from the Node Sub and some from North West PPD.

Some voltage issues ensued, as NEA searched for equipment to remedy the situation. Thankfully, a temporary, portable Sub was quickly located with High Plains Power and was brought in from Lost Cabin, WY. In the meanwhile, many hours of labor were amassed maintaining power for hard running irrigation systems, quickly depleted stock wells and the many homes/businesses running air-conditioning in addition to regular use.

Electro Test and Maintenance out of Rapid City was contracted to comb through the transformer to see if it could be repaired or if it would need to be replaced. Findings thus far are that the windings are good, but double testing to see if copper fragments are inside the unit and gas tests to see if oil is breaking down are still underway. If reconditioning is required, it will likely be November before the transformer can be returned to service. Currently, the portable sub is running smoothly and remains in service at the Van Sub.

In the above photos, the failed transformer is being craned out of the Van Sub; the crane was brought up from the Scottsbluff area.



On June 28, 2012, a portable sub was trucked in to the Van Tassell Substation.



A message from Accounts Receivable and the Billing Department...

- Please send in your billing stubs. If you pay from an invoice bill, we still need the invoice stub returned with your payment. The same applies to Electrician bills, please return the stub with your payment.
- If you have multiple accounts under more than one name that you intend to pay, you need to return the proper paperwork. A single check is fine, but designation of payment with stubs is necessary.
- If you deposit directly into Security Bank, give them your bill stub; if that is not possible, at least advise the correct account for payment placement so the bank has more information than just the name of the person who paid the bill.
- It is in your best interest to not wait until the due date to notice you have not received your bill. You are always welcome to call and find out your balance at any time during the month.
- There is no guarantee that mailing your bill the day before it is due will result in it being received by the due date.

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Touchstone EnergySM

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

7:30 am—5:00 pm

Fridays 7:30 am—
4:00 pm

Electricians Department

7:00 am—5:30 pm (M-Th)

Outages1-800-322-0544
or 307-334-3221

Phones are answered 24 hours a day. Phones will be answered by Niobrara Electric Association during office hours and the Niobrara County Sheriff's office will take all other calls and dispatch NEA personnel.

Smart Meters

There are some very good benefits to this investment, including remote reading of meters within seconds, voltage checks at the meter, blink counts for better targeted maintenance and many other benefits. However, there have been some questions come up that people have read about on the Internet regarding the "smart metering" programs. Here is a "Myth Buster" segment on smart meters.

Myth: Smart meters emit high levels of microwave radiation.

Fact: The system that NEA is using is a power line carrier system that does not emit any radiation energy. We simply communicate over the existing power lines.

Myth: NEA can use smart meters to operate appliances without consumer's permission.

Fact: Smart meters themselves do not operate any devices within the home or the business. Some smart metering systems do have what is called demand side management capabilities. NEA's system does not have that capability.

Myth: Smart meters can track or monitor an individual appliance.

Fact: There is no way to determine if a particular appliance is on or off. The meter simply records energy consumption related information, which is what meters have done for decades. There is no definitive manner in which to differentiate loads based on these measured values.

Myth: Smart meters are surveillance devices.

Fact: Smart meters do not monitor household activity. They only record energy usage values for the home or business. The truth is, older analog meters also record energy usage values. The advantage of a smart meter is that NEA, and customers, will have insights into how they are using energy and make choices that could result in savings on their bill, such as curtailing total consumption.

Myth: Smart metering will automatically cause an increase in the consumer's power bill.

Fact: Smart meters do not cause higher bills. They have been tested and proven to record energy usage accurately. In reality, many older meters are not as accurate and customers may see a slight difference when the newer, more accurate meters are installed. Smart meters also eliminate possible human error when reading meters for billing.

Courtesy of Bridger Valley Electric

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District

John Hester	1	Keeline, WY	President
Andy Barnette	2	Lusk, WY	
David Keener	3	Marsland, NE	Sec./Treas
Bill Wilson	3	Harrison, NE	
Jack Hammond	1	Lance Creek, WY	
Jim Dunn	3	Harrison, NE	
Kenny DeGering	2	Lusk, WY	
Andy Greer	1	Lance Creek, WY	
JD Wasserburger	2	Lusk, WY	Vice President

Boardroom News

May Board Meeting

- NEA Attorney Joe Stecher discussed collections and part two of the CEO evaluation article from NRECA.
- Line Superintendent Rick Bridge reported on a near miss, the Cottonwood project, bucket truck testing, DOT inspections, DOT record keeping, training, new services and outages.
- Manager Ceaglske discussed personnel issues, scheduling for MIP training, future cost of service study, newsletter activity, e-bill, donation requests and upcoming manager meetings.
- Director Hammond discussed Tri-State events. Director Greer discussed WREA news. Director Keener reported on NREA issues.