

Sun River Electric Cooperative



Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone Numbers: 406-467-2526 or 1-800-452-7516

Website: www.sunriverelectric.coop

After Hours & Weekend Dispatch:
406-467-2526 or 1-800-452-7516

If calling from a local number or cell phone –
please use: 406-467-2526 or 406-467-2527

Be sure to check your breakers before reporting outages.

Ripples

APRIL 2022

What's up with electric vehicles?

By **BRAD BAUMAN** | General Manager/ CEO



Electric vehicles are in the news most every week. One would think that everyone will be owning/driving one within a couple years. Somehow my conservative thinking and rural Montana upbringing tells me the time may come, but in due time.

We in Montana tend to like to arrive at our destination when we jump in a car/truck and not have to worry about getting stuck on the side of the road because the battery charge did not quite work as promoted. Granted, we do run out of gas once in awhile, but that is usually because we just did not look at the gas gauge before we took off! Until enough “test drives” have been accomplished that can prove that the range, outside temperatures and the ability to recharge are all met; my thinking is that members in our cooperative will be leery of making the jump to electric vehicles.

But what if I am wrong? What if the manufacturing industry takes it upon themselves to make the change for us? What if incentives become so strong that the transportation industry does make a monumental change? What if



battery technologies improve and allow for better distance and temperature adaptation? These questions are still to be answered, but let me share what the situation might look like between you, our member, and Sun River Electric Cooperative.

Years back the cooperative invested in a technology called AMI, or advanced metering infrastructure. This abil-

See ELECTRIC VEHICLES, page 7

HIDDEN NUMBER

If you find your account number hidden in this issue, it is worth a \$50 credit on your next statement. There is one number hidden in every issue. Give us a call if you are the lucky consumer.

**406-467-2526 or
1-800-452-7516**

ALWAYS CALL | BEFORE YOU DIG



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICERS

John Burgmaier, President.....406-463-2522
Robert Pasha, V.P.406-733-2028
Mitch Johnson, S/T 406-467-2109

TRUSTEES

Russ Bloom406-431-0168
Chris Music406-600-8375
Leonard Sivumaki 406-264-5482
Bryce Johns406-289-0730

MANAGER

Brad Bauman.....406-467-2526

LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 18, 2022

LINEMAN'S PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for blessing us with the ability to become a lineman. Please watch over us as we do our work. Keep our minds sharp and clear. Grant us the strength and courage to complete our job. When out during the storms, protect me and my fellow linemen so that we may come home safely. Amen



YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

#ThankALineworker



REMINDER:

Bills not paid by the 10th of the month will be charged a \$10 late fee.

Pay as you go with **prePAY** electricity from SREC. It is easy! Call SREC to get started.



BE CAREFUL SEEDING

FARM EQUIPMENT AND POWER LINES DON'T MIX WELL

PLEASE remember to work safely around overhead power lines during spring seeding. Be aware of power line heights and locations. While moving machinery, know the height of your machinery, a good rule is to stay at least 10 feet from high-voltage power lines.

If your piece of equipment or tractor comes in contact with a power line, stay inside and call for help. Keep others away as well. If you must leave, don't allow your body to come in contact with the equipment and the ground at the same time, and jump as far away as possible. Once you're off don't go back until co-op personnel tells you it's safe to do so. Always assume the power line is still energized.

In the U.S. every year approximately 60 farm workers are electrocuted. Play it safe, stay away from overhead power lines.

Also, while burning stubble this year please be careful not to burn power poles. Every year a few power poles are burned to the point they need to be replaced. This cost will be passed on to the person responsible. RM

MESSAGE

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

COLUMN BY **ROBERT ANDERSON**
OPERATIONS MANAGER



SCHOLARSHIP

DON'T FORGET TO APPLY FOR THE SUN RIVER ELECTRIC YEARLY SCHOLARSHIP!

DEADLINE: APRIL 5, 2022

Details available online:
www.sunriverelectric.coop
or call Leanne at
406-467-2526

SWAP COLUMN

FOR SALE: Lineman climbing gear (Bashlin - like new), tool belt, safety belt, pouch, climbers - complete, tool pouch, Salisbury 16" hot work gloves, leather protectors, large and small glove bags - \$550 - will sell separately; 8' Topper, Cover Master, Fiberglass - \$350; 4 - 15" steel rims (5 lug) with P205/70/R15 Pirelli tires - \$200 for set; 36 x 80 brand new white Bifold door with hardware - \$40; Electric Wheelchair Scooter - \$750; Electric fold up wheelchair hitch carrier - \$750; Total Gym complete with Cyclo trainer (like new) - \$350; 5 - 40' 4" aluminum wheel line pipe with end connectors - \$65 each; 4 - 40' 4" aluminum wheel line pipe with one end missing - \$50 each; Several odd sizes of same size pipe with no ends - \$1/ft. Call Brenda after 4:30 p.m. at 406-217-4289

FOR SALE: Heston Bale Processor BP25 - extension to feed into bunk. Call Randy at 406-467-2974 for price.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Continued from page 5

ity to bring back meter data in almost real time will allow SREC to couple this with our meter data management system and create billing options that will allow for the adaptation of electric vehicle charging options.

These options are still in the talking stages, but are on the radar as we watch the electric vehicle rollout. Industry analysts estimate that electric vehicle charging could impact the electric load by as much as 30 percent. That's nice growth opportunity for the cooperative! Remember in the early portion of this article I

suggested a more conservative view. Let us wait and see on that growth potential level. However, SREC is positioned to offer solutions to the increased opportunities.

In-home charging stations and the charging rate are under consideration. I would be interested to hear how many of you are thinking that you may want to invest in an electric vehicle. Are you thinking car? Truck? And are you thinking SREC should be involved in your charging station equipment? How fast would you want to charge your vehicle?

I am interested, give me a call if you want to talk electric vehicles. I am open to your thoughts and opinions (406-467-2526). RM



APPLIANCE REBATES

Remember that SREC has appliance and water-heater rebates. Go to www.sunriverelectric.coop for details. 279081

TOWN HALL MEETINGS FOR THE IRRIGATORS

SUN River Electric Cooperative decided to do something a little different this year by having town hall meetings. These meetings were held in the evening hours in Choteau, Conrad and Fairfield. The focus of these meetings was directed at the irrigation consumers who use electricity to run their pivots and wheel lines. SREC used this opportunity to talk about some conservation programs involving our irrigators, and to open some one-on-one conversations.

In 2021, Sun River Electric started an Irrigation Energy Efficiency Program. The application forms are handled by the irrigation companies, and when the project is completed, the irrigation companies will submit an invoice to SREC for a rebate in the amount of \$500 per pivot/wheel line. The SREC member can request this rebate on four accounts with a pivot or wheel line per year. The work to be completed will include an analysis of the pump's performance, impeller condition, electrical windings and nozzle output ratings. Please reach out to the irrigation companies to get more information.

This spring, SREC is running a pilot program to improve power factors on irrigation pumps. SREC will be installing capacitors on irrigation pumps with a bad power factor. Fifteen services have been designated this spring for this program. Some of the benefits will be increased load capac-



ity, improved voltage, reduced power system losses and, of course, a reduced carbon footprint. SREC will analyze the pros and cons this year and decide how to proceed in the future.

Great food and good conversations were shared at the town halls. A lot of SREC staff was present to answer questions, and SREC board members were available at every meeting. Sun River Electric values its members and is committed to helping keep rates low, and adding value to our consumer's lives. RM

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: KATE STEPHENS

KATE Stephens is a 17 year old fourth generation farmer who started a very successful YouTube Channel almost two years ago. Today she has over seventy thousand followers and twelve million views. Her channel is titled Kate's Ag – Farm to Fashion and her goal is to share various types of farming stories to show people how food gets from the farm to their table. In our area, we all know a thing or two about farming but people who live in cities don't get a firsthand look at the daily processes.

Kate is the daughter of Kelly Parks, Great Falls and Mark Stephens, Dutton and the granddaughter of Robert E. Stephens Sr. (a long-time member of Sun River Electric). She started driving combine on her Dad's family farm east of Dutton when she was 15 years old. Her idea started out



with sharing stories about her daily farming experiences from seeding and combining to hauling grain to the elevator. Now she has expanded to other types of farming, recently she featured brussel sprout harvest and an apple series, these segments were filmed in Ontario Canada.

Another area she is addressing focuses on how our clothing and fashion products originate on a farm. Kate has debuted her 100% made in the

USA handbag. The leather handbag is made with a 100% cotton liner and features agricultural elements such as a combine ornament to help connect people with farms.

She is very interested in learning more about cooperatives. Recently Kate served as a keynote speaker for the Montana Farmer's Union Convention.

In 2020, she was the essay contest winner for Sun River Electric as well as the statewide winner for the Washington DC Youth tour. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the trip was cancelled and she received a scholarship which will be very helpful in the fall when Kate will be attending Cornell University. After college she plans to return home to farm and continue bridging the gap between farmers and consumers while growing her fashion line. RM