



2020 Annual Meeting Canceled — What Next?

By Jack Hamblin, Manager, Southeast Electric Cooperative

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District #6 – Karen Kreitel
District #5 – Clayton Jardee
District #8 – Dave Hayden
District #2 – Doug Gardner

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Tye Williams, Asst. GM
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Rita Williams, Office Asst.
Vicki Fix, Member Services
Terri Buck, Custodian

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APPRENTICE LINEMEN

Tanner Fix
Anton Schell



THE annual meeting is the time for all members to come together and really play a role in how your cooperative operates. At the annual meeting, members select the trustees who will represent them on the co-op board. Any changes to the co-op bylaws can only be voted on by the members attending the annual meeting. Any business of critical nature in the co-op, such as the sale or disposing of co-op property or consolidation with another co-op must first be voted on and approved by the membership at the annual meeting. The board sets the policy and direction for the co-op and hires a manager and staff to keep the co-op running day by day.

As you know, our Annual Meeting this year has been canceled because the COVID-19 regulations would not allow a gathering larger than 50 people. We generally have more than 300 in attendance at our annual meeting. After much discussion, the board decided it would be best to adhere to public health directives concerning the issue. At the regular board meeting in April, the board took the prudent course and canceled the annual meeting this year.

How then, will the co-op conduct the critical business that must take place this year? The terms of two trustees expire and an election must take place. Also, the board has discussed having mail-in ballots for trustee elections in the event that the annual meeting is canceled. Current bylaws don't allow that.

All bylaw changes must be voted on by the members in a meeting of the members.

The solution is found in the co-op bylaws. Article III, Section 2 states,

"Special meetings of the members may be called by resolution of the board of trustees, or upon written request signed by any three trustees, by the President, or by 10 per centum or more of all of the members, and it shall thereupon be the duty of the secretary to cause notice of such meeting to be given . . . Special meetings may be held at any place within the County of Carter or Fallon, State of Montana, specified in the notice of the special meeting."

Sometime before the end of the year, each member will receive a notice of a special meeting to be held. This meeting is tentatively planned for sometime in September. A quorum of at least 50 members is required at this meeting. All cooperative business can be legally conducted during this special meeting.

This action did not come easy to the trustees and represents the first time an annual meeting has been canceled in the history of Southeast Electric Cooperative. But then, the COVID-19 pandemic has been the cause of many historic events for all of us. I'm glad there is a solution, and we're looking forward to seeing at least some of you at the special meeting in September.



Southeast Electric Cooperative offices will be closed, Friday, July 3rd in observance of Independence Day.

Details on COVID-19

By Raquel Williams, Carter County
Public Health Nurse

COVID-19 is the disease caused by the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. This virus originated in China in December 2019, and has traveled around the world, creating a pandemic. Worldwide, there have been almost 6.5 million people confirmed to have COVID-19, and more than 380,000 people have died from developing COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, dry cough, fatigue, body aches and pains, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, a rash or difficulty breathing. The symptoms can vary with every individual, and the disease ranges from mild to severe. Most people will recover from COVID-19 without having to

be hospitalized. However, about every one in five people who contract COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Even though older people and those with chronic underlying medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, lung problems or cancer, are at higher risk of developing a severe illness, anyone can become seriously ill with COVID-19 and require hospitalization.

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads primarily from person to person through small respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, speaks or sneezes. If close enough to an infected person, an individual could become infected by breathing in their respiratory droplets. This is why it is recommended to stand at least six feet away from people. The respiratory droplets do not travel far because they

are relatively heavy and drop to the ground quickly.

When the virus is expelled, it lands on nearby surfaces, such as doorknobs or keyboards, and the virus does not die immediately. Even though SARS-CoV-2 is new, scientists know other coronaviruses can live hours to days on surfaces. For this reason, it is essential to clean frequently touched surfaces in your home and business at least daily. Touching contaminated surfaces is the reason it is recommended to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often. An individual could become infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus by touching a contaminated surface, then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.

Another method to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is wearing a cloth mask in public. Research has found that people ill with COVID-19 can spread the virus two days before they begin having symptoms. By wearing a cloth mask, you can prevent spreading the virus if you happen to be infected but do not have symptoms yet. The cloth mask helps to prevent respiratory droplets from being expelled onto another person or surfaces.

By continuing to practice these simple yet effective steps, we can do our part to slow the transmission of this deadly virus. To learn more, go to dphhs.mt.gov and cdc.gov.



SECO #POWERON

SOUTHEAST Electric Cooperative has continued service, as normal, during the pandemic. The lobby was closed, but our dropbox was open for payments, the phones were answered, and the line crews continued their maintenance on our service lines. Our office is now open. We monitor employees and ask that our members respect all social distancing guidelines while in the office.

Southeast Electric, along with Low Income Energy Assistance Program, has extended their energy assistance program through July 31st. If you have not applied for energy assistance for this year and are suffering a financial hardship and having difficulty getting your electric bill paid due to the pandemic, please give us a call.

Together we will #POWERON.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**