

# 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

November 8, 2007

## Co-ops hear updates on key legislation

I was pleased to be able to update the electric cooperative memberships of Goldenwest Electric and Park Electric at their recent annual meetings on current legislative issues. At the Goldenwest Electric annual meeting on Oct. 25, **Herb Chrudismky** and **Charles Miske** were re-elected. At the Park Electric annual meeting on Oct. 26, **Darwin Rabenberg**, **Mike Warren**, and **Perry Anderson** were re-elected.

## MECA board sets winter meetings

MECA's board of directors will hold its winter quarterly meeting and annual Christmas banquet Nov. 28 in Great Falls. With one exception, all MECA committee and subcommittee meetings will also be held in conjunction with the board meeting on the same day. The only MECA committee not meeting on Nov. 28 is the Ad-Hoc Parking Lot Committee, which will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 27. All meetings will be held at the statewide association building, 501 Bay Drive.

Following is the schedule of meetings: Nov. 27 – 4:30 p.m., Ad-Hoc Parking Lot Committee; Nov. 28 – 7 a.m., Audit Committee; 8 a.m., Tribal-Cooperative Issues Committee; 9 a.m., USBP Legislative Subcommittee; 10 a.m., Climate Change Legislative Subcommittee; 11 a.m., Renewables & PURPA Legislative Subcommittee; 12 Noon, Legislative Committee and lunch; 1:30 p.m., MECA board meeting.

The annual Holiday reception and banquet will be held at the Meadowlark Country Club, starting with the reception at 6 p.m. and the banquet at 7 p.m. Cards and meetings information were mailed to co-op managers and MECA board members on Monday. RSVPs are due by Nov. 21.

## Workshop rescheduled on power system basics

A two-day MECA-sponsored workshop providing electric co-op employees with a comprehensive understanding of electrical system operations, including generation, transmission and distribution set for mid-November has been cancelled and will instead be held Jan. 8-9, 2008. Titled "Electric Systems Operations for the Non-Engineer," the workshop will be conducted by the Northwest Public Power Association.

## Job Market

### Line foreman

Fergus Electric Cooperative headquarters in Lewistown, Montana is seeking a line foreman for its Roundup, Montana satellite office/shop. The existing crew in Roundup consists of three journeyman linemen and an assistant line superintendent. Work duties include supervising and working with the line crew, construction of new services, mostly overhead, pole replacements, outage calls (nights and weekends), tree trimming and maintenance of power lines (7200/12470 volt and 50/69KV). For information call **Dale Rikala** at 406-535-3465 (in Lewistown) or Don Criswell at 406-323-1602 (in Roundup). Job does require a current CDL and an IBEW Journeyman card. Job also requires supervisory skills and line construction knowledge, preferable RUS standards

### Office manager

Marias River Electric Cooperative, Inc. is conducting a search for the position of office manager. This position reports directly to the CEO/general manager. Candidates should have a strong knowledge of accounting, finance and at least 5 years progressive experience in accounting or a related field. A CPA designation is preferred. This position has responsibility for the overall finances and human resources of the cooperative. This includes oversight of all accounting activities, cash management, and the development of financial forecasts, and budgets. The office manager is responsible for oversight of reconciling general ledger accounts, preparing journal entries, calculating accruals, and conducting financial analysis. Additional duties

include administration of the benefits and human resources programs. Managerial duties include direction and oversight of all administrative personnel and functions.

Qualifications include a bachelor's degree in finance or accounting or related experience. Qualified applicants must possess excellent oral and written communication skills, time management and organizational skills, and be a team player. Qualified applicants must be proficient in Excel. The successful applicant must pass pre-employment physical, drug screen, pass checks of references, credit, criminal and driving histories.

Marias River Electric Cooperative (MRE) is an electric distribution cooperative which provides serves to approximately 3,700 electric meters in north central Montana. Additionally, Marias River Electric Cooperative provides management and administrative services to Shelby Gas Association, (SGA) a not-for-profit natural gas distributor. SGA provides natural gas to approximately 1,100 accounts in the Shelby area. Applicants should send a confidential resume, cover letter, recent salary history and three professional references by November 26, 2007 to: **Mark Grotbo**, Marias River Electric Cooperative, Inc. P.O. Box 729, Shelby, MT 59474. [mgr@mariasriverec.com](mailto:mgr@mariasriverec.com).

#### General manager

Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative of Columbus, N.D. is seeking a new general manager to replace the retiring manager. The board of directors seeks candidates with backgrounds that are broad enough in scope to include experience in utility operations, financial management and member relations. The board also seeks an individual with an appreciation for the cooperative business model, communications and people skills. The cooperative serves more than 2,300 meters and maintains 2,104 miles of line in five counties.

The company offers an excellent NRECA benefits package, including a competitive salary commensurate with qualifications. Please send resume, a minimum of three professional references and salary expectations by Jan. 15, 2008, to **Don Negaard**, Pringle & Herigstad, P.C., 2525 Elk Drive, P.O. Box 1000, Minot, ND 58702-1000. The information can also be e-mailed to Mr. Negaard. [donn@srt.com](mailto:donn@srt.com)

#### Communications manager

East River Electric Power Cooperative, located in Madison, S.D., is accepting applications for the position of cooperative communications manager. This is an opportunity for an individual with experience in media relations, writing and communications planning. The person selected for the position will be responsible for working with the East River Electric management team in developing and implementing a long-range communications plan that will assist East River's members in communicating important issues facing electric cooperatives and will include representing the cooperative at regional and national meetings. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in journalism or related field and a minimum of 3 years of experience in communications and media relations. To request an East River application, contact East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.; PO Box 227, Madison, SD 57042; Phone: 605-256-4536 or via e-mail, [hr@eastriver.coop](mailto:hr@eastriver.coop). Or, download information from East River's website, [www.eastriver.coop](http://www.eastriver.coop). Applications must be received by Nov. 13, 2007.

### CALENDAR

#### November

13-14  
28

MECA Workshop: "Electric Systems Operations for the Non-Engineer"  
MECA Board, Committee Meetings & Holiday Banquet

Great Falls, MT  
Great Falls, MT