



# FALL RIVER FLASHES

January 2021

Committed to safely and economically provide reliable energy and other services which bring value to its membership.

## OFFICE CLOSURE FOR PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY



Fall River Electric offices will be closed Monday, February 15, to commemorate Presidents' Day, a federal holiday. During this holiday, if you experience an unexpected power outage, our crews will be on stand-by to respond as quickly and safely as possible. If you experience an outage on a holiday, weekend, or any time after normal business hours, call 1.800.632.5726.

## NEED HELP PAYING WINTER ENERGY BILLS?

Winter officially arrived last month, bringing colder weather that usually means higher monthly energy bills, but help is available. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can be utilized by Fall River Electric members. To inquire, call the office in your state:

IDAHO – 208.522.5391  
MONTANA – 800.332.2796  
WYOMING – 800.246.4221

## USE THE APP FOR FAST SERVICE

It has never been easier to be an owner-member of Fall River Electric with our new smart phone app. With the MY FR app, you can pay your bill, check your balance, see your previous payment history, and even report a power outage—plus you can even view your kilowatt usage!

Download MY FR app at Google Play or the Apple App Store today for the quick way to handle your transactions at Fall River Electric.

## Happy New Year!

Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors, along with the Co-op's staff and management, would like to extend a Happy New Year wish to you and your family or business!

## Board Approves \$1 Million Dollar Instant Owner Rebate

Money to be infused into local households & businesses in February

One of the seven guiding principles of being a cooperative is *Concern for Community*, which translates into how Fall River Electric can work to help sustain the communities we serve, while focusing on the needs of our owner-members. We can all agree that 2020 has been a challenging year. Part of Fall River's long-term strategic planning has been to set goals to improve the financial health of the Cooperative, equity being one of the measurements.

"Our board has established an equity ratio range of 40 to 45 percent and we are on the top of that range," says CEO/General Manager Bryan Case. Being at 45 percent equity ratio means the Cooperative has the financial strength and financial flexibility to give back dollars to its owner-members, as opposed to keeping those dollars for future expenses.

Because of the equity position Fall River Electric is in and the Co-op's overall financial strength, combined with the steps taken by Fall River's staff to control costs and limit expenditures, the board felt confident infusing much needed

money back into our communities. Fall River's elected board has approved the disbursement of one million dollars as an instant owner rebate to be paid out to **all members of the Co-op who contributed to net margins in 2020**. The amount of each member's rebate will be determined by the amount the member paid into the Cooperative in 2020. The rebate will be issued as a **credit on their account** as seen on members' February 2021 billing statement.

"We generated revenue above what we budgeted for; we're conservative in our spending and we've tightened our belt," says Case. "Since actual net margins have exceeded budgeted net margin expectations, Fall River Electric Cooperative can return a portion of this year's net margins back instantly to our owner-members when they likely need it most."

Fall River Electric intends for this one-time instant owner rebate to provide help to its members, while boosting the economies of the communities Fall River serves—thus truly embracing the tenants of *Concern for Community*.



## BPA Proposes Rate Increase For 2021

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has proposed an increase in wholesale power and transmission rates to be effective in October. The initial proposal released last month kicks off a rate-setting process, which will end with a final decision to be released in July.

"The initial rate increase proposed by BPA would result in a 13.7 percent wholesale power increase. However, we, along with other utilities in the Northwest, will be actively participating in the rate-setting process to ensure BPA understands the effect an increase will have on our members, especially following a pandemic," says Fall River Electric CEO/General Manager Bryan Case.

BPA is a nonprofit federal wholesale utility that receives no congressional appropriations and must recover its costs of operations through rates charged to over 140 electric utilities in the Northwest. BPA's power supply comes, almost exclusively, from hydropower created by thirty-one federal dams that produce clean, renewable, efficient, secure, and low-cost power.

Once BPA's decision is finalized, the Fall River Electric elected board will review the final outcome and determine whether Fall River's rates will have to be increased.

Bonneville  
POWER ADMINISTRATION





*Where Service Matters*

800-632-5726  
208-652-7431

ASHTON  
1150 North 3400 East  
Ashton, ID 83420

DRIGGS  
1605 N Highway 33  
Driggs, ID 83422

WEST YELLOWSTONE  
436 Madison Ave  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

All Our Offices Are Open  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:30pm

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Bryan Case  
Fall River Electric  
CEO/General Manager



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Want your *Fall River FLASHES* faster? Click the Quick Link *Newsletter* on our website's home page at [www.fallriverelectric.com](http://www.fallriverelectric.com).

Keep up to date, including on power outage information, by "liking" Fall River Electric on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/fallriverrec](http://www.facebook.com/fallriverrec).

## Stay Cozy This Winter

Winter is here and with it comes colder temperatures that make staying warm a little more difficult. Here are five easy ways to stay cozy this season:



1. Whether you are experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth that a regular throw or blanket cannot. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat). This winter, consider an electric blanket instead of turning up the heat—your energy bill will thank you.

4. Another way to make your home cozier is to use a humidifier. Cold air does not hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity inside your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin, and improve sleep.

2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to keep your feet warm. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.

5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, area rugs can also provide extra insulation as well as add a warm surface for your feet on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time. You will enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.

3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and harness natural warmth from sunlight. Open all curtains, drapes, and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in—you will be able to feel the difference.

These are just a few ways you can stay cozy this winter without turning up the thermostat.

## Helping You Pay For Your Child's Education

More than \$70,000 in scholarships are being made available to current high school seniors who are planning to attend college or receive other higher education training this fall. A total of thirty scholarships worth \$600 each for the first year and up to \$2,400 over four years are available through Fall River Electric's college and continuing education scholarship program. All applicants (students) must have parents or guardians who are owner-members (customers) of Fall River Electric.



Scholarship applications are available at Fall River's website, [www.fallriverelectric.com](http://www.fallriverelectric.com). Click on the tab titled "MY COMMUNITY," and then "Scholarships" in the drop-down menu. Deadline to apply is March 26, 2021, so hurry! Scholarships will be presented at Fall River Electric's annual meeting in June in Ashton and are funded by unclaimed Patronage Capital.

Students who have previously received a scholarship from Fall River Electric are reminded that they need to re-apply each year to continue to receive scholarship assistance.

Fall River Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors is also offering a \$2,400 yearly scholarship to a member or a child of a member who is interested in a utility career as a lineman. This scholarship will be awarded to ONE person who plans to enroll in a lineman college. The applicant or their parents or guardians must be members of Fall River Electric to qualify. The lineman scholarship information can also be found on Fall River Electric's website at the same location as our high school scholarship information.

## Take Safety Home

Safety has been and remains one of the highest priorities for the staff at Fall River Electric. In 2021, we want to bring safety home to you. Each month Fall River Electric will introduce a safety topic that you can use at home. This month, our at-home safety focus is on creating a fire escape plan for your home and family. Here are steps to create a fire escape plan for your home:



- Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows.
- Using the map, know at least two ways out of every room.
- Establish an outside meeting place like a tree, light pole, or mailbox, but make sure it is a safe distance from the home.
- Practice your home fire drill at night and during the day. Practice with everyone.
- Practice using different ways out of each room, especially bedrooms.
- Teach children how to escape on their own.
- CLOSE doors behind you as you leave. Closed doors slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.

For more fire safety tips, visit [www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education).

