



Sidney Area Dollars for Scholars was granted \$1,000 from the Operation Round Up Trust that will be used to increase the number of scholarships awarded.



The funds the Eastern Montana Bible Camp Association received from Operation Round Up will be used to update one of the dorms and make it handicapped-accessible.

Operation Round Up distributes funds to community organizations

A year ago, Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) introduced a new program called Operation Round Up (ORU). This program gives LYREC members the option to have their bill rounded up to the nearest dollar each month. For example, if a member's electric bill is \$38.63, the member would pay \$39 and the remaining 37 cents would be donated to the Operation Round Up Trust. The average amount contributed each year per member is \$6. At the end of each quarter, the Operation Round Up board of trustees reviews the Operation Round Up applications and awards the funds to nonprofit organizations across LYREC's service territory.

Sidney Area Dollars for Scholars, the Eastern Montana Bible Camp Association and the Sidney Gymnastics Club were granted funds from the Operation Round Up Trust during the first quarter.

The next Operation Round Up applications will be due June 15. LYREC would like to thank all members who contribute to the Operation Round Up Trust for making our community a better place! ■



The Sidney Gymnastics Club received \$1,100 from Operation Round Up to assist with a building expansion.

Summer energy-saving tips

In 2017, the use of electricity in the United States was 13 times greater than electricity use in 1950. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, 15.4 percent of electricity consumption is used to cool your home, which is the second-largest energy consumer.

The good news is there are a few ways to save on cooling costs that won't cost you a dime, including:

- Start by closing your blinds and drapes during the day to keep out the heat.
- Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave the room.
- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home and at a higher temperature when you are away.
- Range or oven cooking can really warm a kitchen, so use microwaves or convection ovens when possible or break out the grill. Summer is finally here!

There are also some low-cost options that will help you save during the heat of the year, including:

- Plant trees or shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.
- Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.
- Use solar lighting to brighten your outdoor space. Solar lights are easy to install, low maintenance and provide free electricity.

Washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment account for more than 40 percent of electricity consumed in American homes.

When washing laundry, full loads mean fewer cycles, and washing and drying in the late evenings add less heat and humidity to your home.

When streaming online content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

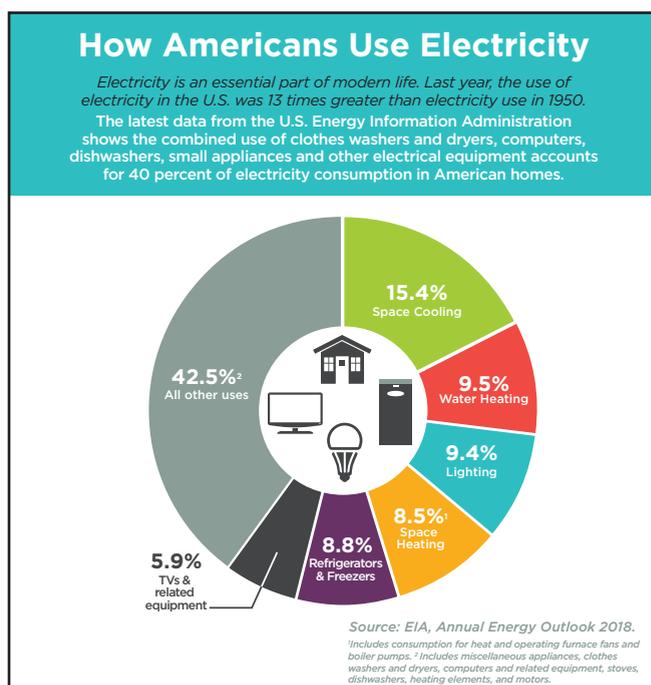
Eliminate vampire loads. Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home's energy use is from vampire loads. Vampire loads come from devices that use electricity even when they appear to be off. The primary culprits are chargers, set-top television boxes, instant-

on televisions and gaming systems. The typical gaming console can use as much energy as a regular refrigerator, even when it's not being used.

So how does the average family combat these dreaded vampire loads? Unplug chargers when not in use. Invest in smart power strips. Smart strips have one "master" outlet that receives power all the time and the other outlets are off. When the device connected to the master outlet turns on, the rest of the outlets receive power, too. For example, plug your television into the master outlet and when you turn it on, the set-top box, speakers and streaming devices will turn on, too. Vampire loads are a real problem that will only continue to grow as the digital age advances.

Lighting is simple. Invest in light-emitting diode (LED) lighting. Energy Star-qualified LEDs use 20 to 25 percent of the energy and last up to 25 times longer than the traditional incandescent bulbs. While LED's may be more expensive, they will save you money because they last a long time and have very low energy use.

It is not a surprise that the average American family's energy use has increased so dramatically over the years. However, with a few simple changes, you can make a significant impact on your energy consumption. ■





AG IN THE CLASSROOM

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative started the morning with a big bang during Ag in the Classroom held at the Richland County Event Center April 30. Elementary school students from all over the area spent the day learning about agriculture and electrical farm safety. ■

Unclaimed capital credits fund education

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is a not-for-profit cooperative that belongs to its members who invest in the cooperative each time they pay their electric bill. If revenues exceed expenses, the cooperative has earned margins. These margins are distributed back to the members in the form of capital credits.

Capital credits are added to each member's capital credit account, and are retained by LYREC for a period of time to finance the operating costs. This keeps rates lower by offsetting the need for the cooperative to borrow funds.

One of the benefits of being a member is that, as financial conditions allow, the LYREC board of trustees retire capital credits in the form of a bill credit or check to current and prior members. Historically, LYREC has

retired capital credits on a 15- to 20-year rotation. In 2018, the LYREC board approved to retire \$2 million in capital credits, which will retire all or part of 2001-2004 and 2016.

It is important for past members to keep LYREC updated of their current address, as capital credit checks may be issued for several years after disconnecting. If LYREC is unable to reach the past members by mail, the names are published in our monthly magazine requesting assistance locating them. If the past members are unable to be located, their capital credit checks are transferred to the unclaimed capital credit account.

By law, the funds in the unclaimed capital credit account can only be used for scholarships or other educational purposes. (Meter No. T20069) ■



MEDORA DISCOUNTS OFFERED

Planning a trip to Medora this summer? Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is able to offer its members a discount by being a Touchstone Energy® member. Simply call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and give the discount code of "Touch 2018" for a 15 percent discount on any of the following during any night of the season. Things to do:

- Medora Musical

- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:

- Elkhorn Quarters
- Badlands Motel
- Rough Riders Hotel

LYREC members can also receive 20 percent off admission at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code "Touch 2018."

HIDDEN NUMBERS

If you find your meter number hidden in this issue, it is worth a \$25 credit on your next statement. The meter number will appear within the four Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative pages. Give us a call during the month your meter is listed, and claim your \$25 bill credit.



LED bulbs on sale

All light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs are not created equal. Many LED products found on store shelves are of poor quality. Some are manufactured outside of the United States with components that produce low light levels, don't have a long service life or make exaggerated energy savings claims.

Look for the U.S. Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR logo on LED lighting. ENERGY STAR-certified light bulbs meet strict quality and energy-efficiency standards and are tested by accredited labs.

While LEDs are more expensive to purchase, the true value is in the lifetime and long-term savings of the bulb. Compared to a traditional incandescent bulb, an ENERGY-STAR qualified LED bulb:

- Can last about 22 years, or as much as 25 times longer.
- Uses only 20 to 25 percent of the energy.

- Produces about 70 to 90 percent less heat, making it safer to operate and can cut energy costs associated with home cooling.

ENERGY STAR-certified bulbs are available in a wide range of colors. Light colors or appearance matches a temperature of the Kelvin scale (K). Lower K means warmer, yellowish light, while a high K means cooler, bluer light.

Shop smart when buying your next bulbs. Always look for the ENERGY STAR logo. ■



Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative now carries a 10-watt, 2,700-Kelvin bulb for \$3.70 per bulb.

Operating report

Year to date:	February 2017	February 2018
Total miles energized	2,111	2,101
Total number of meters	6,138	6,168
Kilowatt-hours sold	48,662,586	24,113,319
Revenue	\$4,713,419	\$4,808,569
Total expenses	\$4,643,950	\$4,588,321
Operating margins	\$1,556,524	\$1,019,005

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Kevin Goff	Operations Assistant
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Aaron Eide	Journeyman Lineman
Bryan Franck	Journeyman Lineman
Jesse Obergfell	Journeyman Lineman
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Justin King	Warehouse Supervisor

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