



BIG FLAT NEWS



April 2026

www.bigflatelectric.com

Lineworkers are ready when it matters most

As an employee of Big Flat Electric Cooperative, I have the unique privilege of seeing firsthand what it truly takes to keep the lights on for our members. In April, we take time to pause and recognize the brave men and women who make that possible every single day – our lineworkers.

When storms impact our communities and outages occur, many people experience the inconvenience, but our lineworkers see a call to action. Our crews are always ready when it matters most – leaving family dinners, working through the night and heading into challenging conditions to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. That readiness is not accidental. It comes from rigorous training, deep experience and a shared commitment to serving others.

What makes lineworkers especially remarkable is that they aren't just restoring power to a system – they're restoring power to their own communities. They live here. They raise their families here. They understand that electricity is more than a convenience; it's essential to daily life, to local businesses, to schools, farms and emergency services. Powering the places we call home is personal to lineworkers.

Electric cooperatives such as Big Flat Electric were built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors, and our lineworkers embody that spirit every day. They are the first to




Big Flat Electric Lineman: L To R, Logan Sims, Erik Simanton, Nathan Veit, Leif Sorensen and Hunter Goodman. Not pictured: Brenden Johnson and Joe Hould, line superintendent.

respond and the last to leave, often working long hours behind the scenes. At times, serving our neighbors means going beyond our own service territory through a process known as mutual aid. During major outage events, Big Flat Electric crews stand ready to assist neighboring co-ops to help restore power. This spirit of mutual aid strengthens all cooperatives and ultimately benefits the members we serve.

We understand any time the lights go out can be frustrating, bringing everyday life to a halt. We are incredibly grateful to our members for your patience and encouragement during these times. Linework is demanding,

physical and, at times, it can be dangerous. Our crews approach each job with a focus on safety and teamwork. They take pride in their craft and in the trust our members place in them.

On April 13 we will celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, but one day is hardly enough. Every day, we thank lineworkers for their service and dedication, which are the backbone of our cooperative.

To our lineworkers: thank you for your hard work, your readiness and your unwavering commitment to the communities we serve. We are proud to stand behind you and grateful for all that you do. 

Morin elected to Big Flat Electric board

WHAT a great representative Big Flat Electric Cooperative has in District 4, the Hays area. Warren Morin was selected by the Board of Directors in August 2025 to fill the position following the retirement of long-time board member, Betty Campbell.

Warren has lived in Hays his entire life, graduating from Hays High School in 1982. Shortly after graduation he married Denise Candy Kirkaldie. Together, Warren and Candy have two sons, Chase and Sean, and are proud grandparents to six grandchildren.

Outdoor adventures such as hunting, fishing and prospecting are a few of the activities Warren enjoys. He is also an avid sports fan who follows baseball, basketball and football. Warren proudly mentioned his oldest granddaughter was part of the Hays state-qualifying flag football team. Music is a long-time passion, playing with his brothers and cousin in the Bad Habit Band for 25 years before retiring



from the professional music lifestyle.

Over the past 20 + years, Warren has been involved with GIS mapping, first with Ft. Belknap Fire Management as a wildland fire fighter and fuel specialist. During this time, he also had several thinning crews he supervised. The past two years he has been employed as the Ft. Belknap Indian Community's Orphaned Wells Program GIS technician.

Warren also served on the Ft. Belknap Tribal Council from 2015 - 2023, completing four 2-year terms as the Mountain Gros Ventre representa-

tive. Through this affiliation, he was asked by Patty Quisno if he would be interested in serving on the Big Flat Electric board. With his background in tribal government and financials, Patty believed he would be a great addition to the cooperative.

As a board member, Warren's goal is to help educate the members of his district so they have a better understanding of the utility industry. Warren feels renewable energy is coming and wants to further educate himself on every aspect of it. He doesn't think we are currently ready for it, but that we will be in the future. Warren is also focused on ensuring that, as conversations around electricity and climate change continue, the cooperative maintains reliable and affordable power for future generations.

Thank you, Warren, for accepting the position as District 4 representative on the Big Flat Electric Cooperative Board of Directors. RM

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As we prepare for the seasonal shift, remember to set your ceiling fan rotation accordingly. In winter months (or whenever your home heating system is running), fan blades should rotate clockwise, which produces an updraft that pushes warm air down. In summer months (or whenever your home cooling system is running), blades should rotate counterclockwise, which produces a downdraft or windchill effect that makes you feel cooler. When used correctly, ceiling fans can boost comfort and allow you to adjust the thermostat a few degrees for energy savings.

Source: energy.gov



2025 capital credit allocation notices to be issued by mail

In April each Big Flat Electric Cooperative Member who received and paid an electric bill in 2025 will be issued a Capital Credit Allocation Notice through the mail.

Cooperatives are distinctly different from investor-owned utilities. For-profit electric utilities generate margins on behalf of investors and shareholders. In an electric cooperative, such as Big Flat Electric, any margins (revenues remaining after all expenses have been paid) are allocated to members in proportion to their electric usage payments. The more electricity you use, the more shares of the cooperative you own. That's the power of cooperative membership.

Capital credit allocations DO NOT represent available funds. Over time, allocations may be paid out to members as funds are available. Payment is known as capital credit retirement. The decision to retire capital credits rests solely with our Board of Directors and is dependent on the financial condition of the cooperative and the provisions of

our bylaws. Big Flat Electric's current retirement cycle is 18 years, and we generally issue capital credit retirement checks in October of each year.

For the year 2025, Big Flat Electric's margins for allocation totaled \$382,783. Each active member received their allocation as a credit to their individual capital credit allocation account. The balance in your account is the sum of your allocations earned to date, minus any retired (paid) capital credits to date.

Your capital credit allocations never expire or go away. Once in your account, they are yours. Please notify our office of any future address changes so that you will receive your available payouts when processed. Allocated capital credits shown on your recently mailed allocation notice may not be used to pay electric bills or any other debit you may owe Big Flat Electric.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 406-654-2040. Thanks!

Key activities from February include:

- **Rights-of-Way:** Big Flat Electric will be requesting 30 feet for distribution line rights-of-way, an increase from the previous 20 feet.
- **Career Fairs:** Malta High School will hold a career fair April 7th. The Fort Belknap career fair is April 13th. Staff will be attending both events, providing information about the utility field.
- **Safety:** Todd Solomon, safety instructor, recently retired. We are in the process of finding a new safety program.
- **Outage Calls:** Staff is looking into implementing a new outage program for after-hour outages.
- **Retirement:** Debbie Kindle, member service/billings clerk, will retire July 1st.

APRIL 2026

IN THE KNOW

HAPPENINGS AROUND BIG FLAT ELECTRIC

- **Meter Reads:** Our crew has been working on verifying annual meter reads throughout the service territory.
- **Digger Truck:** Our digger truck, which has been in Billings for repairs, is completed. The transfer case that went out was covered by warranty.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- **Find us on Facebook** under Big Flat Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- **Visit our website** at www.bigflatelectric.com.
- **Sign up for budget billing** and/or ACH (auto payments) by calling our office.
- **Bills** are generated on the 1st working day of each month, and are due on the 20th of each month.
- **Bills that are 60 days in arrears are subject to disconnect.** Once disconnected, a reconnect fee will be charged. The bill will then have to be paid in full to be reconnected.
- **We have a secure, automated toll-free phone number** for members making payments by credit card and/or bank account: 1-844-968-1965. You will need to have your account number and/or phone number that is on file with our office to access the automated system.
- **Take control of your electric account with SmartHub.** You can pay your bills; set up and cancel reoccurring payments; set up notifications; obtain duplicates of your bills; and view your monthly and yearly usage, all at your fingertips. Visit our website: www.bigflatelectric.com or download the SmartHub app from your Play Store on Android or the App Store on Apple devices.
- New service and service change quotes are only **valid for 30 days**.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your BALANCE, you must keep moving.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

FROM APRIL 1962: BFEC NEWSLETTER

Along Our Lines

APRIL 1962 – BFEC Newsletter

- A fire of undetermined origin destroyed a trailer house on the E. T. Taylor farm 25 miles southwest of Malta on March 7. The trailer house was being used as a bunk house for an employee at the Taylor Farm.
- On March 8, a fire believed to have been caused by a discarded cigarette falling on a pile of magazines, caused considerable damage to the bunk house on the Harlan Krass place at Hogeland. A new davenport being stored in the bunk house waiting the completion of the Krass's new home, was destroyed. It was stated that if the Krasses had not had a fire extinguisher handy at the time of the fire to put it out, that all their buildings might have been destroyed due to the high winds blowing.

The Elmer Meidinger family of Saco have moved from the former Roger Hetrick place to the Andros Strommen place. The Carl Stahls will move to the Hetrick place which Mr. Stahl has leased.

- We of the Big Flat would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the Merle Olson family of Whitewater on behalf of the passing away of little Alan Olson.
- The only yard light installed on our lines in the month of March was for Iver Lefdahl of Malta.
- The Henry Grabofsky farm near Loring has been purchased by Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Lang of Malta. We are very sorry to be losing the Grabofskys as one of our consumers, but wish them the best of luck in their new home.

— 1962 CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA — Bureau of Reclamation, Malta, Montana

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Ann.
Precipitation	0.29	0.53	0.37				
51-Yr. Aver. Precipitation	0.45	0.40	0.51	0.77	1.85	3.17	12.58
1962 Accumulative Precipitation	0.29	0.82	1.19				
Highest Temperature	56.	67.	65.				
Average High Temperature	27.4	27.8	32.6				
Lowest Temperature	-27	-41	-26				
Average Low Temperature	3.2	3.4	8.				

BIG FLAT NEWS

Published Once a Month by
The Big Flat Electric Cooperative
Headquarters, Malta, Montana

OFFICERS

D. A. Depuydt, Whitewater	President
Guy Riggan, Harlem	Vice President
Wm. A. Dorn, Malta	Secretary-Treasurer
Eddie Harmon, Turner	Trustee
Bud Johnson, Malta	Trustee
Wellen Jones, Turner	Trustee
Frank Mohar, Hogeland	Trustee
B. M. Phillips, Landusky	Trustee
Earl Wasson, Whitewater	Trustee
Willis McKeon, Malta	Attorney

EMPLOYEES

Lonnie E. Williams	Manager
Elsie A. Fewer	Office Manager
Enid F. Fewer	Cashier
Lowell Anderson	Line Foreman
George R. Hoynes	Electrical Advisor
Don Ottinger	Lineman
Morris Mavencamp	App. Lineman
Sam Carlson	Groundman
William Kalkman	Material Clerk

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a. m. — 12:00 Noon
1:00 p. m. — 5:00 p. m., Monday through Friday

In Case of Outage, Telephone Collect:

Office	561
Manager, Lonnie E. Williams	204
Line Foreman, Lowell Anderson	671

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- District 1 Duane Klindworth
- District 2 Alan Van Voast, Sec./Treasurer
- District 3 Alan Wasson
- District 4 Warren Morin
- District 5 Roger Solberg, Vice President
- District 6 Patty Quisno
- District 7 Kevin Koss, President

General Manager: Gretchen Boardman



BIG FLAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SERVING BLAINE, PHILLIPS AND VALLEY COUNTIES

P.O. BOX 229 • MALTA, MT 59538 • WWW.BIGFLATELECTRIC.COM

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The power of human connections

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