

# Wind Power



*A message from General Manager/CEO Debra Cole*

Member-consumers may think that interconnecting a small wind system to the grid can be accomplished easily and cheaply. In some cases they may be right, but in others, the process may be significantly more complicated.

## **Safety Factors**

A small wind system can affect the safety and reliability of the distribution system and the quality of power received by neighboring consumers. The cooperative's technical interconnection rules are designed to address such effects on safety, reliability, and power quality.

The biggest safety issue is "backfeed." An improperly connected generator can "back-feed" electricity from a home to the transformer. This can be fatal for linemen working on power lines which are assumed to be de-energized. Linemen take great precautions to determine that the power lines are de-energized before they begin working on the lines, and the cooperative will take great precautions to insure all connected generation meets the required safety features to protect our linemen.

## **Cost Factors**

Interconnection will also entail costs for the consumer. These costs include equipment that must be installed on the consumer's side of the meter to protect the generator and the consumer's own electrical system; equipment that must be installed on the consumer's side of the meter to protect safety, reliability, and power quality on the grid; and possibly upgrades to the distribution system. Such upgrades may be required to address reversed power flows, increased short-circuit current, or even to provide three-phase service to the new generator.

HILCO Electric Cooperative will gladly work with our members to educate and assist with information on interconnecting a small wind system.