

# Federal Climate Change Legislation Must Be Thoughtful, Deliberate



**Steve Reed**  
CEO/Manager

**America is at** a crossroads. Pending legislation before the U.S. Congress provides punitive measures for electric cooperative consumers who derive energy from coal-fired generation facilities.

Your local electric cooperatives, including West Central Electric, support reasonable climate change legislation

with achievable targets. However, we cannot support the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act of 2007, which could be considered by the U.S. Senate in early June.

If passed, this measure would cost hundreds of billions of dollars and produce no tangible benefits. The bill's impact on American consumers, estimated at \$300--\$500 billion annually, rivals our nation's 2008 defense budget of \$479 billion. As written, passage of this measure would reduce real spending power per U.S. household by \$1,300 per year at a time when consumers are facing significant increases in gasoline and food costs, and a meltdown in the mortgage industry.

Federal legislation restricting carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions may be inevitable, but any measure affecting our ability to produce electricity must maintain a viable path for future coal use to protect consumers and to maintain domestic energy security. Coal continues to produce 50 percent of our nation's electricity and it remains an abundant, domestic resource that is relatively inexpensive. Any climate change legislation must provide adequate time to research, develop and deploy new technologies that allow us to use coal more efficiently, capture CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and protect our environment.

There are those who argue that we can meet

demand through efficiency and renewable energy. But, while your electric cooperatives already are diversifying our power supply to include wind, gas and waste heat, pursuing conservation and efficiency programs, and even planning to build the first cooperative-owned wind farm in the nation, this will not be enough.

To avert an energy crisis, our federal government must exercise the same type of leadership that led Americans to the moon in the 1960s. Absent that leadership, and without a sound, reasonable plan,

**To avert an energy crisis, our federal government must exercise the same type of leadership that led Americans to the moon in the 1960s.**

government risks not only the reliability of our electric system, but literally the ability of millions of Americans to be able to pay their electric bill.

South Dakota's Congressional delegation is closely watching the progress of climate change legislation with an eye on potential adverse financial impacts various measures could have on the state's residents. Sens. Tim Johnson and John Thune, as well as Rep. Stephanie Herseth-Sandlin, generally agree that the answers to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reside in technological improvements and efficiencies that will require billions of dollars in research and development by both the public and private sectors.

Change takes time and commitment. And, South Dakota's electric cooperatives are willing to do their part.

# West Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-988)

## West Central Electric Board of Directors

### President

Charles (Dick) Oller, Vivian

### Vice President

Charles Kroetch, Philip

### Secretary/Treasurer

Mike McQuiston, Fort Pierre

### Directors

David J. Mertens, Kennebec

Jim Willert, Belvidere

Shad Riggle, Hayes

David Geisler, Murdo

Raymond Vik, Draper

Joseph Leutenegger, Kadoka

Joe Woitte, Midland

### Attorney

David Larson, Chamberlain

### CEO/Manager

Steve Reed, Murdo

**1-800-242-9232**  
**24-hour dispatching**



WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 17, Murdo, SD 57559. Periodicals Postage Paid at Murdo Post Office, Murdo, SD 57559 and at additional mailing offices. Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 per year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to West Central Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 17, Murdo, SD 57559; telephone (605) 669-2472; toll free 1-800-242-9232; fax (605) 669-2358; e-mail [wcec@wccenet.com](mailto:wcec@wccenet.com); Web site: <http://www.wccenet.com>

Design assistance by TDG Communications and SDREA.

## Co-op News

# Director Terms Expire

All nominating petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of the Cooperative, on or before the 20<sup>th</sup> day of July 2008, at the headquarters office of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., located in Murdo, SD for parties interested in becoming a member of West Central Electric's Board of Directors.

### Director term vacancies include:

#### **ZONE ONE**

LYMAN COUNTY  
RURAL DIRECTOR  
CHARLES OLLER

#### **ZONE TWO**

JONES COUNTY  
RURAL DIRECTOR  
DAVE GEISLER

#### **ZONE FOUR**

HAAKON COUNTY  
TOWN DIRECTOR  
JOSEPH WOITTE

#### **ZONE FIVE**

STANLEY COUNTY  
AT LARGE DIRECTOR  
MIKE MCQUISTION

West Central Electric's Board of Directors consists of 10 members representing five zones (one town and one rural director for each zone). All director positions are based on a three-year term. All nominating petitions shall be in such form as prescribed by the Board of Directors, but shall contain a declaration signed by the candidate, under oath, certifying to the membership that he/she possesses the necessary qualifications and is willing to serve as director. The petition shall be signed by not less than ten (10) members of the cooperative, each of whom shall be required to write their name, address and the date and time of signing. In the event that more than one nominating petition is filed in any one Zone, a Zone Meeting shall be held in each Zone for the purpose of selecting one candidate for director to represent the members located in such Zone as their official nominee. Each Zone Meeting shall be held in August. Notice of the Meeting shall be sent to all members living in the appropriate Zone by first class mail or in the West Central Electric Cooperative Connections publication, not less than 10 days before the meeting.

**West Central Electric**

**will be closed**

**Monday, May 26, 2008**

**in observance of Memorial Day**