



HILL COUNTY ELECTRIC NEWS & VIEWS

August 2025



1.877.394.7804
hcelectric.com 



Craig Gates
General Manager/CEO

CEO Message

Verona Substation: Permanent Repairs Completed

In last November's newsletter, we shared details about the emergency work at our Verona Substation following a bushing failure that led to a 30-hour outage. Recently, our members had another extended power outage while we performed additional work on the Substation. While the outages presented real challenges, I am immensely proud of the dedication of our team and the understanding of our members as we worked to restore power and complete the necessary repairs.

The most recent outage on June 26, allowed us to replace all three high-side 161kV bushings on the Verona transformer — components that are vital to safely moving electricity in and out of the substation. Each bushing weighs about 500 pounds and measures more than 10 feet in length. They were handled with extreme care before installation.



Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5



The installation of the new bushing also required the replacement of the draw-lead connectors. Because we weren't certain if the draw lead would need to be lengthened, and we found that it needed to be lengthened, our team was prepared for multiple repair methods. In the end, precision, adaptability, and a bit of creativity were key!

After installation, we pulled a vacuum on the transformer to remove any moisture, followed by a nitrogen fill. Final testing confirmed that the system was ready to be re-energized, and our scheduled outage of 16 hours was completed in less than 9 hours.

The scheduled outage also provided an opportunity to perform critical maintenance on our 69kV transmission line. Prior to the scheduled outage, crews identified and

prioritized poles in need of attention. Once the outage began, crews worked safely and efficiently to complete as much of the maintenance as possible while the line was de-energized.

With this work complete, the Verona Substation is now equipped to deliver reliable, long-term service to the 687 meters it supports across Virgelle, Colony Bay, Big Sandy, and Hopp-Iliad.

To the team that completed this technical, high-stakes work - thank you. And to our members, we appreciate your continued patience, support and trust in Hill County Electric.



Public Notice

Notice is hereby given that Hill County Electric (HCE) will hold a public meeting as required by HB 490 as it passed in the 2025 Montana Legislative session. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the HCE Wildfire Mitigation Plan. The meeting will be held on August 25, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. located at the HCE main office, 2121 US Hwy 2 NW in Havre, Montana, 59501. Written comments may be delivered to the HCE main office, addressed to ATTN: HCE Wildfire Mitigation Plan, for consideration until 10/09/2025.

From Montana to the Capitol: Washington D.C. Youth Tour Highlights

On June 15, I flew out of Great Falls with a group of 29 kids from other rural electric co-ops in Montana. We were headed to Washington D.C. for a once-in-a-lifetime trip. Once we landed, we hit the ground running visiting National Harbor, Air Force/Pentagon Memorials, Arlington National Cemetery, US Marine Corps War Memorial, National Archives, the People's House Exhibit, WWII and Washington Monuments, Library of Congress, Naval Academy, Gettysburg Battlefield film and Museum (the biggest battle on US soil), Air & Space Museum, Smithsonian, Holocaust Museum, and the Army Museum.

Also, probably my favorite part, I was able to meet Senators Tim Sheehy and Steve Daines where we had a chance to visit with both of them. We tour the US capitol building and learned about our nation's history. There were also multiple opportunities to interact with individuals from rural co-ops from all over the United States.

This trip has been an invaluable learning experience. I had the privilege of traveling with individuals from across our state and building meaningful friendships. I am deeply grateful and sincerely thankful for this remarkable opportunity.

Luke Stevenson

Thank you for the opportunity to explore our nation's capital and tour Washington, D.C. I would like to thank my cooperative, Hill County Electric, and all the other cooperatives that sponsored us on this trip. I really enjoyed talking with our representatives and getting to meet them in person. Visiting Gettysburg and standing where so much history happened. Even seeing buildings with bullet holes still in them was really cool and made it all feel so real. Thank you again to everyone who made this unforgettable experience possible for us.

Dirk Wolery



Swap and Shop

Welcome to our Swap and Shop! Feel free to post and find classifieds from other members!

Visit www.hcelectric.com/swap-and-shop to view all listings or to submit/remove your own.

**Denotes photo available on website*

ISO Model T Car Body for Model T Frame

Call 406.945.2027.

Craftsman 28" Snowblower

Electric start, 2 stage snowblower with tire chains. Only used twice. Asking \$500.00 406-395-4581.

1976 GMC 4wheel drive

4 speed manual 350 V8, Very nice condition, new GM engine and all new interior, no rust P.S P.B. nice paint. runs great, long box. Call (406) 374-2458.

Sundance 7 Person Spa

300 gallon. In good working order - winterized and drained. Call (406) 632-5628

WANTED: Clamp bumper hitch.

(VO type) with or without ball. For Shriner parade vehicle. Call (406) 390-3522

Powder River Cattle Squeeze Chute

Call 808.391.0766 for more information.

German Shepherd Puppies For Sale

Two Female Black and Brown German Shepherd Puppies. Asking \$250.00. Call 406.326.2287.

1993 Ford Explorer

4 liter V-6, motor runs, good tires, needs transmission, clear title. Asking \$400.00 or best offer. Call 406.547.2184.

Cajun electric smoker

Cajun electric smoker with timer, thermostat, burns pellets. Asking \$75.00, call 406.547.2184.

Mini Washing Machine For Sale

Mini washing machine, capacity 1KA, portable, great for RV's or apartments. \$35.00. Call 406.547.2184.

Professional AG Lane Chicken Cages

Asking \$800 call 406.945.2027 with questions.

Flexi-Coil Sprayer

65XL Sprayer 130 ft booms, 1,000 gallon tanks, wind screens. \$750 or best offer, call 406.262.3969.

Sooner Aluminum 20 ft. Stock Trailer Gooseneck

Asking \$9,500.00 Call 406.326.2284.

German Shepherd Puppy

Black/Tan in color, Call 406.326.2287.

Barrett Cattle Trailer

50 ft. Barrett Cattle Trailer. Asking \$10,000. Call 406.301.4035.

2021 Massimo 550 L Quad 4x4 EFI

145 miles with 16.7 hours, Call 406.265.1735. 3/25

Love Seat and Couch

Love seat and couch flower print, solid wood, make an offer and you haul. Call 406.932.4591.

12' Foot Dump Trailer with Split Seasoned Ash

12' dump trailer of split seasoned ash, \$350.00. Delivered, not stacked. Call 406.561.6315

Cattle Stock Trailer

48 ft. (older but in good shape) asking \$10,000.00 – Call 406-301-4035.

Toro Snowblower

Very nice 21-inch, electric start Toro Snowblower, like new, asking \$375, call 406.378.3226.

2015 F250 Platinum Crew Cab Diesel

2015 F250 Platinum Crew Cab Diesel, black, 111,000 miles. Asking \$36,900, call 406.945.2180.

Livestock Guardian Pups

Anatolian Shepherd/Karakachan. Guard goats, sheep, chickens, cows and kittens. Call or text 931-0225

2016 Ford F350 Super Duty Crew Cab

Has 161,136 miles. Asking \$20,000. Call Brian at 406.394.2879 for more information.

Swap & Shop is a classified advertising section of the Hill County Electric and Triangle Communications websites and newsletters. It is maintained as a service to members 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 and if approved, the ad will be published. It will stay online for 1 year unless you notify us to remove or change it. Ads will also appear in our newsletters (space permitting). Due to print deadlines and space available, some ads may appear in the next month's issue. We reserve the right to abbreviate ads.

Happy swapping and shopping!