



Kilowatt Korner

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Congratulations, Cowboys!

What an exciting month for Meeker sports! Congratulations to the Meeker wrestling team on an exceptional year. Your commitment to your team, your coaches and to your beloved sport was evident and your championship trophy was well earned. WREA is proud of your success, and we celebrate with you. Enjoy YOUR new title.

With an exciting weekend ahead for the MHS boys' basketball team and March Madness waiting in the wings, we can't help but think about how it takes an entire team to ensure success in more than just sports. Winning teams consist of varying abilities and it's calling on those skills in the right moment that makes a team a powerhouse on the court or on the mat. Skills, combined with strategy and consistency allows teams to "bring home the win".

In WREA's world, our success is very similar to that of our student athletes. WREA's team success is attributed to reliable power, generated by consistent sources, that can be put in the game any time they're needed. Having enough "always available" fuel sources like natural gas and coal helps us create a winning strategy and provides our cooperative with bench strength when it comes to meeting the needs of our consumers. Admittedly, it can sometimes feel like the refs are rooting for the opposing team- even in the utility world.

Just like a team needs different players for different situations, distribution co-ops like WREA recognize that our power grid requires multiple sources to keep the grid healthy, strong, and diverse. Relying solely on one player to win every game is not an effective strategy. Similarly, using a single fuel source for electric generation poses a significant risk to energy reliability. According to the Energy Information Administration, today's fuel mix is dependent upon natural gas and coal for over 60 percent of its electric generation. Nuclear power produces 18 percent and the combination of hydro, wind and solar produces 19 percent. Natural disasters, political agendas or unforeseen disruptions can instantly change how electric utilities play their game.

A varied energy mix also enhances grid flexibility by accommodating the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources like solar and wind. Think of solar power like a team's inconsistent three-point shooter. It's awesome when the sun is shining bright, but if it's nighttime or a cloudy day the other players- like wind, hydro, nuclear, natural gas and coal- can step up and keep our team scoring. Recognizing that a healthy mix of all energy sources can act as a safeguard, even in the face of unexpected challenges, is always in WREA's playbook.

Much like our exceptional MHS athletes, WREA continues to dig deep, collaborate and work as part of a team with our power provider, and other natural resource providers in our area to bring home the energy reliability and consumer efficiency "trophy". As valued players in the energy industry we know there is room for all methods of power generation and together, we can ensure we have the power we need- when we need it.