

# SPARKS

In the wake of severe storms, maintaining and fixing power lines is a critical task that utility companies undertake to restore electricity to affected communities. As we all are aware of the winter that Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado had, it is very important to High West to maintain our power lines to ensure reliable electricity to your home or business, but also to prevent unplanned outages, enhance system reliability, and ensure that our communities are safe.

Events, such as blizzards, can cause extensive damage to power infrastructure, leading to widespread outages. With the past winter that we had, we realized that there is vital line maintenance that must continue within our service territory. After realizing volatile areas, we have addressed these issues in our construction work plan and are on track to fix those issues sooner rather than later.

Now, many may wonder, if overhead lines are hard to keep up on maintenance, why don't we bury our power lines? Burying power lines, also known as under grounding, involves placing electrical cables and the infrastructure below ground instead of using overhead

lines. While this is a great advancement in the utility industry as it improves aesthetics, as well as reduces vulnerability to weather-related damage, it is generally more expensive compared to overhead power lines. Some of the associated costs of burying power lines includes installation, as well as ongoing maintenance and repairs.

First, installation costs can include, but are not limited to, excavation and trenching, specialized cable designs, installation of conduits and house cables, specialized equipment and labor, as well as obtaining rights-of-way or easements for cable placement across private properties or public areas. In addition, underground power lines require ongoing maintenance and repairs just as overhead power lines do; however, it is not as easily accessible or visible, which makes repairs more complex, and adds time to fixing the issue.

While we believe that under grounding power lines is a great opportunity and can be efficient, we are doing everything in our power to provide reliable service at a reasonable cost for our members. The decision to underground power lines often involves a trade-off between



**Jared Routh**  
CEO/General Manager

and maintenance costs, and if it's the member's choice, they pay the difference for the additional cost. This is why we have updated our work plan and are going to continue to address the line maintenance to do everything we can to avoid widespread outages and to enhance our system reliability.

**This is a reminder that our 86th Annual Meeting will be held virtually on the evening of Thursday, June 15, 2023. Members who register and attend the meeting will receive a \$20 bill credit as well as a chance to win raffle prizes! We hope to see you virtually on June 15!**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**HIGH WEST ENERGY**

**Board of Directors**

Michael Lerwick	District 11	307-630-1277
Gary Smith	District 12	307-649-2375
Ed Prosser	District 13	307-630-8364
Jerry Burnett	District 14	970-895-3386
Damon Birkhofer	District 15	308-235-7296
Kosha Olsen	District 16	307-214-4940
Kevin Thomas	District 17	308-879-4396

*\*Meetings are typically held on the fourth Monday of each month.*

**Leadership Team**

Jared Routh	CEO/General Manager
Dave Crouse	Chief Information Officer
Josh Gorman	Chief Financial Officer
David Golden	Engineering Manager
Konnie Keehnen	Member Services Manager
Carol Macy	Employee Services Manager
Marv Powell	WAFB Operations & Wiring Manager
Nate Begger	Operations Manager

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## INTRODUCING LIGHTNING PAYMENTS: PAY ANYWHERE AT ANYTIME

In today's fast-paced world, where instant gratification and convenience are valued more than ever, the concept of real-time payments has emerged as a game-changer in the bill payment world. We are excited to announce that High West Energy members are now able to utilize InComm (Vanilla Direct Pay) real-time payments to pay their electric bill. Members will be able to pay using a card or cash payment, and your payment will be posted in real time. You will be able to make payments from anywhere, in any state, at any participating business. The businesses are included in the photo.

Making a payment will now be easier than before. You can use the QR code that is printed on your bill or available on the SmartHub application on your mobile device. Take this member specific code into one of the participating businesses and make your payment. The payment will be applied to your account in a matter of seconds. Please be aware that there will be a \$1.50 service fee added to your payment amount.

Real-time payments refer to electronic transactions that are processed and applied to your account immediately. Unlike other payment methods, which can take days to clear, real-time payments eliminate the waiting time associated with transactions. This can be very helpful if your payment needs to be posted to your account to avoid an added charge or even a disruption of service. This will help members who only pay in

cash as well because you won't have to drive to one of our offices to make your payment. This will not only help save you time and money on fuel, but it could also be instrumental on days that the roads may be less than ideal to drive on.



Finally, real-time payments have 24/7 accessibility. Payments can be made outside of High West Energy's traditional office hours, including weekends and holidays.

This availability ensures that members can pay their bill anytime, from anywhere in the country.

You will notice the information printed on your bill this month. There is a link to find a location near you, whether you are at home or on vacation.

We are very excited to roll out this new program in hopes that it will be one more way to help make our members' lives a little bit easier. Please remember that you are still able to pay your bill with card by calling our office or our IVR number listed below. You can also pay with echeck or card using SmartHub. If you have any questions, please call our office at 307-245-3261.




**VanillaDirect Pay - Pay with Cash at a Store**








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By accepting or using this barcode to make a payment, you agree to the full terms and conditions, available at [vanilladirect.com/pay/terms](http://vanilladirect.com/pay/terms). After successful payment using this barcode, you may retrieve your full detailed e-receipt at [vanilladirect.com/pay/ereceipt](http://vanilladirect.com/pay/ereceipt).

The majority of participating locations will accept cash payments up to a maximum amount of \$500.00.

Pine Bluffs Headquarters  
6270 County Road 212  
PO Box 519  
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082  
Monday-Thursday: 7:30 AM- 5 PM  
Closed on Fridays

Cheyenne Service Center  
3302 I-80 Service Road  
Cheyenne, WY 82009  
Monday-Thursday: 8 AM-5 PM  
Closed on Fridays

Office: (307) 245-3261  
Toll-Free: (888) 834-1657  
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