

Volunteers answer calls for help during storm

Members of the Community Emergency Response Team helped take the burden off the police over the weekend, answering 105 calls for help during the year-end storm.

Judy McKee, Sherman County emergency management assistant and team coordinator, said team members were put on standby before the storm because of the snow accumulations predicted by the National Weather Service.

The trained team members responded to 105 calls in town, and McKee said many came through Sherman County dispatch.

"Requests varied, and one was to deliver 15 electric heaters to Wheat Ridge Acres due to several residents without heat from the storm," McKee said. "When travel became extremely dangerous, requiring four-wheel drive vehicles, team members began transporting doctors, nurses, technicians and pharmacists to and from Goodland Regional Medical Center and the Good Samaritan Nursing Home.

McKee said the team transported 36 nurses to and from the hospital; eight X-ray technicians to and from the hospital; four doctors, three lab technicians; two pharmacists and a respiratory therapist. The team transported 37 Good Samaritan staff and four Wheat Ridge Acres

Snow buries High Plains

The National Weather Service office in Goodland reported snowfall depths in the three-day storm at the end of last year.

Total Snowfall Amounts (Dec. 29 - 31)	
Inches	Location
32	Sharon Springs
30	Wallace
30	Kit Carson, Colo.
25	Cheyenne Wells Colo.
24	Winona
24	Oberlin
20	Edson
19	Colby
18	Kanorado
18	Tribune
17.7	Goodland
17.5	Levant
17	Leoti

17	McDonald
17	Atwood
16	Benkelman, Neb.
15	St Francis
14.5	Mingo
13	McCook, Neb.
12	Burlington, Colo.
11	Russell Springs
10	Oakley
8	Hoxie
3	Norton

Jeremy Martin meteorologist at the weather service office in Goodland said Tuesday the snow was not a record depth for Goodland, but with the Christmas snowstorm it was the second snowiest December on record with 25 inches. The snowiest December was in 1924 with 29 inches total.



Dennis Malsom helped load 15 electric heaters into a four-wheel-drive pickup for delivery to Wheat Ridge Acres during the snow storm at the end of December. Photo by Judy McKee

nursing staff.

She said the team assisted with four medical non-emergency cases, and helped six stranded motorists. She said the volunteers worked a total of 112 hours.

"Rich Simon, public works director, and the city street crew did an excellent job plowing the snow off

streets and clearing the way for team members to continue their effort in community service."

Team members making calls included Lisa Malsom, Sherry Brandvik, Rick Breininger and McKee, she said.

"We appreciated the work the city guys did around the clock removing

the heavy snow," McKee said. "They just didn't give up and that says a lot about that crew and their department."

Other calls included helping stranded motorists and non-emergency medical assistance for city residents as well as travelers staying in motels.

"This winter snowstorm provided an opportunity to demonstrate what the Community Emer-

gency Response Team program can do," McKee said, "when government and medical agencies are under stress and in great demand to cover the county in a disaster or crisis event.

"This storm gave the team members an opportunity to introduce themselves and visit with people they didn't really know in our community. Everyone we came in contact with managed to have a smile

on their face even with the inconvenience of the snowfall amount. It was great."

The team is a nonprofit volunteer organization formed with money for a 20-hour training course from a state Homeland Security grant. Donations and fundraising help pay expenses. Anyone who would like more information or would like to become part of the team should call McKee at 890-5188.

Operating costs could hike electric bills by \$10

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News Home electric rates in Goodland will go up by about 10 percent on the February bills, but the monthly operating cost adjustment could push that much higher.

A rate change in January approved by the City Commission hikes the monthly residential meter charge from \$2 to \$3.75, or 87.5 percent, and the kilowatt-hour rate from 10.5 cents to 11.2 cents, a 6.7 percent increase.

The average residential customer uses around 650 kilowatt hours per month, city officials say.

Based on the average usage and the increase in the meter charge, the

new monthly bill would be \$76.55, up about 10 percent.

Electrical operating cost figures from July, September and October showed the operating cost adjustment would add an average of \$10.19 to the monthly bill, bringing it to \$86.74, a 13 percent hike on top of the rate increase. The commission approved the rate increase on Dec. 4, effective on Jan. 15.

The hike will be seen on the bills customers receive in February.

Beyond the base rate increase, there will be a monthly operating cost adjustment added to the bills when base cost exceeds \$110 per megawatt hour.

At the Dec. 18 city meeting, Rod

Blake gave the commissioners an example of what the operating cost adjustment could mean based on the figures from July, September and October.

He said the figures are based on the new rates as approved by the commissioners.

For July, power purchased from Sunflower Electric cost \$410,878, and the operating cost for the month were \$187,105.

The total monthly operating cost was \$657,715. Kilowatt hours billed for the month were \$534,634. The difference is \$123,080, and the operating cost adjustment for the month would be 2.53 cents per kilowatt hour.

Under the old fuel cost adjustment, the charge for July, based on 650 kilowatt hours, would have been 30 cents. The operating cost adjustment, based on 650 kilowatt hours would add \$16.46 to the monthly bill.

In September, the purchase power cost from Sunflower Electric was \$211,519, and the total monthly operating cost was \$378,459. The total kilowatt hours billed for the month were \$585,101. In this case, the operating cost adjustment was a minus (-\$206,642) and there would not have been any added cost to the monthly bill.

For October, Blake said, the operating costs were \$424,140, and

the kilowatt hours billed were \$354,268. The operating cost adjustment would have been 2.17 cents per kilowatt hour to cover the \$69,872 shortfall. This would have added \$14.10 to the average bill based on 650 kilowatt hours.

Mayor Rick Billinger asked if the new operational cost adjustment would cover everything associated with power system, including fuel.

"If we have a line down or problems in the plant, these are all included in the operation cost," Wayne Hill said. "The old ordinance said fuel cost, and if we are not running, we still have overhead.

"Our operating cost adjustment is the right thing to do," Billinger said. "It covers our deficiencies, but I think this takes care of that. That is why I like it."

City Commissioner John Garcia asked if there would be a line on the

monthly bill to show the cost adjustment.

Hill said it will be marked "CA" because the city can only use a two-letter code for each line.

Blake said the operating cost adjustment would cover any unforeseen expenses.

Mayor Billinger asked whether in the months when the operating cost adjustment is below the base cost, the customers would see a credit on their monthly bill.

Hill said when the operating costs are below the base cost, the customers will not see any cost adjustment on the bills. Bills can go up when costs are high, but customers won't ever get a credit when they are low.

"When the energy center comes in, this electric rate is way out of line," Billinger said.

"The energy center is not here yet," Hill replied.

Date approaches for filing for seats

The final day to file for a seat on the Goodland School Board is about two weeks away, with the deadline at noon on Tuesday, Jan. 23, at the office of the Sherman County clerk.

Four seats are up for election, now filled by board President Jane Philbrick, Fritz Doke, Andrew House and Marty Melia.

Candidates can pay a filing fee of \$5 or get a petition signed by 50 qualified voters in the district, said Janet Rumpel, Sherman County clerk and election officer. A candidate can withdraw until the filing deadline.

If more than eight candidates file for the seats, said Rumpel, a primary would be held Tuesday, Feb. 27. The top eight with the highest number of votes at the primary will be on the ballot for the regular school election on Tuesday, April 3.

Philbrick said Friday she intends to run for re-election. House and Melia said they had not decided yet. Doke could not be reached as he was busy with downed telephone lines.

Mary Ann Sneathen, deputy county clerk, said as of Monday, no one had filed.

Group to send Valentines

The Northwest Kansas Family Readiness Group plans to send Valentines to soldiers, marines and reserves from the area deployed or getting ready to deploy overseas.

Eighteen Kansas National Guardsmen from the 731st and 714th Maintenance Companies from Colby, Norton, Goodland and Russell are on the list.

The 714th has already been deployed to Iraq and the 731st is now in New Jersey readying to be deployed, said coordinator Lisa Varney.

"The theme for the effort is 'Love Your Soldier,'" Varney said.

She said the group hopes to get grade-school students to make valentines and is raising money to buy international phone cards.

Soldiers deployed overseas have to pay for Internet connections and phone calls, she said, adding that it

cost them \$7 per minute when her husband calls home collect.

Prepaid phone cards can save the families a lot of money, she said.

Varney said the group has collected \$500 so far. People can buy the phone cards and donate them or give money which will be used to buy cards.

Contact Varney at (785) 899-6939 or 414 W. 13th, Goodland; Melanie Fortin at (785) 460-2995, 315 W. Chickamauga Ave., Colby; or Phyllis Bliss at (785) 852-4570, 119 S. Front, Sharon Springs.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors.

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NEW LISTINGS

823

Cattletrail

Enjoy the Goodland sunsets from the bay window in your living room! This tri-level home has central heat and air, no paint siding, deck, privacy fenced yard, attached garage. Main level has nice living room, dining room and kitchen with appliances; the upper level offers 3 bedrooms and full bath; lowest level is office/den, laundry room and garage and backyard access. Please contact Donna Moore to view this home. \$85,500.



508 E. 11th

Nice starter home or investment property. This home has no-paint siding, central heat, double car attached garage, carport, living room, eat-in kitchen with appliances, three bedrooms, family room area and bath all on one level. There's a partial basement with a den and 3/4 bath. The living room will have new carpet and the bedrooms have hardwood floors! \$31,500. Please call Donna to take a look at this home today!



Here's just a few more of my listings for your considerations. Thanks, Donna Moore

1522 Caldwell	3 bedrooms, 2 baths
809 Eastridge	4 bedrooms, 2 baths
808 Eastridge	3 bedrooms, 1 3/4 baths
326 Sycamore	5 bedrooms, 3 1/4 baths
302 Spruce	4 bedrooms, 2 1/4 baths
307 W. 10	3 bedrooms, 1 1/4 baths
915 Arcade	4 bedrooms, 2 baths

Congratulations Debbie Overmiller and Joseph Murray for winning our \$100 Shopping Spree
785-899-2328 MLS 800-974-2426
1023 Main Street ~ Goodland, Ks



Terry Richardson | Donna Moore | Cynthia Butts
www.GoodlandHomestead.com
E-mails: Terry, Donna or Cynthia@goodlandhomestead.com