



**Ryan Schilreff**  
General Manager



AUGUST 2019



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

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May through September  
Office hrs: 6:30–5:00, Mon.-Fri.

October through April  
Office hrs: 7:30–4:00, Mon.-Fri.

**Board of Directors**

Clay Peterson  
*President*

Kenda Knudsen  
*Vice President*

Julie Kilty  
*Secretary*

Dewey Hageman  
*Assistant Secretary*

Mark Knaub

**General Manager**  
Ryan Schilreff

**Senior Staff**  
Joe Kinnan  
*Operations Manager*

Miles Duffy  
*Assistant Operations Manager*

Tiphanie Fuss  
*Office Manager*

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# New board member selected

During our June Board of Directors meeting, the board appointed Mark Knaub to fill the open Director District #4 board seat.

## Territory of District #4

Director District #4 represents all Wyrulec's Nebraska service territory and represents us on the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) board. Director District #4 was previously held by Jack Preston, who served on the Wyrulec board and NREA board for the past 41 years. Jack decided to retire this past May, which left that director seat vacant.

We wish Jack the very best in his retirement and can't thank him enough for his service to the cooperative.

We would also like to congratulate Mark on his appointment and look forward to his guidance as we continue to position the cooperative to serve its members well into the future.



Photo courtesy Mark Knaub

**Mark Knaub**

## FERC to regulate Tri-State

In last month's article, I spent most of my time giving you some insight into Tri-State Generation and Transmission, specifically some of the challenges Tri-State is facing trying to make the "all requirements" contracts more flexible for its diverse membership.



This past month the Tri-State Board of Directors made a monumental decision to place Tri-State under rate regulation by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Historically, Tri-State has not been rate regulated by the four states it serves or by the federal government.

The Board of Directors of Tri-State, as the governing body, has historically set wholesale rates for its membership as outlined in the company by-laws.

The board has discussed potential FERC jurisdiction for years, however, prompted by the assertion of rate regulation in New Mexico and Colorado.

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## Tri-State to be regulated by FERC

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In 2012, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission suspended Tri-State's rates from going into effect, resulting in New Mexico members paying different rates than other members in other states.

In 2013, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission also asserted jurisdiction regarding a rate complaint from three members.

Because New Mexico and Colorado exercised rate jurisdiction, it caused increased costs, unrecovered revenue, and inconsistent rates to its members.

### More states could further complicate

As the Tri-State membership in each of the four states becomes more diverse, so do the ideas and demands of the membership. Trying to appease each state's membership and their regulatory bodies is becoming impractical.

Public utilities subject to FERC regulation must charge rates that are "just and reasonable" and "not unduly discriminatory or preferential". FERC is composed of five commissioners who are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. There may be no more than three commissioners of one political party serving on the commission at any given time.

### Benefits over the long run

For Wyrulec, the benefit of Tri-State being FERC regulated is that it ensures our members an even playing field when it comes to the wholesale rates charged by Tri-State. Our rates will not be dictated by any other state regulator — it allows a single consistent rate regulator across all states. It also aligns Tri-State regulation with rate regulation of other wholesale power contracts.



You may be asking why any organization would voluntarily place itself under federal regulation. A wise man once told me sometimes we must save ourselves from ourselves!

### Contact information

If you have any questions about your co-op or some of the challenges Tri-State faces and how they affect Wyrulec, you can reach me via email at [rschilreff@wyrulec.com](mailto:rschilreff@wyrulec.com) or on my cell phone at 307-575-2435.

## Wyoming's Rural Electric Cooperatives Initiate New Class at University of Wyoming:

# The Cooperative Business Model

University of Wyoming (UW) students have already begun signing up for a new class in the fall, called the Cooperative Business Model, and now the department head is wondering if he will need a larger venue.

"We've hardly started marketing it, and it's already half full," said Benjamin Rashford, department head of the UW Department of Agricultural

and Applied Economics. Rashford had reserved a room for 30 students.

Rashford noted the class size to representatives of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association during a May 3 ceremony in Laramie announcing the class.

"We're all very generous and give a lot of scholarships, but how much do [the recipients] know about co-ops

and where they get the scholarships from?" said Shawn Taylor, executive director of the WREA. Taylor noted that the course is intended to help students learn what a cooperative is and how it works.

The Cooperative Business Model will educate students about the concept of member-ownership while analyzing functioning cooperatives

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## The Cooperative Business Model

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such as electric cooperatives, credit unions, farmers' co-ops, retailers and more.

The WREA, which consists of 11 utility cooperatives along with three generation and transmission

cooperatives, provided \$10,000 to fund the delivery of the course through the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The class will be offered as a standard

credited course for UW students this fall.

### About the class

This course will acquaint students with the cooperative business model and encourage them to think critically about why co-ops emerge, how co-ops differ from other business structures and where the model can be applied to current economic, social and environmental issues. Students will also learn from guest speakers who are leading thinkers and employers in the co-op field.

Though currently listed as a 4000-level Ag Econ course, The Cooperative Business Model is appropriate for students at all levels and in any major. It will be taught Tuesday evenings during the fall semester at the University of Wyoming.

### About the instructor

Milton Geiger is an economist by training (M.S. from UW Dept. of Agricultural and Applied Economics) and currently works for the members of Poudre Valley Rural Electric Association, an electric cooperative in northern Colorado. He spent over a dozen years working in Wyoming for UW Extension and USDA Rural Development. He is a past Board chair of Big Hollow Food Co-op.



Representatives of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association (WREA) and the University of Wyoming (UW) pose in front of the Breakin' Through sculpture on the UW campus on May 3. WREA gave the UW Foundation \$10,000 to prepare a new class at the university titled The Cooperative Business Model. The credited class will be offered in the fall.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

**Cookware Tip:** Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees, and your meal will cook just as quickly.

Source: energy.gov



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**Monday, Sept. 2 for Labor Day**

# Dormitory 101: Make Room for Safety

The car is loaded up and check-in is about to start on college campuses across the country. While you want to have all the comforts of home at school, there are some **electrical safety tips to keep in mind** as you set up your new space.

- **Do not** overload outlets, extension cords, or power strips.
- Use power strips with **overcurrent protectors**. This will shut off the power if there is too much power being drawn.
- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. Some commonly **approved safety labels** include **UL, CSA, and MET**.

- **Unplug small appliances** when not in use and all electronics when away for extended periods.
- Keep all electrical appliances and **cords safely away from bedding, curtains, papers, and other flammable material.**

Check with your **university's housing department** on specific housing rules before planning to bring hot plates, coffee makers, toasters, microwaves, and portable heaters.

For more information on dorm safety, visit:

 Safe  
Electricity.org

