

Excerpts from the President's Report – AGM 2019



Keep your REA informed!

Members were encouraged to keep their contact information current as it is important to know how to connect with members for important notices and financial issues.

Arears Management

Members were reminded that in most instances, regardless of whether you are renting your property or building, the landowner is the official member-owner of the REA service. The landowner is ultimately responsible for the timely payment of monthly bills regardless of the utility payment arrangement with a renter.

As a co-operative, West Wetaskiwin REA provides our membership with the opportunity to choose electricity providers with the assumption that members will pay their bills in a timely fashion. We encourage members to plan and budget for electricity payments year round to eliminate potential extra labor costs to collect delinquent accounts or to issue land caveats.



West Wetaskiwin REA 2019 AGM

Member Responsibility



The West Wetaskiwin REA relies on our membership to be honest if they have accidentally damaged the system and to report it. We expect members will not intentionally interfere with the REA system as is the case in meter and/or breaker box tampering (see photo left). Tampering with any aspect of the system can cause serious damage and produce a significant liability as it relates to the integrity of the system as a whole.

Tampering with, or modifying, the distribution system in any way is illegal and anyone doing so will be charged.

In the case of third party damage, please know that in the event of any contractor/third party damage, the member remains responsible and it is their obligation to obtain financial reimbursement from that third party – **it is not the REA's responsibility.**

Urban/Rural Annexation

The arguments put forward regarding the issue of urban/rural annexation failed to persuade the Alberta Utilities Commission to decide in favor of the REAs and their respective members. We continue to collaborate with other REAs and the AFREA with regard to next steps – no additional details are available at this time.

For power troubles or service requests, contact: FortisAlberta (the distribution system operator for West Wetaskiwin REA): Toll-free: 1-855-333-9473 or 780-310-9473

For REA inquiries contact:
West Wetaskiwin REA
R.R. #1 Station Main,
Wetaskiwin, Alberta T9A 1W8
Phone: 780-335-9378 (WEST)
E-mail: westwet@telus.net
www.westwetaskiwinrea.com

For billing or account inquiries contact:
Battle River Power Coop
Box 1420
Camrose, Alberta T4V 1X3
Toll-free: 1-877-428-3972
E-mail: brpc@brpower.coop
www.brpower.coop

2018 Update on the REA and the Board

Board activities included holding a total of 26 meetings excluding the AGM as follows: 10 regular board meetings, 5 special meetings, 2 other meetings and 4 formal meetings with FortisAlberta. Directors of the Board and Secretary met in person and over the phone multiple times with members (including FortisAlberta as required) to discuss site upgrade requests, billing issues, vegetation management and new service designs and participated in phone meetings with Battle River Power Coop to discuss member's consumption concerns, billing issues and arrears.

For 2018, the West Wetaskiwin REA

- added 5 new services
- issued 10 replacement contracts with 0 dismantles
- increased microgeneration sites to 9
- has a membership/services count of 933.

Scholarship: The Board of Directors has decided to develop an education scholarship program for member children to assist in their post-secondary studies. The details will be announced in an upcoming newsletter and available on the website.

Brochure: To further the positioning of West Wetaskiwin REA as the distribution system operator in our service area, the Board developed a brochure that will be available at the county office, to local realtors and other locations that would be appropriate.

Vegetation Management: As reported last year, your Board of Directors researched alternate solutions for less costly vegetation management. As a result of our research and discussions with FortisAlberta, our system operator, they agreed to a pilot/trial project in 5 locations. FortisAlberta made a separate AGM presentation with findings that indicate the pilot project is having the desired effect on reducing vegetation growth.

Your Board continues to be concerned with the cost of vegetation management and we strongly encourage members to follow the instructions in their Electric Service Contract (ESC) regarding planting of vegetation (including trees) around power lines.

Unfortunately, there are several areas where these instructions were not followed and the resulting vegetation growth is in danger of compromising the integrity of the distribution system (see photo below).

When these areas are identified, members are notified with an outline of what vegetation removal work needs to be done and required to sign a consent form. Costs per site can vary between \$4000 and \$6000 **as tree trimming must be done by a certified tree trimmer.** The Board is reviewing whether site specific vegetation management resulting from tree planting that clearly deviates from instructions in the ESC should be invoiced to the member.



Regulated Rate Option



The Regulated Rate Option (RRO) may increase or decrease from month to month as it is priced on the open market and subject to many factors relating to supply and demand. It is not a 'regulated' rate, rather is a default rate. If you do not have a contract with an electricity retailer, then you are on the RRO. For March 2019, RRO is priced at \$0.05558 per kWh, reflected on your enclosed orange bill. For April 2019, the Battle River Power Coop monthly rate as calculated under the RRO regulation is \$0.05791; the billing rate charged to WW REA members is \$0.05791.

It is very important to note that your electrical distribution system provider will always be the West Wetaskiwin REA, regardless of who supplies your electricity. Members will not be disadvantaged in any way based on their retailer choice.

For a list of energy retailers, contact the Utilities Consumer Advocate: 310-4-UCA (310-4822) or www.ucahelps.alberta.ca. If you do not have a contract with an electricity retailer, then you are on the default Regulated Rate Option (RRO). The RRO rate is listed on www.westwetaskiwinrea.com

Information on West Wetaskiwin's Code of Conduct Regulation Compliance Plan can be found on our website: www.westwetaskiwinrea.com