

# PRECorp News

JUNE 2018

## Board selects AMI meter vendor

### PRECorp Marketing Communications

After an extensive evaluation process, the Powder River Energy (PRECorp) Board of Directors on May 22, chose the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative's (NRTC) metering solution for its membership.

The metering system is an offering from NRTC through its partnership with Itron Network Solutions, Inc. (INSI).

Last year, NRTC entered into an agreement with INSI to help electric cooperative members build communications networks that are reliable, cost effective and scalable to meet their current and future needs.

PRECorp recently launched a long-term strategy to have a visionary outlook and develop technologies that will serve its cooperative membership well into the future.

INSI's high-performance and secure and open standards platform enables

reliable two-way advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and other future smart grid and related applications. The open standards also enable electric co-ops to choose the meter(s) they want to use.

"I wouldn't say it was any one thing that led us to this choice," said Rich Halloran, PRECorp's Service Operations Manager who is the project's manager. "It was the technology, the speed and the open network. The fact that it's not proprietary gives us lots of options. The Board was very excited about that."

NRTC helps members evaluate the INSI option by, among other things, designing detailed propagation studies to identify specific build-out costs. NRTC has relationships with all major meter manufacturers and can provide pricing information and technical recommendations. Finally, NRTC will manage the build-out and imple-

mentation process from start to finish.

"The NRTC team has been great to work with," said Mike Pommarane, PRECorp's Vice President of System Operations. "They listened to our needs and have been supportive of any decisions we made. Our staff is very engaged, so the ability to choose our meter was very attractive to us. We want to have options."

PRECorp plans to pilot the NRTC/INSI network solution across two circuits served by two different substations before full deployment across their 10,000 miles of distribution served by 57 substations. They've already shared their plans with Fergus Electric Cooperative, a cooperative member of the Members 1st G&T, in the hopes that there may be some synergies created by using the same network.

Initially, PRECorp plans to operate a

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**MIKE EASLEY,**  
CEO

This month I am sharing with you an article that I wrote as my role as a Director on the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority (WIA) Board. In addition to my day-to-day duties as CEO of PRECorp I serve on the WIA Board and the Board of the Wyoming Business Council. These roles help me better understand the “big picture” of what is happening in Wyoming. This helps me immensely in leading PRECorp, and it gives northeast Wyoming a stronger voice in key areas of policy and strategy for the State. I think it is important for us to better understand how leadership and vision work together to make Wyoming, and PRECorp, even better.

*Just like strengths and weaknesses are different sides of the same coin, so are opportunities and threats. We can view the world through a lens that sees weaknesses and threats, or we can see that same world through a different lens to see strengths and opportunities.*

*As leaders in Wyoming, our job is to understand the threats and weaknesses before us, but to also see our future through the lens of strengths and opportunity. Those leaders who can see beyond today and past the horizon are leaders with a special gift we call vision.*

*Wyoming has been fortunate to have leaders with vision. These leaders have positioned Wyoming to successfully face down our challenges by focusing on our strengths and creating opportunity. Since 2004, I have had the opportunity to work with these visionaries to witness, first-hand how they have navigated the challenges to create opportunity. These include, but are by no means limited to, such endeavors as:*

- *proactively navigating the threatened sage grouse listing;*
- *reducing the price differential for Wyoming gas,*
- *catalyzing transmission line development;*
- *revolutionizing the conversation around CO<sub>2</sub> through the Wyoming Integrated Test Center (ITC), and;*
- *positioning Wyoming to become economically diversified.*

*If you look at the many things we have done well you will see a common theme. This theme is called alignment. Wyoming’s efforts to realize the ITC began with a compelling vision from Governor Mead, focused and unwavering legislative support, and a cooperative effort between the state and private industry to make the Governor’s vision and legislative direction become a reality.*

*We all understand that Wyoming is facing challenges related to its economy, and the revenue amounts and mix we had historically realized are changing. A big part of this change is being driven by changes in energy markets that are being propelled by advanced technologies. There is a growing abundance in energy commodities that, only a few years ago were seen from the lens of scarcity. The intensity and the duration of the market swings are changing the way we manage our finances.*

*It would be easy to focus on these changes through the lens of weaknesses and threats; however, we continue to find opportunity in our challenges. I am proud of our leadership’s vision and how we are currently positioned.*

*Soon Wyoming will be at the center of the formation of an entirely new economy, one where CO<sub>2</sub> is an asset. This outcome of the ITC and the NRG COSIA Carbon XPRIZE competition, which will be among the first tenants at the carbon capture testing facility, is a clear example of creating opportunity in the face of a huge threat. This new economy will bring additional stability to our amazing coal resources in Wyoming.*

*Wyoming is also positioned to be the home of one of the largest wind farms in the world as the Chokecherry Sierra Madre project comes online and Wyoming exports wind power over the Transwest Express Transmission line.*

*Rocky Mountain Power’s Energy Vision 2020 project is upgrading existing infrastructure to deliver even more energy within an existing footprint, as well as bringing on additional wind resources and expanding transmission capacity with the Gateway West*

**... Continued on Page 3.**

**HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE: Powder River Energy Corporation offices will be closed Wednesday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day.**

## Do you need a ride to the Annual Meeting?

A bus can pick up passengers Saturday, August, 25, in Beulah, Sundance, and Moorcroft, for arrival in Gillette at 9:45 a.m. Call Missy Biegler at 1-800-442-3630 by Friday, August 10, 2018, to make arrangements.

## Events calendar

The PRECorp Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at rotating locations in Sundance, Gillette, and Sheridan. Meetings might be moved to avoid conflicts with state or national cooperative events. The tentative dates for 2018 are as follows:

- June 18-19 - Sheridan**
- July 17 - Sundance**
- August 21 - Gillette**
- September 17-18 - Sheridan**
- October 16 - Sundance**
- November 20 - Gillette**
- December 17-18 - Sheridan**

### Other events to remember:

- **Wednesday, August 22:**  
Telephone Town Hall, 6:30 p.m., call 1-844-881-1317.
- **Saturday, August 25:** PRECorp 73rd Annual Membership Meeting, Gillette Cam-Plex Energy Hall and Heritage Center Theater.
- **Friday, September 7:** PRECorp Foundation Golf Scramble. Email [communications@precorp.coop](mailto:communications@precorp.coop) for sponsorships or team entries. Participation limited to 96 players.

**OFFICE HOURS CHANGE NOTICE:**  
Powder River Energy Corporation offices and member service phones are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Call 1-800-442-3630 for more information.

## CEO column...

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*transmission line. Wyoming's ability to use its resources wisely for the benefit of its citizens is a great strength.*

*Wyoming is gifted with the ability to be nimble and adaptive. As a small state we have the ability to create alignment from the highest offices in our Capitol to the furthest reaches of our landscape, which is nothing short of amazing. We have an edge here, and it's one that will pay dividends as we continue our efforts to diversify our economy with the ENDOW initiative.*

*Diversification will come with its challenges as it will create change, and change is one of the harder things for people to do. This may cause some bumps along the way, but it will not take us off track. We all understand what the stakes are, and this helps to create the alignment we need.*

*We are living in a world that is changing exponentially and the way we think about solving these challenges needs to be different from how we have thought about them in past. What won't change is our ability to create a great vision, rally and align our stakeholders, and achieve that vision.*



## AMI vendor...

from page 1.

Distributed Automation (DA) platform across the NRTC/INSIs network. Part of PRECorp's strategy is to build in a sophisticated power delivery system that aspires to significantly drive down costs of power over the next several years.

"We're excited about the possibilities – all the ways to take advantage of the technology and the open environment," said Mike Easley, Chief Executive Officer at PRECorp. "We don't even know what those are going to be. We'll look at whatever's out there that can benefit our members."



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[www.precorp.coop](http://www.precorp.coop)

Powder River Energy Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Integrated Test Center dedicated

The Integrated Test Center (ITC) at Dry Fork Station north of Gillette is officially open for business.

The ITC project has been in the works on a local, state, national, and international level. It is Wyoming's way of acknowledging market changes against carbon-based fuels.

Many in the local energy industry are skeptical of the research citing climate change is a result of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from power plants. However, a reality still exists that CO<sub>2</sub> must be treated differently in the future.

This reality opened a door for the Gillette power plant to deliver flue gas and test for carbon capture and utilization technologies.

Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead recognized this issue in 2014, but needed support. Powder River Energy (PRECorp) and its electric cooperative network provided the financial and tactical support Gov. Mead needed to see the project through.

"This is an amazing thing that has happened in Wyoming," said PRECorp CEO Mike Easley following a dedication ceremony May 16 at Dry Fork Station. "If it were not for the electric coops in Wyoming, Basin

Electric, Tri-State G&T in Colorado, and the NRECA, this project would not be going on."

Easley said this is truly a cooperative initiative to change the conversation on CO<sub>2</sub> and turn it from a liability in some people's eyes to an actual asset and a business opportunity.

Easley credited Gov. Matt Mead, who has been working in a visionary way for nearly five years to bring this project online to support Wyoming's energy industry, Easley said.

There are five research teams from Asia, Australia, and North America working for a \$20 million research prize that would create a viable added value use for CO<sub>2</sub> where it is currently a waste product. Some of the ideas rising to the top include creation of a fuel, composite plastics, and construction materials.

Japanese industrial giant Kawasaki is also setting up a research lab at Dry Fork Station.

Locally, PRECorp's long-range vision and strategy prepares for a world that is changing exponentially. This strategy outlines new ways of thinking to solve challenges and opportunities that are sure to come with the changing world.



Photo courtesy Basin Electric

PRECorp CEO Mike Easley, far right, is pictured during the May 16 ITC dedication with Lee Stein of Spiral Therapy, Inc., Wyoming State Senator Leland Christensen, Wyoming State Treasurer Mark Gordon, and Jim Spiers Vice-President of Business and Technology Strategies, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

# 2018 PRECorp Annual Meeting - 8.25.2018

# SERVING YOU

In preparation for the PRECorp Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 25, at the Gillette Cam-Plex Energy Hall, members are encouraged to contact us as soon as possible about interest in the following **NEW** activities planned for the Annual Meeting. For information go to [www.precorp.coop](http://www.precorp.coop) and select "2018 Annual Meeting".

## Free Blood Draw:

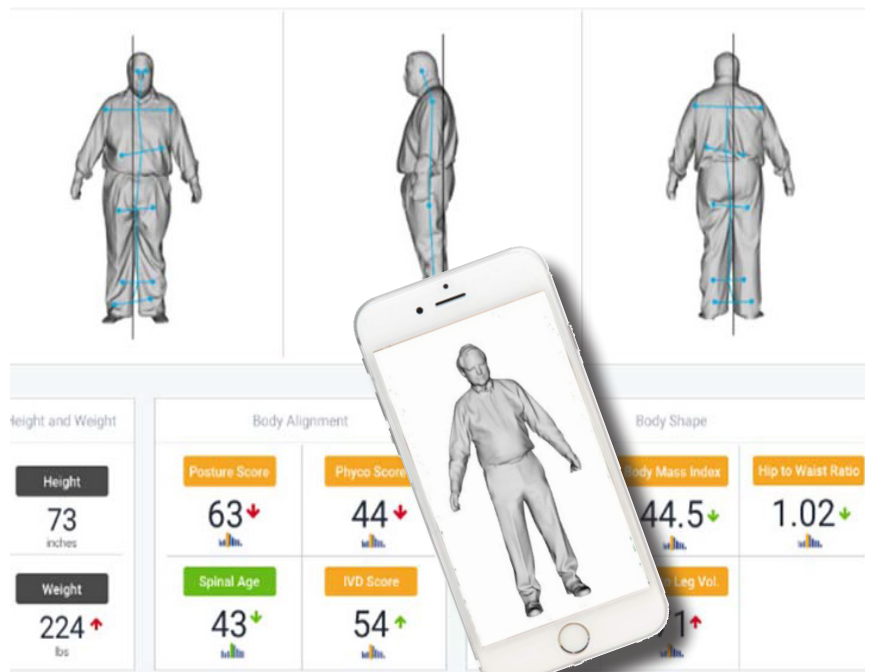
Wyoming Health Fairs will conduct wellness blood draws from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. on August 25. PRECorp will pay the cost of the basic blood draw for members and their spouses. Attendees may pay for additional tests if they so choose.

Those wishing to have their blood drawn for a standard blood panel test must fast for 12 hours. Coffee and light snacks will be provided to blood draw participants prior to lunch being served at 11 a.m. Member registration and voting will be available starting at 8 a.m.

Call PRECorp Member Service at 1-800-442-3630 if you would like to take advantage of a free blood test.

## Tour of Dry Fork Station, Integrated Test Center:

Up to 40 PRECorp members can be part of a special tour of the Dry Fork Station Power Plant and Integrated Test Center north of Gillette at 10 a.m. as part of the Annual Meeting on August 25. Members who would like to participate in this one-hour tour should call PRECorp Member Service at 1-800-442-3630 as soon as possible. It will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.



## Wellness Body Scan:

A newly designed body scanning machine will be available thanks to a partnership between Wyoming Health Fairs and Spiral Therapy, Inc.

This scanner will debut at the Annual Meeting to demonstrate how this scanning device can detect unique data points related to a person's body alignment and structure. The technology develops personalized treatment and physical therapy plans for healing and working toward a pain-free life.

For more information go to [www.precorp.coop](http://www.precorp.coop) and select "2018 Annual Meeting".

# Options are available for keeping an idle service in your name

When Powder River Energy staffers talk about an “electric service,” they are referring to a transformer, a metering point, and the poles or wires that connect and support them.

That electric service apparatus is sometimes de-energized and left idle when the member no longer needs it, or temporarily suspends power to the property, which can range from a stock well or irrigation pump, to a residence or larger structure.

PRECorp still maintains these services, and pays property taxes on them as a part of our system. Additionally, unused lines and equipment can cause inefficiencies in our distribution system and increase the chances of power interruptions to other services. Idle lines, therefore, add to the cost of

providing electric service to all of our members.

PRECorp has procedures to ensure that the cooperative effectively manages idle lines within its system. Retention rates allow PRECorp to account for idle services where appropriate, in order to reduce the expenses associated with those services.

Also, the program keeps infrastructure in place in case there is a future need for improving the membership’s service reliability.

The process also provides a rate structure that will allow members to retain idle lines that they intend to re-energize in the future while contributing to the maintenance, depreciation and property taxes associated with the idle line. The Idle Line Retention will allow the member to have the meter

disconnected and continue to pay a minimum charge to ensure the electric line is left in place.

If you have an idle service in your name, PRECorp will contact you to find out whether you have future plans for this service or would like to have it removed. To retain the idle line, you will be required to pay the idle line retention charge associated with the type of service it was when energized.

#### The monthly rates are:

- **Residential/Seasonal: \$15**
- **Irrigation: \$15**
- **General Service: \$18**
- **General Service CBM: \$35**
- **Large Power: \$79**
- **Large Power CBM: \$100**

For more information, contact the PRECorp Member Service Department at 1-800-442-3630.

## Is your stock well pump power secure?

Powder River Energy reminds our member/landowners who might have stock well pumping agreements through a third-party to occasionally review those agreements with the third party. This is important so livestock managers can avoid unexpected electric water pump service interruptions, if the third-party terminates its electrical service.

PRECorp is often unaware of these types of special arrangements.

If electricity to the third-party is disconnected for any reason, the power to your livestock water pump and thus pumping service could be jeopardized. If you are not the direct recipient of the electrical service, and PRECorp is unaware of the third-party arrangement, this loss of service could occur without your knowledge or notification.

If you are watering your livestock under such a third-party arrangement, and you

want to minimize the chances of a disconnect, please contact us with the following information:

- Notify us of your third-party arrangement.
- Request notification if the third party terminates its service.

To inform us of such arrangements, or to establish direct service to your stock well pump directly, please call PRECorp Member Service Department at 1-800-442-3630.





Photo by Tim Velder/PRECorp

Casey McNerney of Sundance, left, shows the winning ticket as he accepts the keys to his 2018 Polaris Side-by-side from PRECorp Fleet Manager Bruce Olson. McNerney won the machine as part of the Lineman Scholarship Fundraiser held in April.

# Lineman Scholarship fund boosted

The 4th Annual PRECorp Apprentice Lineman Scholarship Banquet was held Saturday, April 28, in Gillette.

The event is held to raise funds and awareness for the program which encourages locally-grown, high-school age youth to explore opportunities in the field of electrical line work.

Funds raised through the banquet ticket sales, live auctions, silent auction, and raffles are made available to assist aspiring linemen to pay for some of their post-secondary schooling, certifications, and tools of the trade.

The program began as a way to give local youth career opportunities and create a group of line workers to replace those who are retiring across the region.

This year's banquet featured the raffle of a 2018 Polaris Side-by-Side, which helped raise the total net funds generated to more than \$30,000. Casey McNerney of Sundance purchased the winning ticket.

"Thanks to many donations from attendees, and special sponsors listed below, the event continues to grow and be successful," said banquet committeeman Mike Bingham. "We sincerely appreciate those who give of their resources and time to help give our local youth career opportunities they wouldn't normally have."

**2018 Banquet Sponsors:**

- Altec
- Anixter
- Arbuckle Lodge
- Bank of Gillette
- Black Iron Guns
- Buffalo Line Crew

- Collins Communications
- CT Accessories
- Coleman Electric
- Walt Christensen
- Tom Davis
- Mike and Becky Easley
- Fire Suppression Systems
- Gillette Stock Car Association
- Sean and Alison Gee
- Philip and Jeanne Habeck
- High Plains Electric
- I.B.E.W. Local 322
- Interstate Power Systems
- JM Lube Companies
- Jack's Trucking
- Tracy Jones
- K & K Auto Repair
- Manning Wrecker Service
- McKie Ford
- Novuus Glass
- Bruce Olson
- Peak Powersports
- Les and Deb Penning
- Rolling Metal Sinclair
- Sports Lure
- Sunshine Paint & Body

# Stay Away from Electrical Substations

An electrical substation converts electricity to a lower voltage so it can be safely routed and delivered to your home. Because high-voltage power runs through substation equipment, please avoid substation areas and the fences that surround them. Keep the following safety tips in mind:



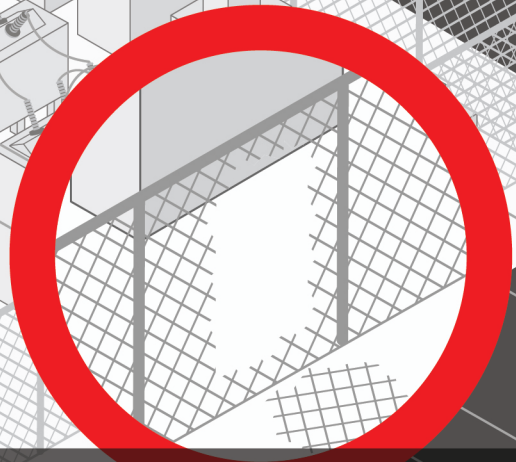
Never release metallic balloons near substations. If they get caught in the equipment or lines, they can cause power outages.



Never fly kites or drones near electrical substations. If you do and the kite or drone gets caught inside the fence, let us retrieve it for you.



Teach youngsters to stay away from electrical substation fences. The area is dangerous, and these fences are NOT for climbing.



If you see a substation fence or transformer cabinet that is open or looks to be vandalized, please contact us immediately.