





HILL COUNTY ELECTRIC NEWS & VIEWS

August 2021



1.877.394.7804  
hillcountyelectric.coop



Craig Gates
General Manager/CEO

CEO August Message

On July 2, 2015, Hill County Electric (HCE) started to receive energy from a 5.3 kW Solar Array that we installed on our campus. Six years later this Solar Array has produced 47,500 kWh or an average of 7,916.6 kWh per year. According

to the manufacture this kWh production has avoided 33 tons of CO₂ or 5.5 tons of CO₂ per year. At HCE's current net metering retail rate 47,500kWh equates to \$4,869 or \$812/year.

We installed the panels to help our members and employees understand the pros and cons of making the investment in a residential solar system.

The solar array cost HCE \$28,224 to install in 2015. At that time with a 0% interest loan, it was projected to have a 44 year pay back. If you were able to obtain a 30 percent tax credit in 2015, it was projected to be a 33 year pay back of the system. At the time this system was connected to the grid it cost \$5.64 per watt of solar capacity installed. Over the past 6 years, it appears the installed cost per watt has dropped approximately 57% from 2015. This would reduce the payback period if HCE

continues to net meter at our retail rate.

HCE's real time data from the panels can be monitored on our website at www.hcelectric.com/service-and-programs/solar-panels. Additional information on the 2015 installed cost and payback period can also be found at the above link.

Solar panels degrade or lose their efficiency each year and typically have a standard panel warranty of 25 years. What happens after 25 years? We can't make any predications at this point, but experts in the industry believe the panels will still produce power just at a diminished rate.

Solar technology is not perfect. Some pros are solar may reduce your carbon footprint, potential tax incentives and little maintenance. Cons are the high initial cost, solar is weather dependent, the panels are only effective when the sun is shining, the panels are not portable if you move, you are limited by the space you have to install the panels and the manufacturing and delivery systems for the panels leave their own carbon footprint.

If you are interested in solar, make sure you take the time to research all the advantages and disadvantages.

HCE Safety Demonstration at Chester Farmer's Union Camp

HCE linemen Josh, Jacob and Dakota spent time at the Chester Farmer's Union Camp in Chester educating campers on electrical safety. Part of HCE's commitment to keeping our community safe around electricity.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

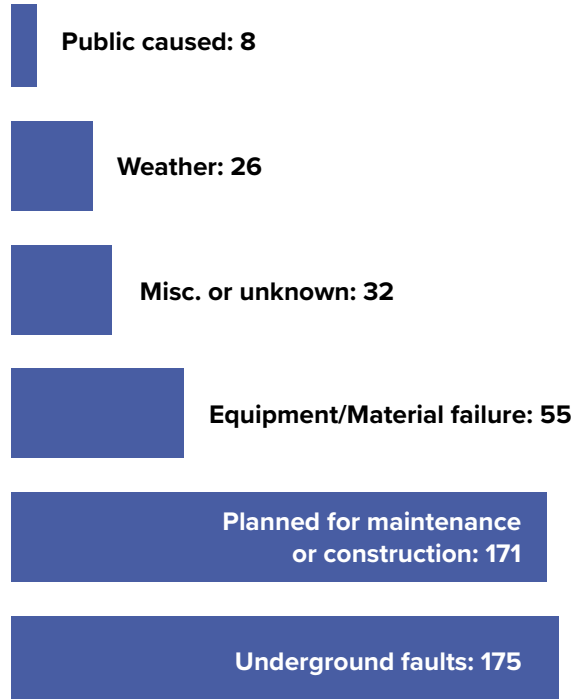
When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: energy.gov



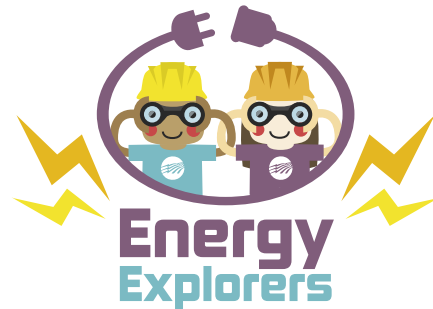
HCE Happenings

Last month, Hill County Electric (HCE) had approximately 467 account hours affected by outages. Of these hours:

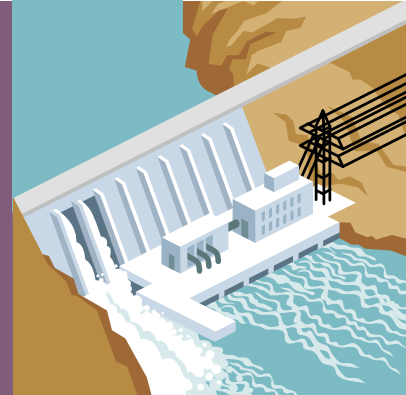


HYDROPOWER WORD SCRAMBLE

You know that it's never safe to mix water and electricity. But did you know that large amounts of flowing water can be used to create electricity? It's called hydropower, and it's made from the movement of water.



Read the facts about hydropower below, then unscramble each **bolded** word. Check your work in the answer key.



1. **YROHD** means “water” in Greek.

2. Water flowing down a **EVRRI** is used to spin large turbines that help make the hydroelectricity.

3. When the turbines spin, a large **TROAEGREN** spins, which makes the electricity.

4. The amount of water used to generate hydropower is controlled through use of large **MDAS**.

5. Hydropower is a form of **ELNERAEWB** energy.

ANSWER KEY: 1. HYDRO 2. RIVER 3. GENERATOR 4. DAMS 5. RENEWABLE

SWAP AND SHOP

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

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!

Round Baler*

1870 Gehl Round baler with auto-tie, 5'x6' bales. Always shredded and is field ready. Asking \$3,500, call 406.355.4920.

HON Lateral File*

HON 2 drawer lateral file with 3 shelves that lock, 42" wide x 66" high x 19" deep. Asking \$800.00, call 406.547.2409.

HON Office Desk*

38000 series, steel body 30" wide x 66" long with two drawers, locking. Asking \$450.00, call 406.547.2409.

Custom Built Kitchen Island

Island dimensions are 29 1/2" x 71 1/2" x 36" with a 2" maple butcher block top over an oak base with casters. The island has a large center storage area with an adjustable shelf that is accessible from both sides, four pull-through drawers, and a bookshelf on one end. Asking \$1,000, call 307.277.5782.

Mercury Boat Motor

Mercury outboard boat motor. 6HP, 4 cycle, long shaft. Asking \$1,200, call 406.547.2184.

Antique Caterpillar Grader

Caterpillar pull-type grader from late '40s. All manual with a 12-foot blade. Asking \$1,750, call 406.376.3268.

Items For Sale

1982 Ford Ranchero, needs some work and rear bumper replaced. Asking \$5,000. Roll-top desk in good condition, asking \$1,400. Call 406.622.5417.

Wanting To Buy

1955-1958 Chevy car or pickup for project. Also looking for a 410 shotgun. Call 406.326.2287.

Toro Titan MX Mower

Model 6080 zero turn mower with rollover protection with 26 HP engine. Ready to go, call 406.378.3212.

Harlowton Home For Sale

Three bedroom home, one bath home for sale in Harlowton. Two-story with basement for storage, new gas furnace on a nice corner lot. \$88,000 firm, contact owner for more details and possible owner contract with a down payment, 406.632.5725.

Rentals in Harlowton

Multiple houses and apartments for rent in Harlowton. Prices vary, no pets, no smoking. Call 406.632.5725.

Delta Platinum Edition Unisaw

10-inch unisaw with 50-inch commercial Biesemeyer fence with mobile base. In good condition, includes extra accessories. Asking \$1,500 or best offer, call 813.453.1787.

Misc Items

1985 Versatile 35.5-foot blade; pressure washer; portable contractor air compressor; receiving hitch; like new heavy-duty toolbox for size pickup and weight bench plus weights. Call 406.378.3212 for prices and more details.

Mayrath Grain Auger

27-foot, 6-inch Mayrath grain auger with 5HP electric motor. Call 406.378.3212

96 Yukon Parts

Doors (passenger side). Call 406.547.2187.

Property For Sale in Loma

Opportunity for small-town living with wildlife and fishing access. For sale at a bargain price, 4 lots and 4 buildings originally housing a second-hand and antique shop. Call 406.739.4361.

Stainless Steel Drop Visor

Twelve-inch stainless steel drop visor comes with brackets. Fits a 2009 Kenworth or newer. Asking \$150 but will consider reasonable offers. Call 406.357.4282.

1967 Ford Thunderbird*

This classic car runs great, has a clean interior, and is in good condition with some minor bodywork required. Asking \$8,000 but will consider reasonable offers. Call 406.357.4282.

McCormick Deering Combine

1956(ish) McCormick Deering Combine. Ran great last time it was started about 10 years ago. Need to get it hauled off the place. FREE to interested person(s). Call 406.572.3317.

Farm For Sale

1175 acre farm NE of Harlem. 840 crop land, balance pasture. Available after harvest. \$750.00 per acre crop land and \$225.00 for grazing. Located in Township 32N Range 25E Sections 4,9,5,6,8 Blaine County. Montana cadastral site has satellite pictures of the farm. Call 406.355.4773.

*Photo of item available to view on HCE website (www.hcelectric.com/swap-and-shop)