

BIG BEND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.



P.O. Box 348, Ritzville, Washington 99169

Ritzville Office 659-1700
Toll-free (866) 844-2363

Ritzville, Lind, Washtucna area after hours,
Saturday, Sunday and holiday emergency calls:

659-0487

All other areas after hours,
Saturday, Sunday and holiday emergency calls:

(866) 844-2363

DIRECTORS: President Lyle Holt; Vice President Dennis Swinger Sr.; Secretary James Person; Treasurer Robert Clinesmith; Daniel Bauermeister, Melvin Kagele, Ken Story, Curtis Dahl. Manager James Johnson; Legal Counsel Kenneth D. Carpenter.

Manager's Message

Thanks For Helping Us With Tree-Trimming Costs

It's amazing the number of trees our Co-op has to trim each year to maintain power quality and avoid safety issues.

In an agricultural area with a desert climate, one would expect trees to be a minor maintenance item for our utility. Instead, the cost of trimming trees is having an increasing impact on our rates.

Our annual tree trimming cost, which was about \$60,000 five years ago, has escalated to more than \$130,000 per year. The cost increase represents more than just higher contractor prices. We are seeing more and more trees planted under electric lines.



*Jim Johnson
Manager*

The Cooperative used to be able to start trimming trees in mid-spring and be done by mid-summer. Now, we begin in winter and don't finish until fall.

Even though we return to cut the same trees every two to three years—which is a short cycle for electric utilities—we often find many trees growing up in our lines by the time we return. In a few locations, fast-growing trees cut in spring grow back into our lines by the end of summer.

In addition to the frequency and cost of trimming trees, many times

we face upset property owners when we arrive to cut or remove trees.

Your help is needed to keep areas under our power lines clear of trees.

If you're planning to plant trees, please look overhead and plant trees away from power lines.

Also, please call the underground location service before you dig by dialing 811 to avoid digging into a buried utility line.

Your efforts will help us manage our tree trimming cost and reduce the chance of tree-related blinks, outages and safety problems.

Thank you for your help. ■



Big Bend Electric Co-op's tree trimming program for 2008 will include work from about Road 170 north to about Herman Road in the Basin City, Mesa, Connell and Othello areas.

WA-25