



27th year 5th Issue

June 2015

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Co-op Connections® Participating Businesses:

- **The Fine Grind** (10% off purchase)
- **Country Corner Hair Shop** (10% off retail products)
- **Miller Soap Company LLC** (10% off purchase. Does not include shipping)
- **Same As It Once Was** (10% off purchase)
- **Herren Brothers** (10% off True Value items not currently on sale or marked at discount)
- **Lickety Stitch Quilts** (Free pattern with purchase)

Accidents happen; when they involve power lines, know how to avoid electrical injury or death.

“Safe Electricity wants everyone to know: If your car hits a power pole, or otherwise brings a power line down, stay in your vehicle and wait until the local electric utility arrives on the scene and ensures that lines have been de-energized. If you come upon or witness an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don’t leave your vehicle to approach the scene.

According to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, tens of thousands of accidents each year occur where power poles are struck by cars or large equipment. Each one of these accidents has the potential to bring down power lines. Surviving the accident itself might not be enough to stay alive without awareness of the right moves to make.

In the vast majority of those incidents, the safest place to remain is inside the car. Only in the rare instance of fire should people exit a vehicle. Then, they must know how to do so *safely*, jumping free and clear, landing with feet together, and hopping away. It’s difficult to get out without creating a path for current to flow, which is why one should get out only if forced to.

““When people are involved in a car accident, electricity is usually the last thing on anyone’s mind,”” Safe Electricity Executive Director Molly Hall notes. ““We’re often more concerned about whether anyone was injured, or how badly the vehicle is damaged. We forget that by exiting the vehicle, we’re risking bodily exposure to thousands of volts of electricity from downed power lines.””

Never assume a low hanging or downed power line is dead. Consider every electrical line HOT until proven otherwise.

Excerpt from article provided by Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council and www.SafeElectricity.org

NRECA’s Straight Talk Alert Safety Article for May 2011

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MUCH DOES THE PROGRAM COST?

These discount benefits are provided at no cost to you.

DOES EVERYONE IN MY FAMILY NEED AN INDIVIDUAL CARD FOR THE HEALTH DISCOUNTS?

No. One card may be used by you and your immediate family.

I JUST RECEIVED MY CARD.

WHEN CAN I START USING IT?

Right away! Just present your card at a participating provider to receive a discount at the time of purchase. Make sure to show them the back of the card for easy processing.

I'VE LOST MY CARD. HOW CAN I GET A REPLACEMENT?

Please contact Niobrara Electric Association at 800-322-0544 or 307-334-3221.

HOW ARE THESE DISCOUNTS DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL INSURANCE?

This plan is not insurance; it is a benefit discount offer. The card provides immediate discounts at the participating provider of your choice. Upon presenting your card, you will pay the discounted price at the time of service. There is no paperwork and no limit to the number of times you can use the card. These discounts are available only at participating providers. Please discuss the program discounts with health-related provider prior to services rendered or purchases.

CAN I USE MY CARD WITH MY CURRENT INSURANCE BENEFIT TO REDUCE MY COSTS?

No, your card cannot be used in conjunction with insurance. However, you can use your card for products and services not covered by your insurance plans. The card will even help in the "doughnut hole" of Medicare Part D.

WHERE CAN I GET A LIST OF PROVIDERS THAT ACCEPT THE CARD?

The Co-op Connections card is accepted at more than 100,000 health-related providers nationwide. Find participating locations at HealthySavings.coop. Visit www.niobrara-electric.org to search through 26,000 online shopping and local business discounts.

CAN I FIND OUT THE DISCOUNTED PRICE OF MY PRESCRIPTIONS BEFORE GOING TO THE PHARMACY?

Yes, if you know the name, strength and quantity of the medication, you can find the discounted price of the medication by visiting rxpricequotes.com or calling 800-800-7616. You will receive the best price available to you through this program. On occasion, pharmacies will price a particular medication lower than the discount rate provided by the card. If that occurs, you will receive the lower price.

To learn more about Healthy Savings, call 800-800-7616 or visit healthysavings.coop.



Always mention the corresponding network or show your card back to receive your discount.



Prescriptions

By using your Co-op Connections card, you will receive a 10% to 85% discount on prescription drugs at over 60,000 national and regional pharmacy chain stores including CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Target and many more.



Dental Care

Save 20% to 40% on most dental services including orthodontics, periodontics and endodontics.



Vision

Get 20% to 60% savings on eyewear.



Hearing Aids

Discount of 35% off hearing aid prices at more than 2,000 Newport Audiology Center locations.



Lab Work and Imaging

Savings of 10% to 60% off usual charges for MRI, CT and other lab procedures.



Chiropractic

Take advantage of 30% to 50% savings on diagnostic services and treatments.

**HumanaDental
ACCESS**

**COAST TO COAST
VISION**

Newport Audiology Centers
Hearing Aid Sales, Services and Exams

**UHS CHIROPRACTIC
network**

Disclosures: This is not insurance nor is it intended to replace insurance. The plan does not meet the minimum creditable coverage requirements under the Affordable Care Act or Massachusetts M.G.L. c. 111M and 956 CMR 5.00. This plan does not make payments directly to the providers of medical services. The plan member is obligated to pay for all healthcare services but will receive a discount from those healthcare providers who have contracted with the discount plan organization.

For a full list of disclosures, visit <https://connections.carrytheard.com>. Discount Medical Plan Organization: New Benefits, Ltd., Attn: Compliance Department, PO Box 671309, Dallas, TX 75367-1309.

IS YOUR BILL BASED ON AN ESTIMATE?

Estimated bills are not generally problematic. However, if your bill is estimating during a seasonally transitional period and if it continues to estimate for not just one bill cycle, but two or three, the inaccuracy in true usage could be substantial.

Please review your bills each month. You'll know if your bill is calculated based on an estimate. *See snap shot to the right.*

We appreciate members calling us with readings when they notice they have an estimating bill. Our meter department is constantly working to identify communication problems & restore proper function; consumer assistance can be quite valuable to us.

Description	Reading	Reading	Usage	Usage	Charges
KWH	15517	15747	230		1
Read Date:	11/30/14	12/31/14			
Usage Charge (Estimated)					25.44
Facility Charge					27.00
WYOMING STATE TAX					2.10
NIOBRARA COUNTY TAX					1.05
Balance From Last Billing					50.06
Payment Received 12/22/14					-50.06
ACCOUNT TOTAL DUE					55.59

Details of Electric Charges				
Usage Charge (Estimated)	2954 kWh @	0.11059		\$326.68
Facility Charge				\$29.00
Total Electric Charges				\$355.68
Other Charges & Services				
WYOMING STATE TAX				\$14.81
PLATTE COUNTY TAX				\$7.40
SECURITY LIGHT (Qty: 1)				\$14.48
Total Other Charges & Services				\$36.69
Current Charges				\$392.37

If your bill has Estimated included after Usage Charge, your meter (for any number of reasons) is not conveying usable readings. If you notice this happening on an occasion, there is no need for concern. If it happens repeatedly and we have not contacted you, please help us out by calling in with a current meter reading.

To date, SmartHub has been extremely well received. From an office perspective, we love its convenience and our members using the system tell us they are enjoying the direct information & access as well as online bill paying.

To sign up for SmartHub access, you will need the following information:

- Your account #, Last Name or Business Name, email address and the Zip code on your bill.
- Click on the link below and using the link next to the "NEW USER?" at the bottom of the page, you can start the process of signing up to get access to the site.

<https://niobraraelectric.smarthub.coop/#login>:

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Julie in our Billing Department at 307-334-3221 or 800-322-0544.

www.niobrara-electric.org

www.facebook.com/NiobraraElectric



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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—4:30 pm (M-F)

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.

The reminder on the front page stems from a couple recent incidents. One of them was a truck that left the roadway and broke a pole, and the way it happened, the wires were a few feet off the ground, still energized. Both the victim and the person who came to their assistance passed near to the wires, not realizing that the wires were still energized. It wasn't until the NEA crew was on site that anybody knew how close they had come to serious injury.

The equipment on our lines is designed with safety and reliability in mind. The major protective device on our system is called a recloser, or breaker. It functions similar to the breaker in your house that sees a fault or overload and de-energizes the circuit. The big difference in our equipment is that it is designed to wait a brief period of time and then re-energize the circuit to see if the problem has gone away, like if there was a lightning strike, or a squirrel or other minor fault that clears before causing a long term problem. With this capability, your power only goes out for a short period of time, and NEA does not need to dispatch a crew for a problem that may already have remedied itself. The recloser generally tries a few times before it "locks out" requiring a manual reset on the breaker, and a closer look at the line. If it doesn't see enough interruptions to reach lockout in a short period of time, it resets and waits for another event.

In the case of the vehicle breaking off the pole, the initial strike on the pole caused the lines to bounce together and set the recloser into its interrupt and reclose cycle, but the line settled down before it tried enough times to reach "lock out", so the recloser was satisfied that there was no longer a fault, and it reset to normal and restarted it's faithful watch, leaving the lines energized.

Be safe out there, treat all power lines as if they are energized until an NEA crew positively determines that it is not.

Kenny Ceaglske

Boardroom News

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

April Board Meeting

- Director Hammond spoke regarding Tri-State business. Director Keener discussed NREA business and Director Greer shared WREA information.
- Attorney Skavdahl spoke on collection matters.
- Line Superintendent Rick Bridge spoke to the Board about new services to be built, pole change out progress and gave a work order update.
- General Manager Kenny Ceaglske talked about vehicle replacement and other upcoming capital spending projects, and west load.
- The Auditors presented a clean report for 2014 records.