



Keeping the
Lights on in
Times of Crisis



April 22 is
Earth Day!



Board Election
Reminder!

APRIL 2021

ENERGYWISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
The power of human connections®



CONTACT INFORMATION

Nucla
170 W. 10th Ave.
P.O. Box 817
Nucla, CO 81424
(970) 864-7311
Toll Free: (877) 864-7311

Ridgway
720 N. Railroad St.
P.O. Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432
(970) 626-5549
Toll Free: (877) 864-7311

Both Offices Open:
M - TH, 7:00a.m. - 5:30p.m.

www.smpa.com
www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower

In the event of a power outage,
contact your local SMPA office to
reach our 24-hour dispatch.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

energywise@smpa.com
(970) 626-5549 x212

SAFETY TIPS

**POWER OUTAGES HAPPEN.
TAKE STEPS TO BE PREPARED:**

- Create a safety plan for all members of your family, including pets.
- Make sure sufficient supplies of medicines are available. Be prepared to be able to charge medical devices.
- Keep emergency numbers handy and retain a battery-powered radio.

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(866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Reflecting on Texas

The days, in February of 2021, when more than 4.5 million homes and businesses lost power in the State of Texas will be long remembered. The massive electricity generation failure caused shortages of water, food, and heat and caused an estimated \$195 billion in property damage. The catastrophe also caused prices of natural gas and electricity to reach record levels. These conditions persisted for several days. Regulators continue to investigate the reliability and energy cost issues across the country.

This crisis reminded us of the fragility of electrical infrastructure against the fury of nature. Here in Western Colorado, it's only natural to ask, "Could such a crisis impact us that way?"

How does SMPA's wholesale power provider, Tri-State, ensure resources are available and prepare for severe weather?

Reliability requires commitment and coordination. Careful preparation, anticipating any number of possible scenarios and responding quickly helps ensure that Tri-State and its members can keep the lights on.

Tri-State plans its resources with a reserve that helps ensure that it will be able to meet its member cooperatives' electricity needs. Tri-State also maintains operating reserves that can be brought on within 10 minutes, and works with other utilities in "reserve sharing groups" to help ensure loads can be met.

How did our power supplier and our region perform during the recent severe winter weather?

Tri-State was able to provide the power its members needed, while managing costs to protect its members from higher electricity bills.

Tri-State's initial analysis on the operational and financial impacts from the Feb. 13-17 winter storm, which has created financial difficulties for utility services providers in many parts of the U.S., show that the storm had an immaterial financial impact on Tri-State.

Operationally, Tri-State's diverse portfolio of resources and power contracts, and its vast transmission network, ensured that sufficient resources were available to fully serve its members' electric loads, even as member loads rose to a year-to-date peak on Feb 14.

What does SMPA do to ensure grid resiliency?

In 2020, the SMPA Board of Directors set a Strategic Objective to identify and prioritize reliability and resiliency risks and issues, with an initial focus on fire mitigation. Advancing this objective, SMPA has developed a comprehensive vegetation management plan that incorporates industry best practices and risk prioritization.

To help "harden" the local electric grid, SMPA has purchased new, environmentally-preferred sectionalizing equipment that boasts high marks for safety and reliability. As operations crews regularly complete system maintenance projects, these upgrades bolster the safety and reliability of our local grid, even during extreme weather or natural tribulations.



Reflecting on Texas Continued...

How should member-owners prepare for weather-related power outages?

It's important to be prepared and have an action plan for possible power outages, both for short- and long-term events. Some things to consider include:

- Stock up on supplies. This might also include filling up your vehicle with gasoline before a cold spell;
- Be prepared to store larger quantities of water and in some cases, be prepared to boil water.
- Never use heating equipment intended for outdoors, such as camping gear, to heat water or cook inside your home;
- Routinely check on backup power sources if available, such as gas generators, to make sure they can operate during an outage;
- Be prepared to move to an alternative location where power is not affected, as is available. This could be with family or friends, a local shelter, etc.

Analyze your Energy Usage

...with SMPA's SmartHub App

Increasing your building's energy efficiency begins with relevant data. SMPA is proud to offer relevant data to you, our member, through our SmartHub interface. SmartHub is a mobile or web-based application that allows you to see your usage, down to the hour. That's right; we said down to the HOUR!

Touch "Usage" on the bottom of your mobile app or click "My Usage" at the top of the SmartHub web app after logging in to your account. If you get stuck simply give us a call at (970)626-5549 Ext 206 and we will gladly offer assistance.



Board Election Reminders:

Petitions DUE April 26th

To those interested in running for a seat on our Board of Directors: Get your Petition Packet by emailing alex@smpa.com this month. Completed packets are DUE April 26.

Helpful Hint: Get more than the minimum 15 signatures and bring in your packet early, so we can verify them.

Make Voting Account Changes before April 26th

April 26 is the date of record for 2021. A list of primary (voting) accounts in District #5 & #7 will be generated on this day. Ballots will be mailed only to accounts on the list. Any changes made after April 26th will not be reflected in the 2021 Ballot Mailing. According to the SMPA Bylaws, changes to primary account status may be made every four years.

Ballot Addressing

Ballots are mailed to your member mailing address. This may differ from your billing address. Please call us to ensure your membership contact information is up-to-date.



Ridgway Secondary School presents an... **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION**

Join us outside... **April 22**
11:30 AM
1200 Green St., Ridgway

CELEBRATE

- Celebrate low-emissions travel at the Electric Vehicle Parade.
- Learn about SMPA Beneficial Electrification Rebates.
- See what your community is doing to protect the environment.
- Groove with the Earth Day music Mix.
- Make a commitment to living well while improving the environment.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging!

- 1. NOTIFY**
Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.
- 2. WAIT**
Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines. **2-3**
- 3. CONFIRM**
Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified. **WARNING**
- 4. RESPECT**
Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.
- 5. DIG CAREFULLY**
If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.

SMPA POWER PLAY

This Month's Puzzle: SHE PROVES U R ER GANG SIR

Hint: In these, multiple balancing authorities pool their contingency reserves to ensure loads can be met.

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWER and be entered into a drawing for a fun prize to:

EnergyWise PO Box 1150 Ridgway, CO 81432