



MYEC

Mid-Yellowstone Electric Cooperative

ALONG THESE LINES...

HYSHAM, MONT. | 406-342-5521

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Why vegetation management matters

by Jason Brothen, CEO

Trees just never go out of style. They keep us grounded, remind us of where we've been and keep reaching for what's next. We are lucky to be surrounded by trees that shade us on hot days and help shelter us on windy days.

Although trees add so much beauty to our homes and properties, Mid-Yellowstone Electric Cooperative (MYEC) works conscientiously to balance preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect.

One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming.

Keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when strong winds, heavy ice or severe storms roll in and bring down branches, power lines and poles. Many power outages can be traced back to trees and vegetation coming into contact with electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may notice crews from MYEC working in your communities throughout the year. Our crews follow the latest industry standards to ensure the job is done safely and effectively. Their work might seem routine, but it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.

It's far better to take care of preventative work when the weather is good than to be cleaning up a mess during a power outage. That's why electric utilities across the country are required to manage vegetation near power lines. Regular trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards. It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for severe weather events.

But it's not just about reliability and efficiency. This work is also about keeping people safe. When trees get too close to power lines, it can get dangerous. Branches that touch or even come close to the lines can carry electricity. Kids climbing trees in their own yards might not realize the risk. And when storms hit, fallen trees can create hazardous conditions for both families and the crews working to restore power.

There's also the financial side. Preventative maintenance, such as tree trimming, is much more affordable than fixing widespread damage after an outage. If left unchecked, overgrown vegetation can cause more frequent outages and increase costs for everyone. A well-planned vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members.

You can help, too. When planting trees, consider their mature height and distance from nearby power lines. Trees that grow up to 40 feet should be planted at least 25 feet away from overhead lines, while larger trees should be planted at least 50 feet away. If you're planting near pad-mounted transformers, keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the front and 4 feet from the sides, so crews can safely access the equipment.

With more than 2,000 miles of overhead line, our crews can't catch everything. If you spot a tree getting too close to the power line, give us a call at 406-342-5521 and let us know.

If your neighborhood has underground lines, don't forget to call 811 at least two business days before digging. It's a free service that can prevent serious accidents.

At the end of the day, we all want a community that's safe, resilient and beautiful. MYEC is proud to be part of that. This is home for us, just like it is for you. ■

Coordinating power across the grid

When you flip a switch, electricity is instantly available, ready to energize your day. However, this seemingly simple act is supported by a meticulously coordinated system of various “power players” working in unison to keep the lights brightly lit.

Mid-Yellowstone Electric Cooperative (MYEC) believes it’s essential for our members to understand how this system functions and who is involved in delivering the electricity you rely upon daily.

Generation of electricity

Everything begins with the generation owners and operators responsible for producing electricity. Power plants transform energy from diverse sources, including natural gas and coal, and renewables, such as wind and solar, into electricity. These facilities can be owned by electric utilities, government entities or private companies. A varied mix of generation sources in most regions helps to ensure reliability while supporting affordability and sustainability goals.

Transmission of power

Once generated, electricity must travel, often over long distances, to reach local communities. This is where transmission owners and operators come into play. They utilize high-voltage transmission lines strung along towering structures to transport bulk electricity from power plants to local areas. You may have noticed these lines along highways or across vast landscapes.

Since electricity cannot be stored in large quantities, this system must continuously transfer power from production sites to where it’s needed, all in real-time.

MYEC collaborates with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, our local generation and transmission partner. Basin Electric is a private, not-for-profit wholesale power provider that generates and transmits electricity to GWEC and other electric cooperatives in our area.

Managing power flow

Coordinating the flow of vast amounts of power is a complex task, particularly across multiple

states or regions. In many areas, organized wholesale markets managed by regional transmission organizations or independent system operators oversee this responsibility.

These entities typically do not own power plants or transmission lines. Instead, they function as traffic controllers for the grid, balancing supply and demand every second and directing which power plants should generate electricity at any given moment. GWEC collaborates with Basin Electric to ensure reliable service and cost-effective energy for our members.

Community impact

Next comes the part of the grid most people recognize – your local electric utility, which is where MYEC steps into play. We take electricity from the high-voltage transmission system and deliver it directly to homes, farms or businesses through lower-voltage distribution lines. We also maintain utility poles, power lines, electric substations and other vital equipment within our community.

When storms strike or outages occur, our teams are dedicated to restoring power safely and swiftly.

MYEC, proudly serves 755 members across multiple counties committed to providing reliable and affordable electricity you can depend on.

Your role in the grid

Lastly, there’s you, the end user. Homes, businesses and industries play a crucial role in the grid. Your energy consumption directly impacts how much electricity needs to be generated and delivered. During peak demand periods, such as hot summer afternoons or chilly winter mornings, the grid works harder to meet increased usage. Simple adjustments, such as modifying your thermostat, helps lessen the load during these peak demand periods.

Beyond these key power players, various organizations work behind the scenes to ensure our grid remains reliable and secure.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) establishes and enforces reliability standards through a collaborative

process with utilities, regulators and industry experts. NERC also monitors the grid, trains personnel and evaluates risks to maintain a strong and resilient electric system across North America.

Meanwhile, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) provides federal oversight, regulating interstate electricity transmission and overseeing wholesale energy markets to

ensure fair and efficient operations. FERC also plays a role in hydroelectric licensing and energy infrastructure development, contributing to safe and reliable energy delivery nationwide.

From generation to transmission to your local utility, a coordinated effort is essential to power your daily life. GWEC is proud to be your trusted energy partner and to play our role in maintaining a robust grid for the communities we serve. ■

Grid Power Players

Electricity is available with the flip of a switch, but it travels great distances and is coordinated among multiple entities before it reaches your home or business. Take a look at the grid power players that ensure you receive reliable electricity.



1. Generation Owners & Operators

Power plants can be owned and operated by electric utilities, government entities or other private companies. Power plants produce electricity by converting energy from various sources—like natural gas, coal, nuclear, or renewables—into electricity.

2. Transmission System Owners & Operators

The transmission grid moves large amounts of electricity over long distances using high-voltage transmission lines attached to large towers. Like power plants, these lines can be owned by a variety of public and private companies.

3. Organized Wholesale Markets

In many parts of the country, Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) & Independent System Operators (ISOs) coordinate the flow of electricity across regions by balancing supply and demand in real time and managing the dispatch of electric generation and transmission across large areas with the participation of generation and transmission owners.

4. Electric Utilities (That's Us!)

Electric distribution utilities take electricity from the transmission system and deliver it to homes and businesses through lower-voltage distribution lines. They also maintain local power lines, poles and other essential equipment.

5. End Users (That's You!)

End users consist of the homes, businesses and industries that consume electricity. Their demand drives how much electricity is generated and how the grid is managed in real time.

Other Key Players:

NERC: The regulatory authority that develops and enforces mandatory, reliability standards for the North American bulk electric grid. (Standards are developed through a stakeholder process.)

FERC: Independent federal agency that oversees interstate transmission and wholesale electricity sales, ensuring fair access to the grid.

STEER CLEAR OF DOWNED LINES

Mother Nature isn't always kind to power lines. Summer storms sometimes prove to be too much for poles and power lines to withstand. If you see a downed power line or utility pole, contact Mid Yellowstone Electric Cooperative immediately.

Do not go near the line or the pole. Just because it's on the ground doesn't mean it's safe to approach. A downed power line may still be energized and could cause serious injury or death.



DO

- If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around power lines – up to 35 feet away – may be energized.
- Immediately report the downed line to Mid Yellowstone Electric Cooperative.
- Assume all downed power lines are energized.

DON'T

- **Never** touch a downed power line. Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it.
- **Never** drive over downed power lines.
- **Never** touch or step in water near where a downed power line is located.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

MID-YELLOWSTONE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

P.O. Box 386, Hysham, Mont. 59038
Phone: 406-342-5521

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon. through Thurs. 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

DIRECTORS

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
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| Joe Schiffer, V.P..... | District 5 |
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| Jessica Welch..... | Cust.Serv.Rep. |
| Ken Rolandson..... | Operations Mgr |
| Daren Reeder..... | Lineman |
| John Cunningham..... | Lineman |
| Brent Battenfeld..... | Lineman |
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Reporting outages

Trouble calls may be placed to the office 24 hours a day. After normal working hours, the phone will be forwarded to one of our lineworkers who are on call. Please check with your neighbors to see if they have power, along with resetting your breakers below the meter prior to calling Goldenwest.