

# Big Skylights



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

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A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

January 5, 2017

## Montana co-ops council sets 57<sup>th</sup> annual meeting

The Montana Council of Cooperatives will hold its 57<sup>th</sup> 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., with 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](http://www.montanacouncil.coop).

## 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 a hands-on learning opportunity.

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](mailto:meca@mtco-ops.com).

## 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](http://www.bigflatelectric.com) to obtain an application and job description. Submit application and confidential resume to: Big Flat Electric Co-op., Inc. at PO Box 229, Malta, MT 59538 or by email to: [kari@bigflatelectric.com](mailto: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](http://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, snow, at all hours and be on a rotating "on call" list, and have experience in rubber gloving, the operation of OCRs 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 Electric is located in a farming/ranching community serving rural residents, including three-phase irrigation and pumping loads, an oil-field, and some small and large commercial loads in Big Horn County, Montana, and a small part of northcentral 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](mailto: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

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  
 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 Great Falls, 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 County 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.