



# HILL COUNTY ELECTRIC NEWS & VIEWS

January 2024



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hillcountyelectric.coop

## Reliable Power for Today— and Tomorrow



Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the CEO/GM of Hill County Electric (HCE), for me it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative. Our team at Hill County Electric is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs? One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across our service area. You may not realize it, but HCE doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), and Basin Electric. From there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our service area.

We are increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it. In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, HCE is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times. Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and members. In the event of a power outage, AMI data helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps HCE save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

HCE offers several bill pay options including: online bill pay, prepaid metering, budget billing and paperless Billing. Energy Assistance is available for HCE members who qualify to receive assistance by applying with the Havre District IV Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) who administers the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). For more information on HCE's resources to manage your HCE account visit our website (<https://www.hcelelectric.com/my-account>).

One of the best methods for improving our service is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Montana and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because it's about cooperation, not competition. As we turn our focus to 2024, HCE will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow. Please remember to stay healthy and stay safe!

# Power Pole Clutter

Flyers, satellite dishes, posters, basketball hoops, decorative lights, even hunting stands. You name it, someone has tried to staple, nail or tie it to a power pole. Here's a quick look at the dangers and pitfalls associated with unauthorized pole attachments.

## Illegal

Many state and local laws and the National Electrical Safety Code prohibit any unauthorized items on poles. Utilities can face fines if these attachments aren't removed.



## Pole Damage

Even small holes can allow moisture and insects past the pole sealant, which can shorten the life of the pole or weaken it and cause it to fall in a storm.



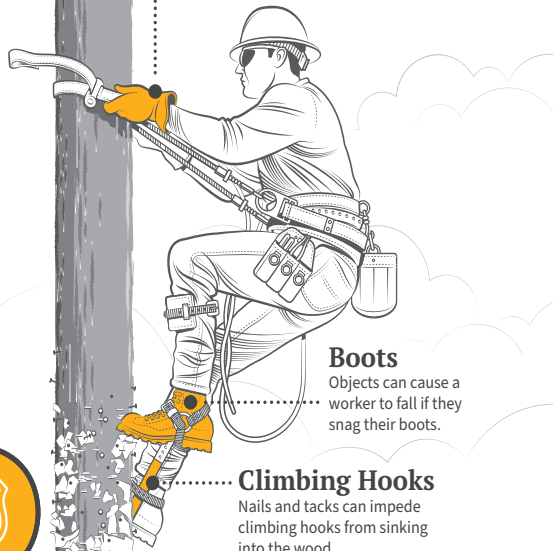
## Hinders Repairs

Posters and flyers can hide identifying markers on poles and slow repair work.



## Gloves

Staples, tacks and nails can puncture a lineworker's insulated rubber gloves and expose them to electric shock.



## Boots

Objects can cause a worker to fall if they snag their boots.

## Climbing Hooks

Nails and tacks can impede climbing hooks from sinking into the wood.



## Dangerous

A person who gets too close to energized lines while attaching an object can be electrocuted.



## Distraction

Some materials posted on poles, like mirrors or holiday decorations, can be a distraction to drivers.

## Fun New Year's Eve Facts:

- Celebrating the new year dates back 4,000 years to ancient Babylon.
- Julius Caesar declared January 1 to be the start of the new year in 46 BC.
- Auld Lang Syne is the traditional song of the new year, based on a Scottish poem.
- Noisemakers are used to scare away evil spirits on New Year's Eve.
- Times Square is a popular place to ring in the new year, with a ball drop tradition that started in 1907 after fireworks were banned.
- There is a lot of confetti thrown at Times Square, about 3,000 pounds of it.
- Some people eat black-eyed peas, or 7, 9 or 12 meals, on New Year's Eve for good luck.

Source: NRECA, Design: Jeff Dionise

## HCE Happenings

Last month, Hill County Electric (HCE) had approximately **1409** account hours affected by outages. Of these hours:



# GEARED FOR SAFETY

Electric co-op lineworkers wear special gear to help them stay safe on the job. Can you match the descriptions below to the correct safety equipment? Use the answer key to check your work!



## Energy Explorers

Hard Hat

Safety Goggles

Flame-Resistant Clothing

Insulated Gloves

Equipment Belt

Work Boots

1. These provide extra protection while lineworkers work with heavy materials that could fall near their feet.

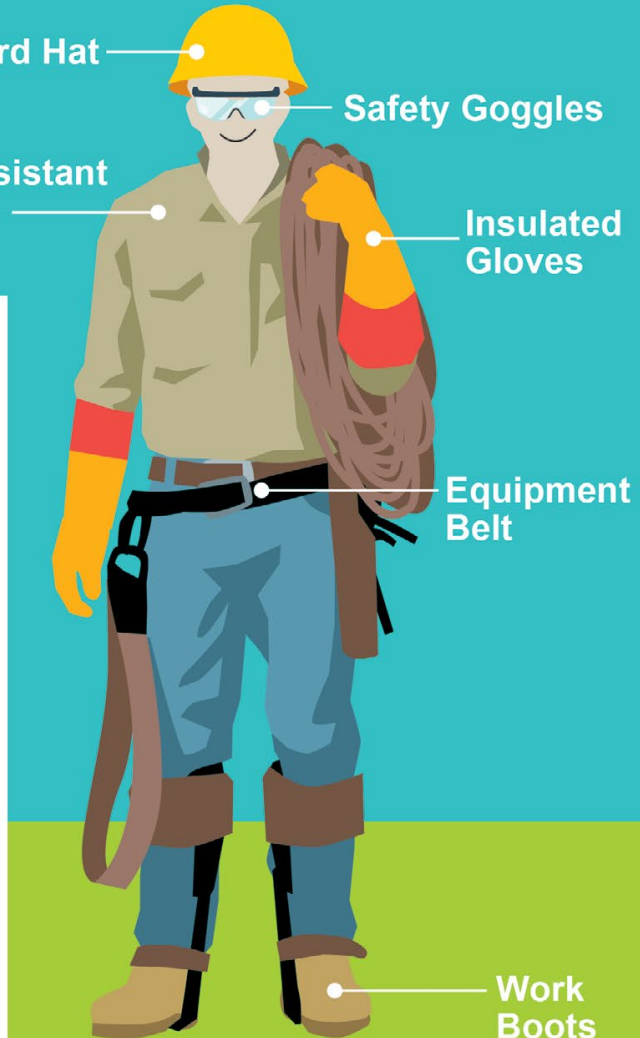
2. This material keeps lineworkers safe from electrical hazards.

3. This protects lineworkers from head injuries and falling debris.

4. These insulated protectors keep lineworkers safe from electrical shock while working on power lines.

5. These keep debris away from lineworkers' eyes while on the job.

6. This is a handy piece of safety gear that holds tools and other equipment.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Answers: 1. Work Boots 2. Flame-Resistant Clothing 3. Hard Hat 4. Insulated Gloves 5. Safety Goggles 6. Equipment Belt

# Swap and Shop

Welcome to our Swap and Shop! Feel free to post and find classifieds from other members! Ads submitted online are usually added within 2 to 3 business days.

Due to print deadlines and space available, some ads may appear in the next month's magazine.

\*Denotes photo available on website

### Big Foot Pickup Camper

10-foot camper with overhead over pickup cab. Includes queen size bed, sleeps 4. Also has air conditioning, a refrigerator, stove and shower. Asking \$1,500, call 406.301.4035.

### Antique Farmhouse cabinet with countertop\*

Two pull-out cutting board surfaces, 3 drawers, 2 tilt-out bins. One door, no back, 33 1/2" tall x 62" long, 24" deep. Asking \$125. Also selling Antique Wilson oak Hoosier-style cabinet, original hardware and zinc pull-out surface, \$1,200 or best offer. Call 540.624.0502.

### Farm Sink For Sale\*

White porcelain over steel, double basin/double drain. Approx. 62" long, has metal cabinet sides and bottom need work, drawers and hardware in nice shape. Asking \$600 or best offer. Call 540.624.0502.

### TAMKO T-Lok Shingles\*

Up to 12 bundles, 22 shingles to a bundle. Tile red blend color, \$50 per bundle. Call 540.624.0502.

### Free Moving Supplies

Flattened boxes (Lowe's small medium sizes and more. bags of bubble wrap, air bags, packing paper and foam peanuts. Hobson area, call 540.624.0502.

### Hay For Sale

Alfalfa Hay, Alfalfa Grass mix, plain grass, Hay Barley in round bales. Call 406.671.6876, 406.671.6633 or 406.473.2422.

### Sheetrock Lift

Heavy Duty sheetrock lift. Asking \$500, call 406.945.3764.

### Men's and Women's Golf Clubs

One set of men's golf clubs, left-handed and one set of women's golf clubs, right-handed. Both only used once, asking \$50 each, call 406.945.3764.

### 1995 Bounder Class A Motorhome\*

36ft Bounder Class A Motorhome with only 53,000 miles, diesel pusher, LP generator, all new tires, 2 filled propane tanks, 3-way refrigerator/freezer. 3 burner stove/oven, microwave, queen bed, shower/bath/toilet, 2 AC units, LP furnace, lots of storage, well kept interior. Asking \$23,000, call 406.357.3491.

### Whole & Half Pork For Sale

Farm raised in Havre, processed at the Saco Pay and Save. Taking pre-orders for July 2024 processing & October 2024 processing season. Whole pork \$450 plus processing fees, half pork \$250 plus processing fees. You receive approx. 150lbs of meat per whole hog. Delivering processed meat locally and between Saco and Havre on pickup day. Contact Josh or Twyla Knudson by email: noneckfarms@gmail.com or call or text 406.230.2281.

### Flexicoil S1070 Sprayer

2009 model, 1600-gallon tank, tire size 480/80R38. \$10,500 or best offer, call 406.262.3395.

### Two Flexicoil Sprayers

567 XL models, 120 ft booms, 1 in good shape and one use for parts. Asking \$10,000 or best offer. Call 406.262.3395.

### Winkel Portable Cattle Chute

Has options, 30-inch swing gate like brand new, stored inside. Asking \$4250 or best offer. Call 406.262.3395.

### 1984 Styger Panther Series IV

KM360 4-wheel drive, SF4 Hydraulics and 8500 hrs. Stored inside for 10 years, new batteries, runs good. Asking \$33,500 or best offer. Call 406.262.3395.

### Ford Escape Parts Vehicle

2001 Ford Escape parts vehicle. Body and all glass in excellent condition, 4 Wheel Drive is good. Engine blown. Asking \$800, call 406.355.4123.

### Cooper Tires

Four 225/60/R16 studded snow tires in good condition, asking \$150. Four LT245/75/R16 Open Country tires in good condition, asking \$175. Call 406.355.4123.

### Adjustable Bed for Sale

Still in box-new, twin-size adjustable bed (knees, head raise and lower). Price new was \$855, make a reasonable offer. Call 406.262.0603.

### Puppies For Sale\*

LGD Anatolian/Karakachan puppies. Call 406.931.0225.

### 1989 Dodge D100\*

318V8, auto, short box, all original, 88k very scarce, runs great. Call 406.350.1392. 8\_31

\*Photos available on our website version of the Swap & Shop ([www.itstriangle.com/swap-and-shop](http://www.itstriangle.com/swap-and-shop))

Swap & Shop is a classified advertising section of the Triangle Communications and Hill County Electric websites and newsletters. It is maintained as a service to customers and communities wanting to buy, sell and announce non-commercial items. To have an ad included, simply enter all the pertinent information on the online form. An administrator will review the information within two business days and if approved, the ad will then appear. It will stay online for 60 days unless you notify us to remove or change it. It will also appear in any of the newsletters printed during that 60 day window. Triangle reserves the right to abbreviate ads and if the section is full, we will display ads on a first come, first-served basis. If you're unable to enter your ad online you may mail or e-mail it to us using the contact info inside the front cover of this magazine. Happy swapping and shopping.