

ENERGYWISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



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 • 7:00am – 5:30pm

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 x2120

NOVEMBER SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ Plug slow cookers, coffee makers, and toasters into different outlets.
- ✓ Make sure appliance cords stay clear of hot stovetops and pans.
- ✓ Before the holiday feast, test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

San Miguel Power Association is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call

(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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

FEATURE STORY

SMPA Supports the West End Family Link Center's Mission to Strengthen the Community

San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) is proud to support the West End Family Link Center (WEFLC), a vital community resource serving residents in the west end of Montrose and San Miguel Counties. Through donations and ongoing collaboration, SMPA helps WEFLC continue its mission of empowering individuals and families by providing essential services, education, and emergency assistance.

The West End Family Link Center works to ensure that no one in our rural communities goes without the support they need. Its programs address basic needs and long-term stability, offering low- to no-cost services such as referrals, case management, and education toward self-sufficiency.

One of WEFLC's most impactful programs is its **Food Pantry**, which provides access to nutritious food for those facing food insecurity. Through initiatives like the *Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Evergreen)* for seniors, *The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)* for households in crisis, and

BackPacks for Kids for students, WEFLC helps ensure that healthy meals are within reach for everyone—from young children to seniors. In Fiscal Year 2024, the organization served 684 individuals and provided more than 7,800 services throughout the year.

WEFLC also provides **Utility Assistance**, helping families maintain essential services like heat, electricity, and water—particularly during the high-cost winter months. Staff work closely with clients to access available resources and prevent shut-offs or service disruptions.

Beyond emergency aid, the center's **Family Resources & Development** programs empower families through parenting education, benefit application assistance, and referrals for housing, healthcare, and employment.

SMPA's support of the West End Family Link Center reflects the cooperative's commitment to improving quality of life in the communities it serves—because when neighbors support one another, everyone benefits.



SMPA Proposed Rate Increase

San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) is seeking comments from the consumer-members on a proposed increase to electric rates. This rate increase is necessary for the association to meet the projected 2026 operation expenses which includes a 7.2% increase in wholesale power costs. The proposal is available for view on www.smpa.com/rates.

The SMPA board of Directors will be taking action on this proposal at their November 18th meeting, which will be held virtually over the Zoom platform. Registration is available at www.smpa.com/board-meeting-agendas-and-minutes. Consumers are encouraged to attend this meeting, share opinions and help Board members make the most informed decision possible.

Members may also provide written comment by emailing rates@smpa.com.

Nucla-Norwood Tie-Line Completion Realizes Vision of Resiliency

Ensuring service reliability of the over 1,800 miles of power lines in the San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) power distribution grid requires equipment, timing, training, and long-term planning--in certain cases--very long-term planning.

“The first mention I could find of the Nucla-Norwood Tie-line project, was in December of 1997’s long-range plan,” said SMPA Chief Operating Officer, Jeremy Fox. Over the course of several following SMPA Work Plans (which typically last four years, each), different sections of the nearly 25-mile tie-line were identified, and the work was done. Section by section, this power line upgrade came to exist and last month, somewhere in the middle of Mailbox Canyon, it was completed.

The Nucla-Norwood Tie-Line project improves service to the Norwood area and the West End of Montrose County in two ways: Firstly, the new power lines are, themselves, better carriers of electricity. “We replaced all that older copper with steel-reinforced aluminum... it’s safer, it can hold the ampacity that we need, it’s more cost-effective and it holds up longer,” said Fox of the aluminum-core conductor.

Another critical characteristic of the new wire is its size. “The further the distance, the larger the conductor you need to move the power.” The new wire is larger and supports more electrical load at longer distances, which was necessary



to realize the project’s main benefit, enabling the Nucla Substation and the Norwood substation to serve as backup power for each other. “Now, in case of a failure at either the Norwood sub or the Nucla sub, the other will be able to pick up the majority of the stranded load.” This would have the effect of shortening a power outage for consumers, while allowing line crews to make substation repairs without the added pressure of knowing that many members were out of power.

When asked why the project took so long, Fox replied that there were several benefits of doing it this way. “Building a project like this in tranches and sections allows us to tackle challenges like equipment acquisition and permitting, a piece at a time, rather than all-at-once. This also has a cost-containment benefit, which softens

the impact on electric rates. “Ultimately, the line gets built, and we realize the benefits, but without a huge shock to the membership.”

With such a long-term project, it’s no surprise that there have been a fair number of contributors over the years. Broadly, SMPA has its own line crews, and those of recent contractor, Western Line Builders, Inc. to thank for the work. Members, as well, have contributed by working with SMPA on easements and by graciously enduring planned power outages as certain, but not all, work required the lines to be dead.

The completion of the Nucla-Norwood Tie-Line is a milestone that underscores SMPA’s commitment to power reliability and resiliency, and it’s a credit to the residents and workers of the region, who’s long-term vision helped us win the long game!



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Experience the convenience of securely automating your monthly bill.



www.smpa.com/content/smarthub-online-bill-pay

What do the Sharing Success Grants Mean to Local Communities?

Did you know that, last year, the Rico Trails Alliance (RTA) won a \$10,000 Sharing Success Grant from SMPA, Basin Electric and CoBank? The RTA is progressing through a 3-year strategic plan to attract volunteers and community engagement to bolster mountain bike tourism and foster economic growth.

Sharing Success Grants can mean anything else you might imagine that can bolster economic activity in your community!



**Tell us about your proposed project. Apply at www.smpa.com/content/sharing-success-economic-development-grants.
Deadline: November 13th, 2025**

SMPA POWER PLAY

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLE:
C I TOOK T POUND COINS
Hint: Hot Savings.

Last Month's Answer: NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWER
and be entered into a drawing for a fun prize to:
EnergyWise
PO Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432



SMPA Offices Closed for Thanksgiving
Our offices will be closed on November 26th and 27th. Basic account services available via SmartHub app.
Warm Thanksgiving Wishes from SMPA!