



PRECorp News

SEPTEMBER 2026

PRECorp hosts 81st Anniversary Meeting

By Tim Velder, PRECorp Marketing Communications

More than 300 Powder River Energy members cast ballots for the 81st Annual Meeting Saturday, August 22, at Buffalo High School. However, the razor-thin quorum margin raised concerns among cooperative leadership for increased member attendance.

The event featured a wellness fair, updates from cooperative officers, a free lunch and door prizes. Attendees took home a variety of gifts including a 2027 PRECorp calendar, hats, and other items.

The minimum quorum requirement of 100 members attending in-person was exceeded by 1, and 224 votes were cast by mail.

Cooperative members cast ballots for four director seats, re-electing Philip Habeck (Crook County), Mike Helvey (Sheridan County), and Clay Branscom (Weston County). In Campbell County, James Tarver defeated sitting director Ty Pirtz. Pirtz was appointed in 2024 to the Board to fill out the remainder of a vacated term. PRECorp CEO Brian Mills thanked Pirtz for stepping in and serving the membership for the past three years.

Special guests included Wyoming Rural Electric Association (WREA) Executive Director Shawn Taylor, Basin Electric CEO Todd Brickhouse, and Basin VP of Member Services Chris Baumgartner. Representatives from other cooperatives in Montana also attended.

Joshua Crews, Sundance High School, thanked the



PRECorp photo

PRECorp CEO Brian Mills outlines the successes and challenges of the cooperative model during the 81st Annual Meeting Saturday, August 22, at Buffalo High School.

PRECorp membership for sponsoring him and four other local high school students at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp. The camp, held in Steamboat, Colorado,

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BRIAN MILLS,
CEO

Last weekend, I found myself in the stands at a high school activity. Visiting with the gentleman next to me, the conversation drifted, as it does, to his power bill. Nothing dramatic, just a comment about the amount and how it's paid automatically now, he barely thinks about it.

I hear some version of this "member experience" frequently, but for some reason this one got me thinking. May-

be it's not really an age thing... it's just how many of us experience PRECorp day to day. An email that your bill is ready. Autopay pulling it from your account. A phone call, a friendly voice, and a Facebook post if the lights go out. Nothing in that routine looks any different than dealing with the phone company or a big-box retailer, and nothing in it tells you that you're anything other than a customer.

For newer members, that makes sense. They signed up for electric service the way they'd sign up for anything else, and the member-owner material we provided slides easily into a pile or is tossed as they assimilate to their new home. Our longtime members experience something just as real, just quieter. After twenty, thirty or forty years of paying a bill every month, the fact that you own a piece of this cooperative can wear smooth, the way any truth probably does once you've lived with it long enough that it stops standing out. Not because it stops mattering... just because familiarity has a way of going quiet on us.

Either way, "member-owned" starts to read like fine print instead of the whole point. So let me pull it back out, with something better than a slogan... hard evidence.

Last year, your Board of Directors retired \$3.3 million in capital credits straight back to the membership, and Basin Electric, our wholesale power supplier (and a cooperative in its own right), returned another \$8.9 million on top of that. That's generated because your cooperative ran lean, landing real money back in members' pockets instead of a shareholder's divi-

There are 16,000 miles of line, the 50-plus substations, and the nearly 27,000 meters that make up this system. You and your neighbors financed that, generation after generation, through the rates you paid and the capital you left invested in the cooperative.

dend check. No investor-owned utility does that... there's no one on the other end of that transaction to send it to but you.

Then there's the 16,000 miles of line, the 50-plus substations, and the nearly 27,000 meters that make up this system. You and your neighbors financed that, generation after generation, through the rates you paid and the capital you left invested in the cooperative. You don't just buy power from it... you hold equity in it.

In August, we wrapped up our 81st Annual Meeting in Buffalo, where members cast ballots in contested races for three of our ten board seats, two elected from each of our five counties. One member, one vote, regardless of how many meters you have. That's not a customer service model. That's a governance model, and it's yours to participate in.

It is an irony that we get caught in. We, the PRECorp Team, want to serve you so well with a reliable product and service that it allows you to go about your business and priorities with confidence. At the same time, we want you to be proud of the cooperative you own and understand why "member-owned" makes a meaningful difference. For Team PRECorp, we love serving our neighbors and communities with an essential service that brings so much light to their life (pun intended). It brings a sense of fulfillment to our labor.

Powder River, Let 'er Buck!

Basin Electric increasing its power rates

By Tim Velder, PRECorp Marketing Communications

Powder River Energy staff spent much of August responding to a proposal by wholesale power supplier Basin Electric to increase its rates in 2026 by double digits.

PRECorp's intermediary generation and transmission (G&T) partner, Members 1st Power Cooperative, and others advocated that Basin consider lessening the impact of such an increase so its member cooperatives and consumer-members could absorb this increase over a two-year period.

The Basin Board of Directors was slated to take a final vote on the 2027 rates at its September meeting. That plan would amount to approximately a 9.8% increase in the cost of power for its member cooperatives. This is a \$6 to \$9 increase per month on average residential usage. This will vary based on individual usage. These estimates are also preliminary, however, and are subject to change.

Basin has cited a variety of reasons for seeking the additional revenue. The primary reason is the Bismarck-based power generator is raising capital to build new generation stations in its service territory. These stations are needed to supply adequate power for the growing

appetite for electricity in the central United States.

Secondarily, Basin is required to provide adequate power generation resources to satisfy regional grid stability requirements. In times of maximum demand, Basin must literally overbuild infrastructure to meet the highest possible demand.

Basin is also faced with increasing costs to build generation and transmission facilities. For instance, the Dry Fork Station in Gillette was constructed at a cost of \$800 per megawatt produced. Today, generation facilities are running about \$2,800 per megawatt.

PRECorp officials recognize these challenges Basin is confronting, but are advocating for a softer impact on its members.

Some of the softening strategies include the predictable distribution of Basin capital credits to cooperatives, which would alleviate the pressure at the local level.

Go to www.precorp.coop for information updates. A clearer picture is likely to emerge in October. PRECorp CEO Brian Mills will host a telephone town hall meeting for members on Thursday, November 19, at 6:30 p.m. to offer additional details.

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Annual Meeting...

from page 1.



PRECorp photos by Corrie Burgess & Tim Velder

Above, (from left) PRECorp Board President Jim Purdy convenes the Annual Meeting at Buffalo High School.

Below, a future coop member enjoys a sweet treat while learning the member registration system at the Annual Meeting at Buffalo High School.



with students from Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Wyoming, includes lessons on the unique cooperative business model, safety, and conservation.

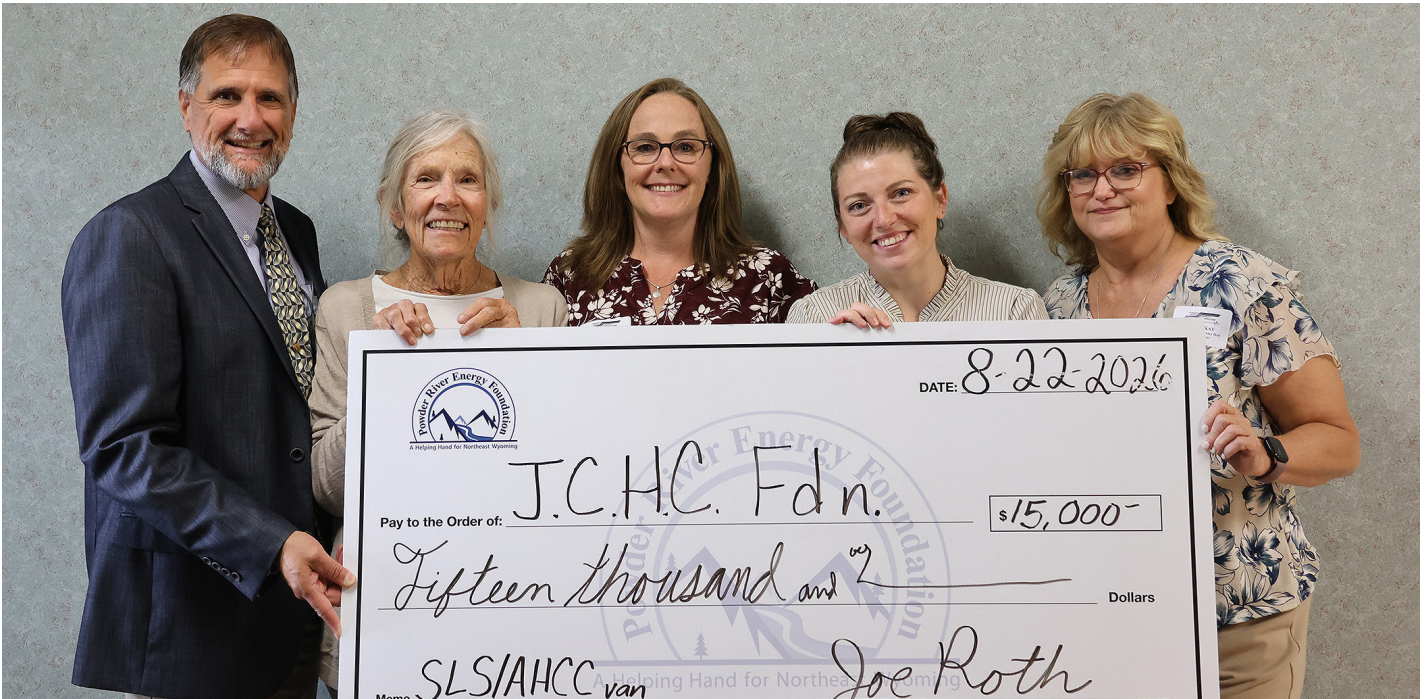
PRECorp Foundation Executive Director Joe Roth outlined the progress of the Foundation's charitable giving on behalf of the cooperative. He announced a \$15,000 donation to the Johnson County Healthcare Foundation toward the purchase of a handicapped transport van for patients in the county to access local services.

CEO Mills' message of the day announced a power cost increase being passed down from Basin Electric to its member cooperatives. Mills said the numbers are not finalized yet, but could be as high as \$9 per month more per member in 2027. Final numbers will be released later in September.

Mills emphasized the rate increase is more about the realities of local cooperatives controlling where their power comes from. "There is a lot of power in the cooperative model. Now is the time to invest," Mills said. "We are sitting in the future that others built for us 20 years ago. Now we need to build for our future generations." In order to control the power generation, new facilities must be built to meet increasing demand, follow rules of the regional power grid, and satisfy financial lenders.

Mills said that without the large family of cooperatives under the Basin umbrella, these costs would likely be much higher, and decision-making would lack local input. "You have spent 80 years investing half a billion dollars in building assets in northeast Wyoming that is ready to serve," he said. Mills added that the initiating ag industry has grown to include world-class, large industrial loads.

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Annual Meeting...

from page 4.

Mills also said that a threat to cooperative independence in Wyoming is proposed third-party generation where a large power user generates its own electricity, but offers to sell the excess to neighboring users. This could threaten the territories of electric cooperatives.

"Energy is an essential service," Mills said. He said changes in attitudes toward cooperatives, innovation to make usage more efficient, and stronger bonds between cooperatives can greatly impact our collective future.

More in-person attendees needed

After PRECorp Board Secretary-Treasurer Gerry Geis outlined the highlights of the annual financials of the cooperative, he asked those in attendance to do a little extra in 2027. "I am amazed at the people that come here year after year," Geis said. "In order to keep this coop going strong for the next 50 to 100 years, we need involvement. I encourage you to bring someone with you next year that is under the age of 40. Encourage someone to participate."

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PRECorp photos by Corrie Burgess & Tim Velder
Top left, PRECorp Foundation Executive Director Joe Roth and Board member Mary Yemington present a \$15,000 check to Johnson County Healthcare Foundation representatives Carrie Boller, Ashley Kosiba, JoAnn Kay, at the PRECorp Annual Meeting.

Left, PRECorp member service representatives register members prior to the meeting at Buffalo High School.

Events Calendar

The list of PRECorp events includes Board meeting dates, holidays, telephone town hall meetings, and more.

- **NEW DATE: Tuesday, September 22:** PRECorp Board of Directors meeting, 9 a.m., Sheridan.
- **NEW DATE: Tuesday, September 29 -** PRECorp Foundation Board of Directors meeting, 9 a.m., teleconference.
- **Tuesday, October 20:** PRECorp Board of Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m., Sundance.
- **Tuesday, October 27 -** PRECorp Foundation Board of Directors meeting, 9 a.m., Gillette.
- **Wednesday, November 11:** Veterans Day Holiday, PRECorp offices closed. Call 1-888-391-6220 with an outage.



- **Tuesday, November 17:** PRECorp Board of Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m., Gillette.
- **Thursday, November 19:** Telephone Town Hall meeting with PRECorp CEO Brian Mills, 6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, November 24 -** PRECorp Foundation Board of Directors meeting, 9 a.m., teleconference.
- **Thursday and Friday, November 26-27:** Thanksgiving Holiday, PRECorp offices closed. Call 1-888-391-6220 with an outage.
- **Thursday and Friday, December 24-25:** Christmas Holiday, PRECorp offices closed. Call 1-888-391-6220 with an outage.
- **Friday, January 1:** New Year's Day Holiday, PRECorp offices closed. Call 1-888-391-6220 with an outage.

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Foundation provides preschool tuition assistance in memory of Shayna Ritthaler

The Powder River Energy Foundation (PRECorp Foundation) awarded preschool tuition scholarships totaling \$3,484 to students at six preschools in Crook and Weston counties. This is the sixth allotment in a sustaining preschool tuition assistance program as part of the Shayna Ritthaler Memorial Scholarship.



The PRECorp Foundation Board of Directors awarded funds to Weston County Children's Center/Region III Developmental Services and Sundance's Kid Prints, Inc. preschool.

The scholarship fund was established after the tragic 2019 homicide death of Shayna Ritthaler, a high school student with ties to Moorcroft and Upton high schools. Shayna enjoyed her life with her sister Josalyn, and their grandparents Reuben and Shelly Ritthaler, on their ranch near Upton.

Region III provides early intervention and special education services for birth to school-age children. Their

service areas include Crook and Weston counties, with preschools in Newcastle, Upton, Hullett, Moorcroft, and Sundance. Kid Prints, Inc. provides preschool education and kindergarten readiness to children ages 4 and 5.

"This distribution of scholarship funds is part of an ongoing effort to support early childhood education in memory of Shayna," said PRECorp Foundation Board President John Flocchini. In 2021, the Foundation raised more than \$50,000 in the raffle of a donated '72 Mustang Mach I. According to the wishes of the car's donor, the program has expanded the scholarship to more students in more preschools.

"This is a critical part of the Foundation's overall mission to help working families in need in northeast Wyoming. These early learners will benefit from extra days in their preschool programs to help them be ready to start kindergarten on Day 1," Flocchini said.

The PRECorp Foundation will manage the scholarship fund in an investment strategy to last until at least the year 2038 to provide for future generations of students.

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Annual Meeting...

In order for the meeting to be official and the Board elections to be counted, a quorum of 100 members must register in person at the meeting. This year, the number was reached only five minutes prior to Board President Jim Purdy calling the meeting to order. Purdy echoed Geis' remarks encouraging more members to attend in person.

Purdy highlighted the work of the PRECorp financial team, and all the employees, in their work to ensure the costs and rates paid by the members are stable and predictable. "They truly are committed to improving our lives as member owners," he said.

The 82st Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, August 28, 2027, in Moorcroft. Plans are already underway to showcase the LaBelle Prairie Solar Energy/Battery Storage project in Moorcroft.

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PRECorp photo

PRECorp members serve as election judges, tallying ballots in the three contested elections for the Board of Directors.

Time of Use discount hours explained

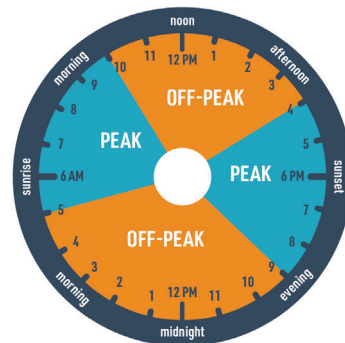
PRECorp's Time-of-Use Rate extends from October through May. Members can achieve lower off-peak rates for electricity usage from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. beginning in October.

This rate option is one more way PRECorp provides members with affordable rates and options that fit their individual energy needs. The concept behind this program is fairly simple: rather than a single flat rate for each unit of energy used (e.g. kWh), you pay different rates for the electricity you use based on the time of day and season. Under this voluntary rate option, *when* you consume electricity is just as important as the amount of electricity you use.

On Time-of-Use, rates are lower during midday and overnight because of the decreased demand for electricity during those times. To help lower costs, you can shift energy use to off-peak periods (when electricity prices are lowest). Our Time-of-Use Rate also changes seasonally, because electricity demand differs between summer months and the rest of the year. These rates can make a big difference for members particularly in the areas of heating and cooling; major appliances; and water pumping equipment.

To learn more contact your Member Service Representative at 800-442-3630.

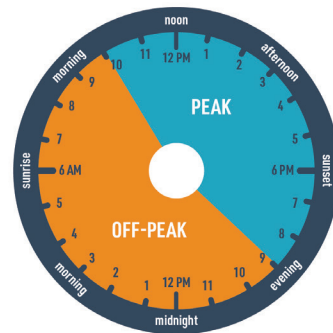
TIME OF USE - OCTOBER THROUGH MAY



THE TIME OF USE RATE PLAN HAS TWO PERIODS:

- \$ Lowest price (OFF-PEAK): 14 hours each day
- \$\$ Highest price (PEAK): 10 hours each day

TIME OF USE - JUNE THROUGH SEPTEMBER



THE TIME OF USE RATE PLAN HAS TWO PERIODS:

- \$ Lowest price (OFF-PEAK): 13 hours each day
- \$\$ Highest price (PEAK): 11 hours each day

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