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 Incorporated In 1945
 Serving 3,700
 A Locally-Owned Utility

By Kris Ingenthron, General Manager

Being Thankful

As I embark on my 32nd year serving members at three different cooperatives, I am truly grateful to have been given the opportunity to contribute to the communities I have lived in.

At this time of year many of us begin to reflect with thankfulness for the things we have such as close friends, family, good health and many more things too long to list. Today, I am thankful to be a part of Marias River Electric Cooperative. Our employees are some of the hardest workers I know. Working as a team, our mission is to provide our members with the most affordable, reliable and safe electricity possible while improving the quality of life in the communities we serve. At MRE, we take that mission very seriously.

I am thankful for our cooperatives because they allow employees to live alongside the members they serve each day. We are locally owned and operated; there are no distant shareholders receiving a return on their investment. The beauty of our cooperative is that we, the employees of MRE, are your

neighbors, friends and family.

I am thankful that we can serve as a vibrant force in our local economy — partly because we are local. Marias River Electric is invested in the future of our rural communities. We are member driven and led by a board of directors who are not only elected by the membership, but are also members themselves.

I am thankful for the opportunity to show care and concern to those around us through community projects such as our annual food drive, providing educational scholarships to young people and keeping our highways clean through the adopt-a-highway project. We are committed to helping you save money by providing energy-efficient information and work each day to be your

trusted resource.

At the end of a recent employee meeting I asked everyone one simple question. “What does it mean to you to work for a cooperative?” They were asked to write their answer down, and could use anything from a one-word answer to a paragraph. Listed below are just a few of the responses that I received from the Shelby Gas Association and MRE employees:

Working for my cooperative means;

“Working together as a team.”

“It means I get to be a part of a community.”

“A group of people working together for the common good.”

“That the members and I own the cooperative.”

“I am a proud member owner and employee of my cooperative. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to work for a business that is about the business of people not profits.”

Here, at Marias River Electric, our employees represent a very diverse group of people, from Baby Boomers to Millennials. There are many differences and expectations amongst the age ranges, from early 20s to mid-60s. However, I think you would agree from a sample of the comments listed above that even though we are a diverse group, we all



work for and care about the same thing — you, our members. So, the next time I say “we work for our members” or “every decision we make is based on the best interest of our members” you know we, your cooperative management and staff, truly mean it. It’s not just fluff!

Finally, I am grateful for our faithful readers. Without engaged members like you, Marias River Electric and Shelby Gas Association would not exist.

On behalf of your Board of Directors and Staff,

“All our best to you and yours.”



NRECA

Welcome to our new members

Brandy McFarland
 Daniel Bridge
 Elisha Dempsey
 J&J Stokes, LLP
 Shawn Kaneff
 Steve M. Laufenberg
 Diana Raymond
 Roman Sattler
 Carla Schade
 Amanda L. Seymour
 Alex Sinclair
 Stockman Bank of Montana
 Teresa S. Homestead Heritage

Think Small Save Big

By Jennifer Hagood,
Member Service Specialist

Now that the holiday season has come to a close, we begin to look forward to the year ahead. Perhaps that means committing to a healthier lifestyle or resolving to work toward a new goal. Whatever your new year resolutions may be, at Marias River Electric we are committed to providing you with safe and reliable electric service at the lowest rates possible.

When it comes to savings, we all want to do our part to be efficient. This is why MRE is looking out for you. Whether you are considering upgrading your old appliances, weatherizing your home or purchasing new lighting, we want to be your trusted energy-saving source. There are many ways to save on your monthly electricity costs. Just a few small changes can add up to big annual savings. Below are a few low- and no-cost tips and tricks to start you on the path to smart energy use.

LIGHTING THE WAY

Keep your lightbulbs clean. Dusty bulbs can cut your light output by as much as 25 percent, which increases the need to use more lighting sources than necessary.

When replacing your lightbulbs short-term costs can equal long-term gains. Consider switching to LED bulbs. Although they are slightly more expensive than CFLs, these energy-efficient bulbs can last up to 15 years longer.

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

- Reducing your major appliance energy use can add up to a large amount of money saved over its lifetime. When purchasing

new appliances, check out the appliance energy guide for the projected annual cost savings, and always look for the Energy Star label.

- When it comes to refrigerators, keep the heat out and the cool in. Frequently clean the seals of your refrigerator and freezer doors. Check for any cracks or air leaking around the door seal. The less heat that enters the appliance means less time that the compressor has to run to keep your food cool. Annual cleaning of your refrigerator coils is recommended to increase the life of your appliance.
- There are many handy tools that can be used to determine the exact amount of energy and cost associated with your appliance usage. If you would like more information about borrowing an easy-to-use Kill-A-Watt reader from Marias River Electric to determine what its costing you per month to run your appliance call us at 406-434-5575.



HEAT UP YOUR SAVINGS

- Install foam weather stripping around drafty doors and windows to keep the heat in and the cold out.
- Consider replacing your standard thermostat with a programmable thermostat that automatically controls the heat during the hours you are sleeping or when you are not at home. Programmable thermostats can bring comfort to your home and savings to your wallet. Once installed and in proper use, the cost savings from a programmable

thermostat can often pay for itself within the first year.

- If you have a forced-air furnace or a heat pump, check the filter each month. Clean and replace the filter as needed. This will lead to greater energy efficiency by allowing proper and unrestricted airflow through your heating source.
- Don't block heat registers or return air vents with drapes or furniture. Not only is this dangerous, but it can lead to colder rooms and restricted air flow.

KEEP ON TRACK

Marias River Electric offers free tools for you to analyze your past and current energy usage, as well as plan and conserve in the future. This free app can be accessed



on your tablet and smartphone, or by going to our website at www.mariasriverec.com. Signing up for SMARTHUB and accessing your My Usage tool can help you compare your monthly energy use and costs. With this savings tool, you can set markers to monitor changes in your usage over periods of time. With a few simple steps you will be well on your way to energy savings in the new year.

For more information on energy savings, home energy audits or accessing SMARTHUB, call Jennifer at 406-434-5575.

MRE Office Closure Dates

New Years Day — January 1, 2017
Memorial Day — May 29, 2017
Independence Day — July 4, 2017
Labor Day — September 4, 2017
Thanksgiving Day — November 23, 2017
Friday After — November 24, 2017
Christmas Day — December 25, 2017

Your account can be accessed for payment or inquiries 24 hours a day online at www.mariasriverec.com or through the free SMARTHUB mobile app.

iOS APP



Android App

