

ENERGY WISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

A Time of Transition for Your Electric Cooperative	1	Linemen Step Up	2
LED Rebates - Like free money!	1	In the News: Colowyo Mine Plan Approved	2
NRECA Youth Tour & CREA/CEEI Youth Camp.....	2	SMPA Holiday Card Coloring Contest.....	2

**OCTOBER
2015**



CONTACT INFORMATION

Nucla
170 W. 10th Ave.
P.O. Box 817
Nucla, CO 81424
(970) 864-7311
M - TH, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-877-864-7311

Ridgway
720 N. Railroad St.
P.O. Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432
(970) 626-5549
T - F, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-800-864-7256

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

In the event of a power outage, contact your local SMPA office. If it is after hours, you will be able to automatically transfer to our 24-hour dispatch.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Send your questions or suggestions for the editors of EnergyWise to:
energywise@smpa.com
(970) 626-5549 x212

SAFETY TIP

This Halloween, be sure to drive below the posted speed limit in residential areas during trick-or-treating hours. This will allow you time to break if you see a child dart in front of you.

San Miguel Power Association is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

NOTABLES: A Time of Transition for Your Electric Cooperative



Kevin Ritter
SMPA General Manager

A message from your General Manager, Kevin Ritter

Dear Members,

It is with mixed feelings that I announce my intention to retire as the General Manager of San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) at the end of the year. It has been my profound honor to serve in this capacity for about eight years and I will always appreciate having had the opportunity to do so. However, as I look on my family, my career and my life goals, I realize that now is the time to make this transition.

Although changes in leadership can be challenging, our cooperative is strong and resilient. As a cooperative, we have established our position as a service-oriented, progressive utility serving a vast and beautiful territory. Our membership is as varied as our landscape, but our cooperative is well-known to serve all members with the same dedication and commitment.

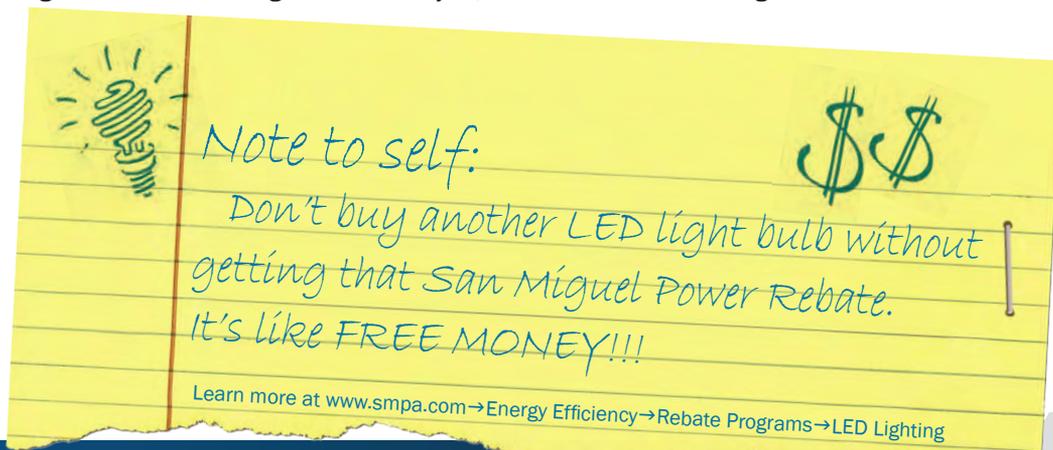
Many changes have come to the industry in the past decade. Increased attention to and regulation of traditional energy sources has brought changes to the generation side of things. Meanwhile, the material costs of some renewable energy sources have dipped, allowing some to generate their own power. With our net metering program, and renewable energy rebates, SMPA has done its best to offer flexibility to members who choose to utilize them.

Our distribution infrastructure was built in one of the most rugged places in the country. Our engineers and operations crews have had quite a time contending with wild weather conditions and the treacherous landscape. Not only have they managed to provide us with power through all the challenges, but they have been incrementally improving our power grid, making it more robust and adaptable as technology improves.

Our communities have also faced trials in recent years. The changing industry and economic conditions have tested community leaders and compelled some folks to leave the area, but others have risen to meet the challenge with new ideas and endeavors. As a cooperative, SMPA takes its responsibility as a community advocate seriously. The board and staff have worked hard not only to keep our community dollars here but to bring in external funds to support local efforts to bolster schools, businesses, and members in need.

I am proud of the work this cooperative has done to achieve its mission of demonstrating corporate responsibility and community service while providing our Members safe, reliable, cost effective and environmentally responsible electrical service.

It now falls to our board of directors to perform one of their most fundamental duties: to seek out and hire the next General Manager of this cooperative. The task will demand their experience, their patience, their wisdom and best judgment. Based upon my experience with them, I can say with confidence that they are up to the task. The members of this board, just like the community members they represent do not shrink from a challenge. They understand in full of the meaning of the word "cooperative." And they will not lose sight of their ultimate goal. To serve you, the members of San Miguel Power Association.



Hey Juniors, Apply Now!

Interested in learning about leadership? Check out these two fantastic opportunities!

NRECA YOUTH TOUR (JUNE 9 - 16)

This is your chance to spend an educational and fun week in our nation's capitol, learning about government, electric cooperatives and leadership.



CREA/CEEI YOUTH CAMP (JULY 17 - 22)

Sometimes the best way to learn about cooperatives is to form one. You'll do that, plus you'll meet new friends, go rafting, and experience northern Colorado in all its glory.



Submit one application for either or both events. Find Application at: www.smpa.com → Community Programs → Youth Programs
Deadline: December 11, 2016

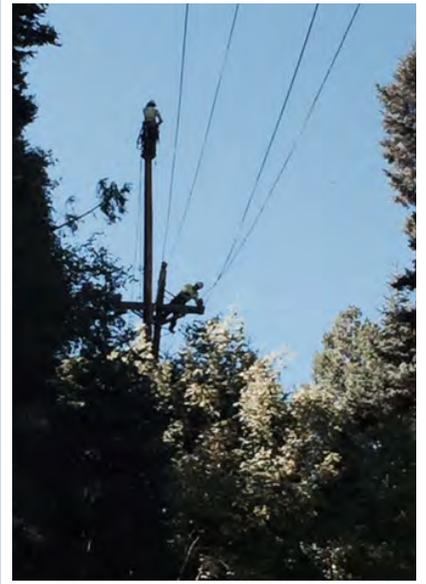
Linemen Step Up.

They wake before the sun, pour steaming cups of coffee, and kiss their family goodbye. After swinging by the office to get the day's orders, these men and women climb into their trucks and head out.

We often take power—and the men and women who provide it—for granted. Linemen have to work safely, smart, and efficiently—all while 40 feet in the air wearing sturdy, thick rubber gloves. On a typical day, lineworkers maintain electrical distribution lines or build service to new homes and businesses. They have a lot on their plates. But when our dispatch center calls crews with a problem, everything else takes a backseat.

Can you imagine getting a call at 3 a.m. telling you it's time to go to work? Not many people are willing to make that kind of sacrifice, but when there's a power outage in our territory, our lineworkers get out and get the job done, no matter what time of day it is.

Lineworkers also focus on safety; the lives of coworkers are on the line. Job safety is important to everyone, no matter your occupation. But for lineworkers, there can be no slip ups or careless actions. Mistakes can cost a limb or life. That's one of the reasons linemen



SMPA and contract crews repair power equipment on the Campbird mine route near the Revenue Mine.

form a brotherhood. When you put your life in the hands of co-workers every day, they become more than colleagues. They're family.

That sense of family extends to electric co-ops across the nation. One of our principles is cooperation among cooperatives. We help other co-ops in their time of need, and they extend that service to us, too. It's reassuring to know that if there's an emergency, a national team of lineworkers stand ready to answer the call.



IN THE NEWS

COLOWYO MINE PLAN APPROVED

The U.S. Department of the Interior has approved and signed a modified mine plan for Colowyo Mine, which was subject to a federal district court order requiring the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) to update its environmental review of the mine.

In addition to the new mining plan, on August 31, 2015, the OSM completed a new environmental assessment for the mine, resulting in a finding of no significant impact on the environment from mining operations.

"We are grateful to the staff at the Office of Surface Mining and the other cooperating agencies for their diligence and hard work to complete the environmental review within the short timeframe ordered by the judge," said Mike McInnes, chief executive officer of Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, which owns Colowyo Mine through its subsidiary, Colowyo Coal Company.

Located in northwest Colorado, the Colowyo Mine produces over two million tons of low sulfur, subbituminous coal annually and is

currently one of two primary fuel sources for the Craig Station power plant near Craig, Colo.

In February 2013, the Petitioner (WildEarth Guardians) sued the U.S. Office of Surface Mining in the Federal District Court claiming that the agency failed to adequately provide public notice and address environmental impacts prior to mine plan approvals for seven coal mines in the Western U.S., including Colowyo.

In May 2013, Judge R. Brooke Jackson ruled against OSM, but delayed vacating Colowyo's mining permit for 120 days to allow the OSM to address the deficiencies that he discussed in the order. During this time, Colowyo continued to operate. Colowyo Coal Company is appealing the decision.

Colowyo Coal Company believes the new mine plan allows the mine to continue to operate and the completion of the environmental assessment, finding of no significant impact and mine plan will satisfy the court, but it is uncertain how the court will proceed.

"The approval of the new plan should provide our employees and the [local] residents... with the confidence to move forward and focus on the future," said Chris McCourt, Colowyo Mine's manager.

It's Time!

...for the 2015 Holiday Card Coloring Contest!

Hey 4th and 5th graders! We need your help to design our 2015 holiday card. Send us a drawing of how your family uses electricity during the holidays, and you could WIN!

**Deadline: Monday,
November 30, 2015**

1st Place:
\$50 & artwork
featured on
SMPA's Holiday
Card!

2nd Place: \$35

3rd Place: \$20

