

October is National Co-op Month

Electric co-ops grow for the communities they serve

October is National Co-op Month, and Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is joining cooperatives across the United States to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

Electric co-ops, including LYREC, exist to serve their members. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs.

This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on the ways "Co-ops Grow" for their members.

- **Co-ops grow communities:** Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, such as providing educational opportunities with scholarships. Co-ops foster community engagement and support the unique needs of co-op members. "Concern for community" is one of our core principles, and being community-focused is essential to everything we do.
- **Co-ops grow together:** Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve our members. We're better when we grow together!
- **Co-ops grow tomorrow's leaders:** Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school demonstrations, community events or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program, we're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.
- **Co-ops grow for you:** At LYREC, your satisfaction is our No. 1 goal. It's why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you! ■



CO-OPS
GROW



COMMUNITIES

Electric cooperatives are joining co-ops across the U.S. to celebrate National Co-op Month.

As your local electric co-op, our services are shaped to meet your specific needs. We love growing with you, the members we are proud to serve.

Playing it safe online

by Kyle Kavanagh, IT coordinator



In today's world, most of us don't leave the front door unlocked. We protect our homes, loved ones and valuables from intruders with locks, alarms and other security measures. Cybersecurity is no different. It's the practice of protecting other valuables, such as your identity, banking and health records and other sensitive information, from digital attacks and theft.

In addition to pumpkin-spice lattes, crisper air and Halloween festivities, October is the time of year we recognize Cybersecurity Awareness Month. While taking necessary steps to protect our personal information is a year-round practice, Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) uses this time to share helpful cybersecurity reminders across our team of employees.

Given our increased reliance on internet-connected devices and gadgets, this month, I'd like to share a few cybersecurity tips and let you know how LYREC is working to boost our own cybersecurity efforts.

According to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security responsible for strengthening cybersecurity and infrastructure protection, these are the four best ways to keep you and your family safe online.

- **Implement multifactor authentication (also known as two-step verification) on your accounts.** The additional layer of protection makes it much harder for criminals to access your information. Even if hackers obtain your password, they may be unable to access your accounts if multi-step verification is enabled.
- **Update your software.** This is one of the easiest ways to protect your personal data. When downloading a software update, make sure it's coming straight from the company that created it. Beware of fake popups that request urgent downloads. Better yet, turn on automatic updates.
- **Think before you click.** Most successful cyber attacks start with a phishing email. Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. Avoid emails (or texts) that look too good to be true, oddly urgent,

poorly crafted or include unusual requests.

- **Create strong passwords, using long, unique and complex words or phrases.** Consider using a password manager to save time, work across all devices, protect your identity and notify you of potential phishing websites.

For the young people in your household

Just as you would talk with your children about safety in the physical world, discuss ways to stay safe online. Help them understand the public nature of the internet. Young people need to know early on what is shared online stays online and is difficult (if not impossible) to take back. Just as you would guard your money or valuables, children need to learn to guard their personal information, especially on social networks. As a parent or guardian, help your children learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks and gaming sites.

Keeping the electric grid and your data secure

We're doing our share on the cyber front. Part of offering excellent service is keeping that service secure and reliable. For LYREC, reliability means repairing wear-and-tear, upgrading our equipment to withstand storms and severe weather and using technology and best practices to keep our system secure from cybersecurity issues.

We also work together with co-ops across the country to develop new technologies and infrastructure, learn from each other and keep the grid's network secure. For example, we participate in tabletop exercises, in which co-ops around the country come together to simulate realistic cyber issues and practice responding to the latest types of issues we might have to manage.

While we can't stop a storm or predict every disruption, as a co-op, we do everything we can to keep the lights on and our members protected. Because if we all do our part, our interconnected world will be safer and more secure for everyone. ■

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

- An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative.
- A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials.
- Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024
AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

ESSAY QUESTION

If you could have dinner with one prominent Washington, D.C., figure, whether from the present or past, who would that person be and why? What would you ask them?

HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC).
- Email entries to Jami Propp at scholarships@lyrec.coop or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, P.O. Box 1047, Sidney, MT 59270.
- Questions? Call Jami at 406-488-1602 during regular business hours.
- **The deadline is Nov. 30, 2023.**

EMPOWER



LEARN MORE AT NDYOUTHTOUR.COM

SCHOLARSHIP

JOHN REDMAN MEMORIAL

To be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship:

- The applicant's parent/legal guardian must be a LYREC member.
- The applicant must be enrolled as a full-time college student in the fall of 2023.

To apply:

- Make a short video describing a meaningful volunteer experience you were part of and how it impacted the community.
- Download an application from www.lyrec.coop and email the completed application to scholarships@lyrec.coop.
- Once your application is received, you will be emailed a link to upload your video.



In memory of longtime director John Redman, LYREC has started a memorial scholarship in his name.

DEADLINE : OCT. 18, 2023, AT 5 P.M.

Go to www.lyrec.coop for more information

3200 W. Holly - Sidney, MT 59270

Phone: 406-488-1602

Fax: 406-488-6524

Website: www.lyrec.com

TRUSTEES

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Greg Rauschendorfer	Vice President
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Preston Long	Apprentice Lineman
Trey Schepens	Apprentice Lineman
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Mike Eberling	Mechanic
Dan Gieser	EMS
Lee Alvstad	Mechanic/EMS
Richard Tremblay	EMS
Bo Kindopp	GIS/Easement Technician
Tom Hall	GIS Specialist
Corey Candee	Chief Information Officer
Jeremy Reese	Information Technology Technician
Braden Kindopp	Information Technology Technician
Edwin Gatzke	Line Locator/Groundsman
Justin King	Warehouse Supervisor
Dennis Fine	Summer Help

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Need heating assistance?

If you are having difficulty paying your heating bill, there is help. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) of Montana and North Dakota are accepting applications. These programs help Montana and North Dakota residents with their heating bills through the winter months.

Eligibility is based on your household income and resources. If you reside in Montana, you can contact Energy Share at 800-227-0703. If you live in North Dakota, you can contact Community Action at 701-572-8191. You may also download an application at www.lyrec.coop or call Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative for more information. ■

Operating report

Year to date:	June 2022	June 2023
Total miles energized	2,140	2,149
Total number of meters	6,235	6,289
Kilowatt-hours sold	177,179,104	224,127,065
Revenue	\$18,877,867	\$23,460,055
Total expenses	\$18,177,082	\$21,825,276
Operating margins	\$1,328,279	\$4,114,448