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**Viewpoint**



*By Dave Wheelihan, CEO, Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association*

**Co-op people gather to keep abreast of issues**

The Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association will hold its 43rd annual meeting at the end of September in West Yellowstone. The annual meeting is typically an opportunity to update the membership on happenings and trends that affect your local electric

cooperative. This year's annual meeting is no exception. From panels on taxation of the electric industry to remarks from Montana's gubernatorial candidates, we expect a packed, informative agenda.

The annual meeting will immediately follow the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Region IX meeting also being held at West Yellowstone with Montana serving as this year's host state. Attendees at that regional meeting will also have training opportunities to improve their skills as directors, managers or employees.

The training opportunities and the information gained on industry trends is an important aspect of being a director, manager or employee of an electric cooperative. The fall of Enron and other corporations caused Congress to pass the Sarbanes-Oxley Act which is designed to improve accountability of companies, their employees and directors. Keeping abreast of how your electric cooperative runs and the issues that impact it is a responsibility your directors, managers and employees take seriously. They know that in those positions on behalf of you, the consumer-owner of your local cooperative, they are ultimately responsible to you.

We know they will take to heart the theme of this year's annual meeting: Montana's electric cooperatives-leading the way to a powerful future.

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