

29th year 8th Issue

September 2018

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

High Loads 1

Co-op Month & Seven Co-operative Principles 2

High Load Pictures 3

Manager's Message 4



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



The high load pictures in this insert are from a recent oversized load escort that NEA did. This is one of the largest items ever moved through our system, and it was actually a convoy of four buildings. (more pictures on page 3)

Many of our lines were originally built to the standard of the times, 21' clearance. Over the years, WYDOT has requested any new crossings to be at least 25'. This load measured in at just under 29'. Prior to the load coming through, we were able to go out and rebuild a few of the crossings to allow for the load to pass under with our crews only monitoring the crossing, but many still had to be manually lifted.

The crews needed to lift some of the lines as much as 10' to allow the load to pass. That type of lift takes eight linemen and eight sticks to lift all four wires, on both sides of the load. We brought bucket trucks in case we needed to disconnect the wires from the tops of the poles; thankfully, that was not needed.

This load took about ten hours total to move through the NEA system over two days. The same company is planning for three more similar convoys over the next few months, so if you are travelling on Highway 85 or Highway 270, don't be too surprised to see one.

As far as cost to you the member, the smaller oversized loads, (19'-25') see charges that pay for the crew time plus a little extra to fund rebuilding as many crossings as we can. On the very large loads like this, we charge for all crew and equipment time, so that no expenses are transferred to you.

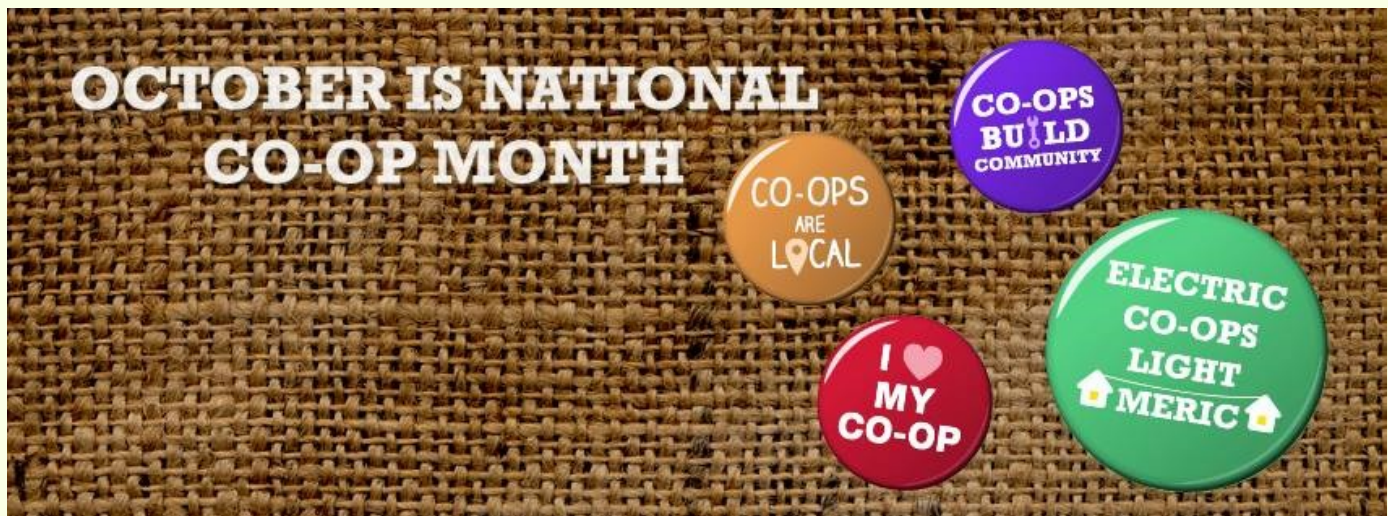
For the trivia buff, here's some info on the load:

Height x width x length = 29' x 24' x 242'

Weight = over 500,000 lbs

Number of axels/tires = 20/124

Number of line crossings = 51



The Seven Cooperative Principles Are our Guide:

Open and Voluntary Membership

Democratic Member Control

Members' Economic Participation

Autonomy and Independence

Education, Training and Information

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Concern for Community

National Energy Education Development (NEED) Teacher Conference

Engaging, hands-on electricity science training for teachers held every summer at Tri-State headquarters. Educators learn about energy, receive classroom resources and curriculum aligned to their state standards and enjoy professional development and networking.

- Audience: 4th-12th grade teachers in your service territory
- Format: interactive
- Length: three-day workshop
- Location: Tri-State headquarters in Westminster, Colorado
- When: every summer, when school is out
- Expenses covered for teachers:
 - conference, lodging and most transportation
 - an energy teaching kit valued at approximately \$300
- To apply, contact Michelle Pastor at mpastor@tristategt.org

If you are interested in the NEED Teacher Conference, contact Michelle Pastor with Tri-State or contact our office and speak with Twyla.



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.

As we get toward the latter part of the year, it is a time when we look back on the expenses for the year, and look forward towards the new year. With that, the budget and load forecasts are completed and we take a look at our rates. For only the second year since I have been here, we will not see an increase in the rates we pay to Tri-State, but internal cost pressures do continue to rise slightly as we increase staffing, rebuild more lines, and perform more maintenance. With that, the board approved a 1.1% rate increase effective January 1, 2019. More exact details of the increase will be in next month's newsletter.

As with most of our rate increases in the last few years, it is mostly being placed on the facility charge. Historically, much of the fixed costs of doing business have been charged to you through the energy, or kWh charge. This can create boom/bust cycles in our revenue depending on what conditions we see in a year. Wet/dry in the case of irrigation, cold/hot with regards to home heating, or high/low pricing on oil. A term in the industry is to be "kWh neutral", meaning whether you sell a lot or only a few kWh, or customers source them from solar panels, wind mills, or other outside sources, the cooperative continues to get the revenue it needs to keep the system properly maintained for those that want to be connected.

Most categories of our costs are fixed in nature, employee wages and benefits, buildings, vehicles, line maintenance and rebuilding, etc. are things that happen no matter if we sell 1 kWh or 10 million. The variable costs that we see are primarily the power we purchase, and the losses in the line to delivery that energy (the two of which make up about 60% of our actual costs). We are slowly adapting to the new environment that the industry is evolving into, trying to keep the change moving, but subtle in the effect on you, our members. In my mind, it is important to deliver the energy that you need at the most cost-effective price that we can, but more importantly, to do it as safe and reliable as we can, so that when you need it, it is there.

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

Board Minutes

- Operations report dealt with work plan updates and safety topics.
- Manager Ceaglske reported on budget, rates, staffing, energy efficiency rebates and large load requests.
- Director Keener updated the board on NREA news.
- Director Greer spoke on WREA issues.
- Director Hammond discussed Tri-State business.

