

# The Week TELE

FRIDAY,

75¢

Fort Laramie • Hawk Springs • Huntley • Jay Em • L



Picture by  
Blake Wisroth

## Saturday's Weather

High 83 Low 39  
See A8 for details

## Inside This Telegram

Depression  
screenings in  
town Oct. 7  
Page A2

Honoring those  
who served  
Page A3



Supporting  
community  
healthcare  
Page A5

Biz incubator takes  
new direction  
Page A6

# Rates not SO MEAN?

By John Miller

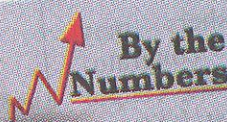
Staff Writer

Many Torrington residents are unhappy with the city's approval of electrical rate increases. But they can at least take some comfort in knowing their residential bills will still be lower than those sent to many people living

outside the city limits.

The Torrington City Council made a decision two years ago to contract with Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN), a subsidiary of NMPP Energy, for the city's electrical needs. As members

See RATES, page A6



## Comparing residential electrical rates

	Monthly charge	Kilowatts per hour rate	Total bill using 1000 kW <sub>r</sub>
MEAN 2010	\$10.50	\$0.09103*	\$101.53
MEAN 2011	\$13.00	\$0.09980*	\$112.80
Wyrulec 2010-11	\$26.00	\$0.1092	\$135.20

\*Using highest summer rate

# Quarter-cent tax on ballot

# Rates: Not so MEAN for residents?

From page A1

of MEAN, municipalities have a measure of control over electrical rates charged to residents.

According to Torrington Mayor Leroy Schafer, the decision was made at that time because the city stood to save more than \$1 million by switching from Wyrulec to MEAN. And though the current rate hikes may cut into those savings, Torrington electrical customers, on average, will still pay substantially less as a result of the switch.

Comparing total rates

between the two is almost like comparing apples to oranges as the companies have many differences in their rate structures and how they are presented. But after analyzing the most simplistic structure, residential power, the advantage overwhelmingly goes to MEAN.

Although Wyrulec hasn't raised rates in two years, and according to Wyrulec General Manager and Executive Vice-President Rollie Miller they won't go up next year either, the company's kilowatt per hour (kWh) rate will still be higher

for residential customers even after the second 9.8 percent MEAN rate increase in October 2011.

In addition, Wyrulec's basic charge per month is \$26 per customer, in addition to its flat \$0.1092 kWh rate. In comparison, MEAN's monthly customer charge will hike to \$10.50 Oct. 1, and \$13 the following year, still only half of Wyrulec's basic charge.

Much was made of MEAN's summer kWh rates being higher than its winter rates. But virtually all of MEAN's residential rates, even after the sec-

ond price hike in 2011, are lower than the Wyrulec flat rate. The closest they come is the 2011 summer rate of \$0.094 kWh. Through the winter, MEAN residential customers will pay no more than \$0.072 kWh.

The difference in rates between the two companies tightens up when power usage is stepped up to the small and large business categories. Small businesses through MEAN beginning October 1 will pay an \$18 customer charge with winter and summer kWh rates of \$0.0985 and \$0.1285,

respectively. Wyrulec charges a \$42 basic charge and a flat kWh rate that is the same as residential, \$0.1092.

Large businesses, such as Western Sugar Cooperative, Wyoming Ethanol and the Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution (WMCI), pay higher kWh rates for MEAN's services, while other charges are incomparable between the two. The consensus, however, between Miller, Schafer and MEAN representative Phillip Euler is MEAN's large business rates are higher than Wyrulec.

