



# Vigilante Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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VIGILANTE ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE

**BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES AND  
GENERAL  
MANAGER**

**Cheyenne Garrison,**  
President

Dist. #5  
Wise River/Silver Bow/Melrose

**Andy Johnson,**  
Vice President

Dist. #6

Dillon North/Glen

**Tom Mitchell,**  
Sec./Treas.

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Dillon South/Grant

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Dist. #1

Cardwell/Whitehall/Three Forks

**Dean Hanson,** Trustee  
Dist. #2

Silver Star/Waterloo

**Tom Helm,** Trustee  
Dist. #3

Townsend/N. Helena/  
Lump Gulch

**Colt High,** Trustee  
Dist. #4

Twin Bridges/Point of Rocks

**Dean Peterson,** Trustee  
Dist. #7

Jackson/Wisdom

**Allen Martinell,** Trustee  
Dist. #9

Dell/Lima

**Rollie Miller,**  
General Manager

## Deep Creek Canyon Fire

By **ROLLIE MILLER**  
General Manager



**O**n Sunday, June 13, at about 3:30 in the afternoon we were advised of a fire and outages in the Deep Creek Canyon and Grassy Mountain Subdivision areas east of Townsend.

Fire crews were on the scene when we got there, and they escorted us in the fire area to inspect the damage and make efforts to repair the line. A tree outside of our permitted right-of-way through the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land had fallen over and taken our powerline to the ground. We were able to get into that area to make the repairs and re-energize the line later that evening.

The next day, at approximately 11 a.m., a tree that had been damaged from the fire the previous day fell over and landed on our powerline, again tripping the circuit out. We were able to get that tree removed from the line and re-energize again a couple of hours later.

On Tuesday, June 15, very strong winds

blew the fire up and out of what control the firefighters had the previous two days. During this time another outage occurred, but it was too dangerous to inspect the area.

We were allowed back in there on Wednesday morning, and we determined that the fire destroyed approximately three miles of line in very steep and rugged terrain. We notified the about 120 members affected, mostly in the Grassy Mountain subdivision, that it would be at least a week before power was restored.

The next morning we had our line superintendent, two engineering staff, three contractor crews from Western Line Builders and two of our crews working on organizing the project, clearing danger trees from the right-of-way, staking the new powerline, laying out material and beginning the rebuilding process.

For the next week plus, the guys worked 12-hour days in hot and filthy conditions in steep and rugged terrain. Power was restored to the area on Thursday June 24 at approximately 3:30 p.m.

*See FIRE, next page*

# Heat-pump water heater is a great option worth looking at

**R**EGARDLESS of the energy type, when you look at how energy is consumed in your home, one of the major users is your water heater. Think about it: you need hot water for bathing, laundry and dishes, and every time there is a need for hot water, you are introducing cold water into the tank, causing the heater to come on. The water heater may also be the most neglected appliance in the home, since most of us don't give it a second thought until it needs to be replaced.

For the purpose of this article, we will focus on electric water heaters. When faced with replacing a water heater, many people will replace the unit with something similar due to necessity or cost. However, there is an option that is becoming more readily available and worth serious consideration: heat-pump water heaters, also known as a hybrid electric water heaters.

Over the years, we have used these pages to inform our membership of the benefits of heat pumps. Heat pumps simply displace heat from one location to another. For water heating, the heat pump transfers heat from ambient air, warming a refrigerant coil to heat the water in the tank. The

beauty of today's heat pump water heaters is if demand gets too high, or something goes wrong with the heat pump, the system employs standard resistance heating elements.

To explain why you have to go further than unit costs when replacing a water heater, I offer this analysis. I went onto the website for one of the big box stores and found two water heaters (same manufacturer), one standard and one hybrid. The tank size and first hour rating (FHR)<sup>1</sup> were very similar. Due to several variables, I am not including the cost of installation in this analysis.


The cost of the standard unit was \$470 and the cost of the hybrid unit was \$1,450. Included in the product information is the US Government Energy Guide for each model. On the energy guides, there is an estimated yearly energy cost. The energy guide cost is based on 12 cents per kilowatt hour, which is twice our single-phase rate. Using our rate, the estimated yearly energy cost on the standard unit is \$210 per year and the hybrid



unit is \$57 per year.

Using these numbers and the unit cost, we can calculate how many years it would take to break even on this purchase. The total cost through year five for the standard unit is \$1,520 and the hybrid unit is \$1,735. The actual breakeven point occurs somewhere in year six – still not much of an argument for installing a hybrid unit.


However, this being a heat pump, the hybrid selected would be eligible for a \$600 incentive from Vigilante Electric Cooperative, making its estimated total cost at year five \$1,135. Here, you would recover your additional cost within the first three years of installation. This unit is also eligible for a federal tax credit.

As with all incentives offered by Vigilante Electric, there are requirements that need to be met to secure an incentive on a hybrid water heater. This illustrates, however, what can be discovered when you do a little research and go beyond the unit cost. If you have any questions regarding this, we would be glad to assist. 

## FIRE

*Continued from previous page*

In all, 58 new structures were installed with numerous new anchors. Five of the poles needed the holes dug and poles set by hand. I want to personally and publicly thank all the guys working directly on this project. It was very dangerous work in horrible conditions, and I am very happy to report that not a single accident occurred, nor even a Band-Aid was used.

I would also like to thank my entire team because everybody had to step up and help fill in to make this all work smoothly. In addition, I am very pleased and encouraged with the way the entire group of diverse interests related to this fire came together and worked as a team to get us through what started as literally a life-or-death crisis. More specifically, the USFS, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Broadwater County Fire and Law Enforcement, Montana Highway Patrol and others fighting this fire. 



# UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

## SETTING US APART

**D**id you know that your cooperative is, by law, a non-profit organization, and that YOU (a co-op member) are part owner? Vigilante Electric Cooperative is owned by those we serve. While there are many unique features of an electric cooperative, one distinguishing feature is capital credits.

Each year, Vigilante Electric Cooperative calculates net margins, which is the amount that our revenue exceeded expenses during the year. We allocate the net margins as capital credits to our members based on the amount of electricity they purchased throughout the year. Members are sent a notification of their portion of the allocated margins annually.

We then use the allocated, but unretired, capital credits to improve and expand our electric system, and meet our other capital requirements. This reduces our need to borrow money and helps us provide reliable electric service.

Every year, Vigilante Electric's

board of trustees evaluates the cooperative's financial position and capital needs, and determines whether the co-op will retire capital credits. When it is financially feasible and prudent, we retire the capital credits in the form of a check back to the member.

In 2020, Vigilante Electric retired \$731,906 in capital credits that had been allocated in 2005 and 2006. We also retired an additional \$220,296 for estates and inactive services. To date, we have returned more than \$18.5 million back to our members.

There are a few challenges that we face when it comes to capital credits that center around the accuracy of member information. Over time, members pass away, go through a divorce or they leave our service.

If the member information is not kept current and accurate, it impacts our ability to return your money. Even if a check gets issued, the information on that check needs to be accurate or banks may refuse to honor it. Regard-

less of the change, the easiest way to navigate the process is to call. We will guide you through it.

For estates and members leaving our system, you will be given the option of receiving your capital credits early and at a discounted rate. Discounting is the process of determining the present value of a future sum of money. The discount is based upon the weighted average cost of capital, and is calculated annually.

Finally, this time of year we prepare a list of past members with unclaimed capital credits. The list, which appears in local newspapers, this publication and on our website, consists mainly of members who have permanently left our system, and for whom we no longer have current contact information.

The following is part two of the list that was published last month.

Please review the information and contact us if you recognize any names.

**RM**

GILLESPIE, BRAD & EMILY - KALISPELL, MT  
GIUFFRE, MATT & KELLY - TOWNSEND, MT  
GOHN, STEVEN & JANICE - BUTTE, MT  
GONZALES, HUMBERTO & ARCOME - HELENA, MT  
GRAYBEAL, TY - DILLON, MT  
GRUBER, MARCUS - BUTTE, MT  
GUTIERREZ, JOSE & MARIA - NAMPA, ID  
HALES, FARIN - DILLON, MT  
HAMILTON, PATRICK & SHERRI - TOWNSEND, MT  
HAMMOND, LEROY - TOWNSEND, MT  
HANSON, DENE - BUTTE, MT  
HANSON, FRED - DILLON, MT  
HAWKEY, ROBERT & CHRISTINA - YUMA, AZ  
HAYDER, JOHN & ERIN - THREE FORKS, MT  
HEDDEN, LISA - HELENA, MT  
HERITAGE WEST LLC - MIRAMAR BEACH, FL  
HERRING, WENDY - TUCSON, AZ  
HILL, SCOTT - SALT LAKE CITY, UT  
HOOGENBOOM, BRIAN & MELISSA - SOLDOTNA, AK  
HOPGOOD, JEFFREY & HEATHER FLINT - DILLON, MT

### CAPITAL CREDITS CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

HOWARD, JERRY A - HELENA, MT  
HUDSPETH, JOSEPH & JESSICA - WILLISTON, ND  
HUTH, SHARI - TOWNSEND, MT  
HYNDMAN, ANDY - WHITEHALL, MT  
ITA, SHAINALEE - SPRING CREEK, NV  
JANIKOWSKI, ASHLEY I - DILLON, MT  
JECKEL, RICK & SHERRY - MISSOULA, MT  
JEKA, LEE M - CRESTVIEW, FL  
JENKINS, MICHAEL M - TOWNSEND, MT  
JENKS, AMY J - HELENA, MT  
JOHNSON, ANGELA - DILLON, MT  
JOHNSON, JENNIFER - TOWNSEND, MT  
JOY, LORI - EUREKA, CA  
KATANO, STEVE & MEIKO - ST GEORGE, UT  
KEARNS, ANDREA - BUTTE, MT  
KOESTER, ROBERT B - WHITEHALL, MT  
KNUTSON, THEODORE - DILLON, MT  
KOSTRBA, JARRET & VALARIE - DILLON, MT

KRATTIGER, HOLLY & ALLISON BETHEL - DILLON, MT  
KRAUS CONSTRUCTION - THREE FORKS, MT  
KUNTZWEILER, DOUGLAS - HELENA, MT  
LALONDE, PATRICK - WHITEHALL, MT  
LARSON, LINDA - DILLON, MT  
LAVIGNE, KIMBERLY - TOWNSEND, MT  
LEGACY CAPITAL GRP - HUSON, MT  
LEVERTON, KRISTEN & KARI CHATRIND - DILLON, MT  
LEVINE, DEANNA - BELT, MT  
LEWIS, DONALD E - SANTEE, CA  
LIEN, RUSSELL & DIXIE - BUTTE, MT  
LOTZER, SHANE & CANDACE - KODIAK, AK  
MACKAY, KEVIN A - GREAT FALLS, MT  
MARTINEZ, MANUEL - BUTTE, MT  
MAWYER, DON - DILLON, MT  
MCCLUNG, COLE - DILLON, MT  
MCGINLEY, MARK & ELIZABETH FERRIS - WINSTON, MT  
MELL, BRUCE - LEWISTOWN, MT  
MENGLA, JIM & MARLEEN - MOUNTAIN HOME, AR

See **CAPITAL CREDITS**, next page

## CAPITAL CREDITS

*Continued from previous page*

MENOR, TINA - BELGRADE, MT  
 MENTZER, JUSTIN & PAMELA - DILLON, MT  
 MERCER, LESLIE - CLYDE PARK, MT  
 MERGENTHALER, TRAVIS & TRACY - HELENA, MT  
 MESSERLY, KAYLA - DILLON, MT  
 MILLER JR, HAROLD J - CARDWELL, MT  
 MOCK, JOSH & CHRISTINA - DILLON, MT  
 MONOCO, ALEXIS & KEVIN ANDERSON - BIGFORK, MT  
 MONROE, JARRET - DILLON, MT  
 MONTANA, MOLY B. DENUM & JOE BARDSWICH - HELENA, MT  
 MUNDEN, DAVID - HELENA, MT  
 MYERS, BRETT & JODI - PRESTON, ID  
 NATE, STEVEN & JAMIE - ENNIS, MT  
 NEEDEEN, GEORGE - DILLON, MT  
 NEILSON, ROY & CAROLINE - E HELENA, MT  
 NELSON, STACEE - DILLON, MT  
 NEWLON, KAREN - BOZEMAN, MT  
 NEZ PERCE MOTEL - COPPER CENTER, AK  
 ODELL, CHANCEY - LEMMON, MT  
 OLSON, DALE & LORI - DILLON, MT  
 PADDOCK, BLAINE - NAMPA, ID  
 PAGANO, DINO & SUSAN - PALMER, AK  
 PANTALONI, NICK - HUSON, MT  
 PARKER, MICHAEL & KYRA - LIMA, MT  
 PAYNE, GEORGINA - DILLON, MT  
 PETERS, NORM - LEWISTOWN, MT  
 PETERSEN, PETE - RYEGATE, MT  
 PETERSEN, TERESA - ANACONDA, MT  
 PIERCE, JOSEPH & KELLY - HELENA, MT  
 PODGORSKI, CLINT - DILLON, MT  
 POLIZZI, PAULA - WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MT  
 POTPAN, DEBORAH - GENEVA, OH  
 POWELL, TOM - BUTTE, MT  
 POWERS, REBECCA - TACOMA, WA  
 PRATHER, ELIZABETH - FRUITA, CO  
 PREVEL, GENEVIEVE & MARK CLAYTON - TOWNSEND, MT  
 PRYOR, THOMAS - GOODING, ID

QUICKENDEN, SHARON - MISSOULA, MT  
 RAINES, KENNY & TWILA - CARRINGTON, ND  
 RASMUSSEN, CLINT & DEBRA - CHINOOK, MT  
 RATHIE, MONTY R - BAKER, MT  
 RAYMOND, RUSSELL - COLORADO SPRINGS, CO  
 REED, ERNEST J - PUEBLO WEST, CO  
 REESE, DON & EMILY CAYER - JACKSON, MT  
 RENS, EMILY - JACKSON, MT  
 REWERTS, NIK - DILLON, MT  
 RICHERT, PAXTON & MEGAN - HELENA, MT  
 RICHMOND, JESSIE - HAVRE, MT  
 RIFE, MATT - GREAT FALLS, MT  
 RIGHNOUR, TABITHA - TOWNSEND, MT  
 RIVER HOUSE RESTAURANT - BOZEMAN, MT  
 ROBERTSON, ROBERT J & JACKIE - EXETER, CA  
 RODRIGUEZ, STEVE & JANNAE - LANSING, MI  
 ROGLER, SHARI & ANESTHESIA SOUTHFORK - KEVIN, MT  
 ROMOS, RICHARD - WHITEHALL, MT  
 ROSE, BRAD - DILLON, MT  
 ROSSELOTT, M C & DEBBIE - MILES CITY, MT  
 ROUSLTON, SCOTT & LAURIE - CLEVELAND, OH  
 ROUSSEAU, FRED - COEUR D ALENE, ID  
 ROWLEY, WILL - REDDING, CT  
 SAGISSOR, JULIE - TOWNSEND, MT  
 SANDALL, MARISSA - TWIN BRIDGES, MT  
 SCHOCK, TROY & KARRI - DILLON, MT  
 SCHWARTZ, JOHN & GINA - WILDOMAR, CA  
 SCRIVNER, SHANE - BOZEMAN, MT  
 SEILLER, WAYNE A - EAST HELENA, MT  
 SEVERANCE, FRANCIS - DILLON, MT  
 SEVERSON, RYAN S & NANCY - PABLO, MT  
 SHEETS, MIKE & JESSICA - DILLON, MT  
 SHELTON, DANIEL & ANGELA - WISE RIVER, MT  
 SHIPMAN, STACY J - SIDNEY, MT  
 SHREFFLER, RAPHAEL - MEEKER, CO  
 SIEVERS, JOANNA - ENTERPRISE, UT

SLATER, MICHAEL & SONJA - BILLINGS, MT  
 SMITH, AARON - BOZEMAN, MT  
 SMITH, N T - MADRAS, OR  
 SPICKARD, TIM - URBANDALE, IA  
 STACK, KENNETH & LAURA - HELENA, MT  
 STEBBINS, JANET L - SHERIDAN, MT  
 STEELE, ALLISON - LAUREL, MT  
 STEINHOFF, AMBER - DILLON, MT  
 STICE, JOSH & KYLIE - TOWNSEND, MT  
 STIEGLER, JOSEPH J - TETON VILLAGE, WY  
 SWAN, JAMES & CAROLE - DILLON, MT  
 SWANSON, MICHAEL J - BUTTE, MT  
 SWENSON, KATIE - DILLON, MT  
 SWINDLE, CHAD - DILLON, MT  
 TAYLOR, SYNDIA - KILA, MT  
 TICHENOR, VALERIE - WHITEHALL, MT  
 TILTON, GARY - DILLON, MT  
 TOOMBS, WARREN - ST JOHNS, AZ  
 TORGERSON, HEIDI - BOZEMAN, MT  
 TOROK, MIKE - WHITEHALL, MT  
 TROLINGER, CHARLOTTE - BOULDER, MT  
 TROST, KAYLEE - BOZEMAN, MT  
 ULIZIO, TODD - MISSOULA, MT  
 VAN MARTER, PAULA - CONNELL, WA  
 WALTER, RYAN - DILLON, MT  
 WATSON, KIM - TOWNSEND, MT  
 WATSON, LAUREN & TATE DEMPEWOLF - WORDEN, MT  
 WELCH, ROSS - THREE FORKS, MT  
 WERLE, BILL & DARLENE - WHITEHALL, MT  
 WHITE, CHESTER & TAMMY - POMPEY PILLAR, MT  
 WILKE, MEGAN - DILLON, MT  
 WILLIS, GINA - PAGOSA SPRINGS, CO  
 WILLOUGHBY, PAT - HELENA, MT  
 WILSON, AMANDA - HILL CITY, SD  
 WILSON, DAVID - LEWISTON, ID  
 WOOD, KEVIN & SUSAN - HELENA, MT  
 WOODCOCK, LARRY & ARLON - PETOSKEY, MI  
 WRIGHT, NINA - SHEPHERD, MT  
 X C NETWORKS - EL PASO, TX  
 ZITELBERGER, RONALD & DEBBIE - SPOKANE VLY, WA

# If the Message is Urgent...Call

**A**s a member, we try to make your interactions with us as easy and convenient as possible. This is why there are a variety of platforms that allow you to communicate with us. While we appreciate all the input that we receive from our members, for information that needs a timely response the best way to notify us is to call.

Facebook, messenger, emails and SmartHub are all viable and often-used means of communicating information to us, and Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., they work well. These platforms are not monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week, however. So, depending on

when you sent the message, there could be a delay in the response.

For outage notification, or to report any urgent situation, the best thing to do is call our office number at 683-2327 or 800-221-8271.

During regular office hours, calls will be answered by Vigilante Electric Cooperative staff, and after hours our phones are answered by a call service that we contract with. For urgent situations, the call service personnel will take your information and get it to the appropriate staff immediately. RM