



VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 1049, Dillon, MT 59725-1049
(406) 683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Web site: www.vec.coop

E-mail: contact@vec.coop

2018 Electric Rates

Over the course of a year, we communicate quite a bit of information regarding rates. Whether it is in this publication, at the annual meeting or through our website, we want to keep our membership informed about the issues that could impact rates. By now, the members of Vigilante Electric should have received a letter from General Manager Rollie Miller regarding modifications to our rates that will occur with the January 2018 billing.

The driver behind this is Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) increasing our wholesale power rate by 1.6 percent. Much of this was also explained by Rollie in his fall update in the October edition of this publication. At the time he wrote that article we were finalizing our cost of service study (COSS) and formulating a rate proposal for our board of trustees.

The purpose of the COSS is to ensure that we are capturing our fixed costs of doing business (those costs that are incurred whether electricity is used or not), and the cost of energy purchased on our members' behalf. This year our COSS included merging the Class "A" Residential and the Class "B" Low Usage rate classes and includes an increased minimum bill component.

The board of trustees received management's proposal at its September meeting and finalized the new rates at the October meeting. A summary is provided below:

Rate Class A	2016	2018
Effective	January 1, 2016	January 1, 2018
Base Charge	\$23.00/mo.	\$26.00/mo.
All kWh used per month	5.8 cents/kWh	5.8 cents/kWh
KVA Charge for all billing KVA over 15 KVA	50 cents/KVA	50 cents/KVA
		Minimum Monthly Bill \$38
Rate Class B		
Base Charge	\$32.00/mo.	Merged
All kWh used	7.8 cents/kWh	With
KVA Charge for all billing KVA over 15 KVA	50 cents/KVA	Rate Class "A"
Rate Class IRR - Irrigation		
Annual Base Charge	\$12/HP, \$240 minimum	\$12/HP, \$240 minimum
All kWh used per month	4.8 cents/kWh	4.8 cents/kWh
Demand Charge	\$2.00/KW/month (or) \$1.50/HP/month \$20 min.	\$2.15/KW/month (or) \$1.50/HP/month \$20 min.
Rate Class GS - Commercial		
All kWh used per month	5.0 cents/kWh	5.0 cents/kWh
Plus the higher of:		
Demand Charge or KVA Charge	\$3.00/KW/month (or) \$1.00/KVA of transformer capacity, but not less than \$25 per month or greater than \$100 per month	\$3.50/KW/month (or) \$1.00/KVA of transformer capacity, but not less than \$25 per month or greater than \$100 per month
Yard Lights (flat rate per month)		
175 W Mercury Vapor	\$8.50	\$8.72
400 W Mercury Vapor	\$13.50	\$13.85
100 W High Pressure Sodium	\$7.50	\$7.69
200 W High Pressure Sodium	\$9.00	\$9.23
400 W High Pressure Sodium	\$13.50	\$13.85
43 W LED	\$8.00	\$8.21
70 W LED	\$8.50	\$8.72

Rate increases are never welcomed, and while we do everything we can to control costs they are a part of doing business. However, even with these increases, our residential and irrigation rates will still be some of the lowest in the country. If you have any questions regarding these increases, please contact us at our Dillon office at 683-2327 or (800) 221-8271.

Space Heater Safety Tips

Heating equipment is the second-leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year. These fires result in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electric shock hazards if not used properly. Fire and electrical hazards can be caused by space heaters without adequate safety features, space heaters placed near combustibles, or space heaters that are improperly plugged in.

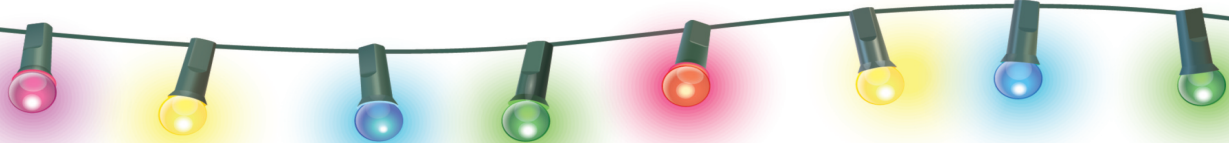
Safety should always be a top consideration when using space heaters. Here are some tips for keeping your home safe and warm when it's cold outside:

- Make sure your space heater has the label showing that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Before using any space heater, read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels carefully.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs, or loose connections before each use. If frayed, worn or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Proper placement of space heaters is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that



- can burn, including papers, clothing and rugs.
- Locate space heaters out of high-traffic areas and doorways, where they may pose a tripping hazard.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture or carpet, which can overheat and start a fire.
- Always unplug and safely store the heater when it is not in use.

You can find more electric safety tips by going to our website at www.vec.coop. There you will find a link to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), a non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety at home and in the workplace.



MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the age-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Vigilante Electric Cooperative Leadership Award and Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Memorial Scholarship

By Rod Siring, Member Services

At Vigilante Electric Cooperative, we understand the need for post-secondary education. Whether it is college or vocational school, continued education is an important part of our workforce development. This is why we provide scholarship opportunities to deserving students.

This year, we are again pairing our Leadership Award with the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association's (MECA) Memorial Scholarship to give deserving students the opportunity to win two scholarships by filling out just one application. Scholarship applications can be found on our website at www.vec.coop/content/scholarships.

All scholarships received will be judged based on the criteria set forth in the application. The top applications will receive the Leadership Award, and the best application will be forwarded to MECA to compete for an additional \$500 scholarship.

All educational opportunities are funded by unclaimed capital credits, which we are required to retain for five years. At the end of this period, we can either use the funds for educational purposes or turn them over to the state of Montana.

The balance of this fund fluctuates from year to year and is one of the determining factors in the number of scholarships we offer, and the dollar value of each scholarship. At this time we do not know how many scholarships will be offered or how much each will be. During the last academic year, our board approved 14 scholarships worth \$500 each.

The deadline for applications is January 26, 2018. If you have any questions, contact our Dillon office at 683-2327 or (800) 221-8271.

Rocky Mountain Supply

A Remodel Done Right

By Rod Siring, Member Services

If you have been in the Dillon area at any time in the last two years you have probably noticed the work being done at Rocky Mountain Supply, Inc. (RMSI). The outside of the store got a facelift and new fuel pumps were added, and the inside was reorganized and made more open and bright. Yet this remodel was more than just a cosmetic improvement; in essence, it is a new store — and a great example of doing things right.

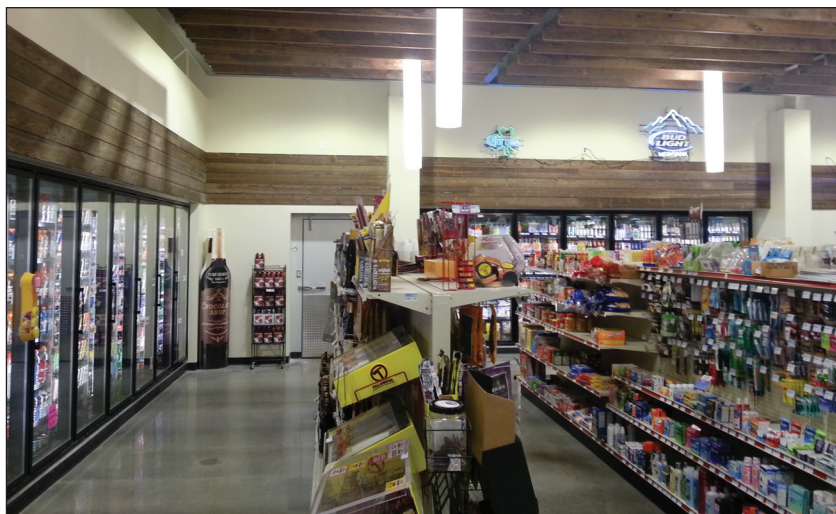
Having worked with RMSI on an LED upgrade of its canopy lighting, we were interested in this remodel from an energy-efficiency standpoint. Specifically, we wanted to see if there would be an opportunity to involve the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and potentially provide RMSI with incentives for electric energy-efficiency improvements that were incorporated into the renovation.

After a review of the construction plans, the focus of the analysis was on lighting, refrigeration and the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system (HVAC). A baseline energy model was developed using the building and operational characteristics, along with code-compliant conditions for the lighting and roof-top HVAC system. For the refrigeration, a comparative analysis was done on the savings potential between installing new equipment versus used.

After construction was completed, 12

months of actual billing data was used to create and calibrate an energy model that represented the as-built facility conditions. The most significant and cost-effective savings were from the newly enclosed refrigerated cases and compressors, and new LED light fixtures. Overall, the modeled energy savings from the improvements are estimated at 143,138 kilowatt hours per year. At 5 cents per kilowatt hour, that is a savings of more than \$7,100 per year on RMSI's electric bill.

This project and analysis took nearly two years to complete. On September 26, 2017, BPA approved the findings and we were able to provide RMSI with incentives totaling \$36,679.



Capital Credit Refunds

Vigilante Electric Cooperative is currently trying to locate the following individuals for payment of capital credits.

If you have any information regarding names on this list, please contact us at 800-221-8271 or 683-2327, or by email at contact@vec.coop.

ERICKSON, RANDY T BOISE, ID	GRASKY, JAMES/MARY CHOTEAU, MT	HOWARD, NICOLE DILLON, MT	KINSEY, MARK SILVER BOW, MT
ESCHENBACHER, ANNELIS MISSOULA, MT	GRASSHOPPER INN c/o MIKE BAER DUBOIS, WY	HUGHES, CHERYL A BEND, OR	KOBRIGER, MARC DILLON, MT
EUSTICE, DONALD J DILLON, MT	GREEN, RONN BILLINGS, MT	HUMPHREY, GARY/ BONNIE CHISHOLM, MN	KOSKI, ANNETTE BELGRADE, MT
FERGUSON, ANNA GREAT FALLS, MT	HALL, ROBERT NACHES, WA	INBODEN, LOWELL POLARIS, MT	KRAVIK, SHANE DILLON, MT
FORD, DAVID/DARRELL HENDERSON, NV	HAMMOND, L C/CHARM HARDIN, MT	JACKSON, TERRY/BINDER, SHARON THOMPSON FALLS, MT	KUCHTA-CASTRO, DEBRA DILLON, MT
FORTIER, TYLER FORT LEAVENWORTH, KS	HAMMOND, SHINE DILLON, MT	JANNEY, JOHN J ANTHEM, AZ	KUSKA, HEIDI SAFFORD, AZ
FRAZIER, LORAN E MISSOULA, MT	HARGIS, JACK BOZEMAN, MT	JEFFS, JAMES S TOWNSEND, MT	LEA, GERALD WISDOM, MT
FRISBEY, JASON HELENA, MT	HARPER, JANE H TUCSON, AZ	JENKS, KATHLEEN PRESCOTT, AZ	LEISA, JANELLY TWIN BRIDGES, MT
GALBRAITH, JAMES DILLON, MT	HARTUNG, MARK R HELENA, MT	JENKS, WAID HELENA, MT	LENTZ, SCOTT/GRETCHEN SEDRO WOOLLEY, WA
GALL, JOSEPH WICKENBURG, AZ	HATFIELD, MARLIN DILLON, MT	JOHNS, SHAWN P FREDERICKSBURG, TX	LEWIS, CINDY SAUDI ARABIA
GARCIA, ANTHONY/MICHELLE WILTON, CT	HAYDEN, JAMMIE DILLON, MT	JOHNSON, BEN WHITEHALL, MT	LEWIS, JAMES D DILLON, MT
GAROUTTE, MATT HELENA, MT	HAYES, MELINDA DILLON, MT	JOHNSON, LELAND/HELD, KATHRYN HELENA, MT	LEWTON, JOHN WHITEHALL, MT
GARRETT, S K DILLON, MT	HENDERSON, ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, IN	JONES, ELAINE PLENTYWOOD, MT	LITTLE, WESLEY/ MICHELLE THREE FORKS, MT
GEE, JEAN DILLON, MT	HENSEL, ERIC HOMESTEAD, FL	KAMPS, KELLY MAPLE FALLS, WA	LITTLE, WILLIAM/ELISE FORT DEFIANCE, AZ
GEOFFROY, CECIL C ESTATE c/o BESSIE V GEOFFROY DILLON, MT	HESTER, CHARLIE ANACONDA, MT	KAZIO, DEBORAH LAS VEGAS, NV	LOGAN, CHRIS HELENA, MT
GOULD, KENDRA BOONE, NC	HIBBARD, JONI HELENA, MT	KEEGO LODGE INC DILLON, MT	LUNSMAN, URSULA TOWNSEND, MT
GRAHAM, DAVID TOWNSEND, MT	HILLEBRAND, JAMIE SHELBY, MT	KING, ERIN DILLON, MT	MARSHALL, DENNIS/AMY PAHRUMP, NV

*CAPITAL CREDITS
Continued next month*

RURAL MONTANA