



29th year 7th Issue

August 2018

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Drone Usage 1

Capital Credits 2

Capital Credits Continued 3

Manager's Message 4

NEA will be at the State Fair on Saturday, August 18th. Come over to Douglas and see all the State Fair has to offer, including the Electric Co-ops booth. There will be live demonstrations, free bottled water, other give-aways & information.

CO-OP CONNECTIONS LOCAL BUSINESS PARTICIPANTS

(CHECK WEBSITE FOR REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DISCOUNTS):

- **Herren Brothers True Value**
- **Same As It Once Was**
- **Country Corner Hair Shop**
- **Rough and Refined**
- **Miller Soap Company**
- **Bloomers**



Rushmore Drones out of Rapid City came to our system in July. Licensed pilot, Dylan Murphy (seen in above picture), flew our 69 line North of Lusk in the Breaks area, with a Matrice 210 drone.

Access and viewing of line, poles and hardware can be difficult in many areas of NEA's system and this service is quite valuable. The drones allow up-close views and easy viewing access to equipment with remarkable clarity and in a timely fashion.

We hope to have the drone fly line on a regular schedule; much like we have our pole testing on a schedule each year to check/test a certain number of poles in a pre-designated area. By breaking out designated areas, we can evaluate the entire system over a scheduled period of time.

This photo is a washer like the one in the picture of the pole (next page), on it is a quarter for size reference and a cotter pin that is used on the transmission lines. Drone aided photography has been able to see missing or loose cotter pins as well.





Picture on the left, un-aided view from the ground, looking up towards the cross-arm and hardware on a transmission pole, the arm is typically 45-60 feet in the air.



Picture on the right, is a close up view that the drone provided. No mistaking the flat washer hanging down on top of the eye of the bolt. Over the years, the nuts have slowly vibrated loose or the arm has dried up and deteriorated and there is a risk of the nuts coming all the way off the bolt and the line falling, damaging the conductor and hardware, risking contact with livestock or people in the area, or possibly starting a fire.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THESE PEOPLE ARE? PLEASE HELP US DELIVER CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS!

ALEXANDER, ALVIN
ARMSTRONG, DOUGLAS
ARMSTRONG, WILLIAM E. JR.
BETTS, CHERYL
BLAKEMAN, DAVID R.
BOLTJES, HENRY F. JR.
CABOT OIL & GAS PRODUCTION CORP.
CALLAHAM, SABRINA
COTE, EDWARD
DEVON ENERGY PRODUCTION CO LP
FOUR S RANCH, HAROLD SCHMIDT
GLANDT COMMON TRUST / RONAL GLANDT
GRANT, LARRY F.
HAT CREEK COMM CLUB, SAMMY SCOTT
HAYNES, ODELL R.
HICKOK, JANE A
HOFF, ELMER
JOHNSON, EDWIN W.
JOHNSON, GLORIA FAYE
KANT, PAT
KANT, WALTER F II
KEENAN, DOROTHY
KREMAN, CLARENCE
LAY, DOUGLAS H.
MANSFIELD, DEANE
NATION, LLOYD W.
OSBURN, SHANE
OUTHOUSE, EDNA
PERLINSKI, IDA A.
PETERSON, LINDA

POLLAT, MARK E. / LIGHTNING CREEK RANCH
PRDCTN CRDT ASSC OF THE MDLND / RON L. YOUNG
PRICKETT, BRIAN
RAPIER, JOHN III
REA, BILL A.
REYNOLDSON, DON C.
RILEY SAND & READY MIX
RYDER, DALE D. & PATRICIA G.
S & M CONSTRUCTION
SAND, STANLEY W.
SCHNEIDER, WALTER L.
SCHUTT, SUE
SIEBKEN, CLARENCE AND COLEEN
SIOUX CO SADDLE SHOP
SMOCK, PEE WEE
SNOCKER, BILL
SPRACKLEN, CATHY
TEEN CENTER / JERRY ASCHWEGE
THAT A WAY RANCH
THOMAS OPERATING CO, TOM VANDENBERG
TRIDLE, SUSANNE C.
WARBONNET RANCH LTD, CHARLES BAKER
WARNOCK, STAN
WHITE, DAVE P.
WILLIAMS, EMMA C
WITT, GERALD

Members that have been on this list for five years or more have been removed to make room for new names. If you know someone who was a past member (especially in the 1980s and 1990s) please have them call 800-322-0544 or 334-3221. Thank you.



nea@niobrara-electric.org

PO Box 697 Lusk, WY 82225

**"This institution is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer."**



Touchstone EnergySM

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

7:30 am—5:00 pm

**Fridays 7:30 am—
4:00 pm**

Electrician Department

6:00 am—4:30 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.

Technology is creeping in to the industry that has stood on very similar equipment for years. As you have seen with the article on the drone technology, we can get closer to the source of problems that to this day take many hours of line patrol with guys in trucks and binoculars. This technology is still limited by needing a certified drone and pilot, so we won't have direct access to it anytime we want. We will still be doing ground patrols, both preventative and during outages. The drone patrols catch some of the other little, slow changing things that we can fix before there is a problem.

Whether you've had a chance to see the maps the linemen are using or not, they have come a long way since the days of paper maps. Before we would publish a new paper map every few years and it wouldn't be very up to date by the end of its life.

We switched to digital GIS mapping most of ten years ago and as we do projects like the drone flights, or pole testing, we have been gathering data that improves the maps and locations of the lines. Add to that the GPS capabilities of modern tablet computers and we can, in some cases, pin point the location of the truck and follow "the blue dot" to the location that we need to go.

The data in the maps is days old instead of months or years and it includes additional information beyond just a dot on the map like member name, service name, meter number, transformer size, rate class and is projected over a topographic map. As time goes on, we hope to add land ownership information and satellite maps, but that is limited by the capabilities of the source of the information. For example, counties may only update land ownership maps annually so we need to source them at the right time, or the satellite maps may only be updated periodically. Interestingly enough, there was enough of a time delay on a line removal that we were able to use the tablet based maps combined with a GPS in the tablet to locate where the old poles were and verify if they had been removed and old holes filled.

There are other technologies that rely on good cell coverage, which of course is a bit of a challenge out here, so we have not pursued them much yet. As coverage becomes available, we will look at the costs versus the benefits and see where it makes sense.

Manager Kenny Ceaglske

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

Over the last two meetings (June & July)

- Line Superintendent Rick Bridge discussed safety updates, Lance Creek to Manville progress, starting work on VanTassell project, truck replacement and recent outages
- Manager Ceaglske updated the board on west oil field load, drone flights, potential for credit card payments, upgrades to the NISC billing system, and RUS system inspections.
- Director Keener updated the board on NREA news.
- Director Greer spoke on WREA issues.
- Director Hammond discussed Tri-State business.