

Big Skylights



An internal newsletter of the STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

December 22, 2016

Season's greetings

Best wishes to all of our MECA member cooperatives' directors, managers and other staff. Thank you for all your help these 12 months in helping make this a successful and effective year for your statewide association. We are looking forward to a busy session of the Montana Legislature in 2017. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Montana co-ops council sets 57th annual meeting

Montana Council of Cooperatives will hold its 57th annual meeting Jan. 9-10 in Helena. The event will be held at the Radisson-Colonial Hotel. The meeting begins at 2 p.m., on Monday, Jan. 9, adjourning at 3:45 p.m. on Jan. 10.

The Council's popular dinner-dance in honor of the 2017 Montana Legislature will also be held. This event - also to be held at the Radisson-Colonial Hotel - starts with cocktails at 5 p.m., and dinner at 6:30 p.m. The dinner-dance is scheduled to conclude at 10:30 p.m.

For more information and to register, please visit the Council's website: www.montanacouncil.coop. Discounted registration rates are available until Dec. 30.

Lineman Basics training to be held in February

MECA will hold the popular Lineman Basics training course Feb. 7-9 at the Statewide Association's headquarters building in Great Falls.

This 2 ½ day course provides linemen with additional training they may not receive through safety meetings and hands-on learning opportunities.

The course is open to the first 40 registered participants. Registration is advised no later than Jan. 20.

In-depth instruction will be provided by the following instructors and their topics: **Diana Hamilton**, meters and metering; **John Nanini**, transformer connections and theory; **Tom Nordrum**, lineman overcurrent protection and transformer connection issues, and; **Andrew Mahlen**, fault locating.

For those in need of overnight accommodations, MECA has corporate rates at the following hotels: Best Western Heritage Inn, (406) 761-1900; Staybridge Inn & Suites, (406) 761-4903; or, La Quinta Inn & Suites, (406) 761-2600. Be sure to request the Montana Electric Co-ops (MECA) corporate rate.

For more information, including registration information, please contact **Lea Potoczny** of our staff. The phone number is (406) 761-8333. Her email address is meca@mtco-ops.com.

Montanans renew terms on regional power group

Congratulations to Montanans **Dan Gliko** and **Doug Hardy** on being re-elected to the Midwest Electric Consumers Association Board of Directors at the organization's annual meeting Dec. 7 in Denver. Mr. Gliko is president of Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative, based in Great Falls, while Mr. Hardy is the co-op's general manager.

Mssrs. Gliko and Hardy were first elected to the Midwest board in 2009. Mr. Hardy also currently serves as the Midwest board's vice president.

Job Market**Apprentice Lineman**

Big Flat Electric Cooperative, based in Malta, is accepting applications for an electric apprentice lineman who has graduated from a certified line school. Applicants must have a CDL driver's license or be able to obtain one for the state of Montana, and will be required to pass a pre-employment drug test as well as a federal DOT physical.

Contact the office at (406) 654-2040 or visit www.bigflatelectric.com to obtain an application and job description. Submit application and confidential resumé to: Big Flat Electric Co-op., Inc. at PO Box 229, Malta, MT 59538 or by email to: kari@bigflatelectric.com.

Applications must be received in the office by 5 p.m. on Jan. 18, 2017.

IT Specialist

Ravalli Electric Cooperative (REC) is looking for an IT Specialist who is responsible for providing corporate-wide server and end-user device support for a variety of computer equipment, software and operating systems.

The person in this position will be responsible for maintaining corporate networking, including Windows and other servers, wired and wireless infrastructure and WAN access, including routing, firewalls and remote access, Active Directory and all other server infrastructure, including databases such as Microsoft SQL Server and Oracle, and monitoring cyber security for all computing resources to maintain availability for corporate needs while delivering IT support and training to REC employees and the board of directors.

Experience/educational requirements are as follows: A four-year college degree in information technology or a related field, and MCSA certification is preferred. However, consideration of education and work experience, including the management and technical support of a LAN and WAN system, Windows Workstations and Servers, Active Directory, MS, SQL, Oracle and UNIX/LINUX. Responsibilities may be given in lieu of a degree. Applicants must have good analytic, written, and oral communication skills, experience with customer service and be able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds. The successful applicant must possess a valid Montana driver's license, present a professional appearance at all times, and have the ability to travel occasionally out-of-town. Offers are contingent upon completion of a background check.

To apply, please visit REC's website at www.ravallielectric.com and submit a completed REC job application, resume and letter of interest. A benefits package is available after 90 days and competitive wage depends on experience. This position will remain open until filled.

Journeyman Lineman

Big Horn County Electric Cooperative of Hardin has an opening for a journeyman lineman. Applicants must have or be able to obtain a Montana CDL, have completed a recognized four-year apprenticeship program; be proficient in operating digger derricks, bucket trucks, trenchers, underground locating and fault-finding equipment, be in physical condition to carry out the work associated with overhead and underground power lines, be willing to work in extreme conditions such as heat, cold, wind, rain and snow, at all hours and be on a rotating "on call" list; have experience in rubber gloving, the operation of OCR's and regulators, and underground and overhead distribution lines. Having a positive safety-minded attitude and being a "team player" is a must.

The successful applicant will be required to live within 15 minutes driving time of work, take a pre-employment physical and drug test, and be on a six-month probationary period.

Big Horn County Electric is located in a farming/ranching community serving rural residents, including three-phase irrigation and pumping loads, an oilfield, and some small and large commercial loads in Big Horn County, Montana, and a small part of north central Wyoming.

The co-op offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefits program. Send resumes to: **Monte Russell**, District Supervisor, Big Horn County Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 410, Hardin, MT 59034 or mrussell@bhcec.com. Ph: (406)665-2830. A company employment application with references will be required, along with work history dating back five years. This position will be open until filled.

CALENDAR

January

2	Start of 2017 Session of Montana Legislature	Helena, MT
9	Electric Co-op Day at Montana State Capitol Building	Helena, MT

February

7-9	Lineman Basics Training Course	Great Falls, MT
16	Social Media Training Course	Great Falls, MT
22	Workplace Protection Course	Great Falls, MT
23-26	Director Education Programs, Pre-NRECA Annual Meeting	San Diego, CA
26-March 1	NRECA Annual Meeting	San Diego, CA
26-March 1	NRECA Tech Advantage Conference	San Diego, CA

March

3	Vigilante Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Dillon, MT
8-9	NRECA Training Courses: 2600 Director Duties & Liabilities and Understanding the Electric Business	Lewistown, MT
14	Big Horn County Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Hardin, MT
14-17	New Co-op Communicator Orientation	Arlington, VA
18	Flathead Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Kalispell, MT
18	Missoula Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Missoula, MT
18	Ravalli Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Corvallis, MT
21	DOT Compliance Training	Great Falls, MT
21	Mid-Yellowstone Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Hysham, MT
23	Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Billings, MT
25	Lincoln Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Eureka, MT
30	Central MT Electric Power Cooperative Annual Meeting	Great Falls, MT
31	Sun River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Fairfield, MT

April

1-4	Directors Conference	Tampa, FL
3	Directors Course 921.1 – Board Leadership Certification	Great Falls, MT
4-5	MECA Spring Committee & Board Meetings	Great Falls, MT
6	Upper Missouri Power Cooperative Annual Meeting	Sidney, MT
11-13	New CEO Orientation	Arlington, VA
14	Marias River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Shelby, MT
23-25	NRECA Legislative Conference	Washington, D.C.