

## Rate changes included in February bills

By Tim Velder, PRECorp Marketing Communications

When PRECorp members review February power bills the numbers could be a bit of a shock considering higher usage from bitter cold January temperatures and changes to power rates implemented on January 1.

The rate increase became effective in January after a year-long application and review process with the Wyoming Public Service Commission (PSC). In order to meet lender requirements and cope with dramatic declines in sales from a downturn in the cooperative's industrial energy loads, the PSC approved a 2017 revenue increase of \$11.5 million for PRECorp. The level of increase varies by class of service.

The increase cooperative members might expect will vary depending on usage, local taxes, fees, and special programs.

A portion of the interim Cost of Power Adjustment (COPA) from January 2016 is rolled into the new rate.

Based on usage of 1200 kWh per month, a residential member can expect to see a monthly increase of \$18.80 compared to the same usage a year ago.

The interim COPA, which was imposed by PRECorp's wholesale power supplier Basin Electric in September 2016, will continue to be a line item on the bill titled 'Power Cost Adjustment'.

PRECorp members are encouraged to call Member Service at 1-800-442-3630 for information on energy efficiency and usage control programs; payment assistance programs; and other information about their account.

## 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 2017 are as follows:

**February 21 - Gillette**

**March 21 - Sheridan**

**April 18 - Sundance**

**May 16 - Gillette**

**June 20 - Sheridan**

**July 18 - Sundance**

**August 15 - Gillette**

**September 19 - Sheridan**

**October 17 - Sundance**

**November 21 - Gillette**

**December 19 - Sheridan**

Other events to remember:

- **Wednesday, March 1** - All Employee Meeting, PRECorp Offices closed
- **Friday, March 31**: Application deadline for *PRECorp Scholarship* and *Swanda Scholarship*. Swanda Scholarship applicants must be Crook County high school seniors entering ag-related studies in post-secondary schools.
- **Saturday, April 22**: Apprentice Lineman Scholarship Banquet, fundraiser at Gillette Cam-Plex Energy Hall, 5 p.m. social, 6 p.m. dinner and auction.

# Scam artists never let up on trickery

The scheme of randomly calling people and businesses to trick them into handing over money has been around a long time.

There are some common tactics the scammers have to achieve in order to be effective. The primary one is to make you believe they represent Powder River Energy. This can be done by programming their phone to show up as PRECorp or Powder River Energy on your caller ID.

Secondly, they have to influence you to send funds in a hurry through a prepaid card. The caller threatens to cut off power if the customer doesn't pay. Calls of this nature circulate across all utility customers, then abruptly cease, only to return again a few months later.

The following are some things to keep in mind when a caller threatens to shut off your power for a late or unpaid power bill:

- Do not assume the name and number on your caller ID are legitimate. Caller IDs can be spoofed.
- Never share your personal information, including date of birth, Social Security number, or banking account information.
- Never wire money to someone you don't know.
- Do not click links or call numbers in unexpected emails or texts – especially those asking for your account information.
- PRECorp DOES NOT require their members to

purchase prepaid debit cards or money orders to avoid an immediate disconnection.

- If you receive a call that sounds like it may be a scam, or if you believe the call is a scam, hang up, call law enforcement and report the incident to PRECorp.

PRECorp members are encouraged to call Member Service at 1-800-442-3630 to verify any electric service phone call that seems suspicious.

You can also help by alerting your family members and friends. Share the scammers' tactics described in this article. You can also help raise awareness and warn others by reposting scam awareness information on social media; use the hashtag #stopscams.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don't let it heat up your electric bill! Caulk around the fireplace hearth and keep the damper closed when a fire is not burning.

*Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy*

## Safety first

Are there some hazards around power services at your residence, ranch, or business that could result in a tragedy?

If you notice potential hazards involving PRECorp facilities, call 1-800-442-3630, to report the facility location and nature of the problem.