

ENERGY WISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



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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:
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SAFETY TIP

'Tis the season to be cautious. With all the snow and ice from the heavens, employees working outdoors are at a big risk of slipping and falling on the job. When working outside, wear shoes or boots with non-slip or non-skid soles and Always clear all walkways and entrance steps to buildings of ice and snow.

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: No Rate Increase in 2017!

Board to Restructure Rates to Promote Long-Term Vision

In a landscape of rising energy costs, the San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) Board of Directors has announced that it will not need to collect more revenue from its members in 2017. Earlier in 2016, SMPA received notice that its wholesale rates were going to go up. "That was no surprise," said SMPA General Manager and CEO, Brad Zaporski. "We knew we needed to look at our budget to see how much of the increase we could absorb before passing it on to our members."

Under Zaporski's direction, SMPA managers scrutinized the proposed 2017 budget to find ways to protect members from the wholesale increase. "We went through the budget line by line," said Zaporski. "We ultimately found that we could absorb the entire 4.2% increase without having to pass on any increase to the members."

But the discussion of rates also brought up another issue that has been on the minds of SMPA Board and staff members for a number of years.

Like most other co-ops, the San Miguel Power monthly bill is composed of two separate charges: The Access charge, which is a fixed amount that every member pays, regardless of their energy use, and an Energy Rate which is the price per kiloWatt-hour (kWh) of energy used.

A comparison of SMPA's access charge and energy rate to those of some of the neighboring co-ops reveals that SMPA's energy rate is one of the highest, while its access charge is extremely low. "That puts us in the position of having to sell a lot of energy in order to make our revenue requirements,"

said Zaporski. "It's a relatively risky position, from a business standpoint, and it creates a disincentive for us to help our members in their efforts to be energy-efficient. That runs counter to our mission and—really—everything we are as a cooperative."

Before the SMPA Board of Directors held their monthly meeting, in Ridgway on November 29, they listened to members at a formal Rate Hearing. Taking these and other comments into



SMPA Board President, Rube Felicelli congratulates CEO and General Manager for finding a way to cover the 4.2% wholesale rate increase without drawing more revenue from the SMPA members.

consideration, the Board adopted a new rate structure that re-balances the ratio of revenues collected from access charges and energy rates. This move will not only cover the increased costs of wholesale power and improve the financial stability of the cooperative, but it does so in a "revenue-neutral" way, thereby protecting the members from increased costs next year.

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A Bright Future for Dark Skies Silverton LED Street Lights Keep Light Where it Belongs...

Silverton Colorado is classically known as a hard rock mining community settled in the midst of the San Juan Mountains. As with any small town, Silverton has to manage with a relatively small tax base that depends on a seasonal economy.

Times are certainly turning around for the sleepy mountain community and the town administrators are working on quite a few projects to bring their residents more opportunities for work and sustainability for the town.

One big step in the last year was to convert all the old inefficient street lights over to LED. The town leveraged rebate money and labor contribution from SMPA to make a minimal investment in a long term energy saving project.

The town has approximately 90 lights throughout the streets and along the major intersections. Traditionally, these lights have been a mixture of obsolete style Mercury Vapor and High Pressure Sodium. In the spring of 2016, the town council and town administrator discussed the idea of replacing the old, inefficient

lights with the newer style LED. This discussion had been going on for the last year or so but the timing this year was optimal due to the rebate money and an offering from SMPA.

The town elected to move forward with a street light replacement project and discussions began with SMPA on the specific needs of the town.

“Of course the LEDs are going to save the town money on their electric bill,” said SMPA Key Accounts Executive, Paul Hora, “but they will further benefit the residents and visitors by producing less light pollution.”

For a tourism-driven economy like Silverton’s any possible draw for tourists will certainly enhance opportunities for economic development. “...so we selected a low-kelvin, full cut-off LED fixture.” continued Hora. “This will maximize visibility of the night sky and limit upward light trespass.”

This project paves the way for Silverton to become a recognized “Night Sky” friendly town which draws more people and makes the already beautiful night sky that much more exciting.



The SMPA Offices will be closed:
December 23 - December 26.

Automated services are available 24-7 at (970) 626-5549. Also, call the same number to report a power outage.

10 Ways to Save this Winter

1. Place throw blankets on the sofa and an area rug will help insulate the carpet.
2. Open south-facing window shades during the day to let in free heat from the sun.
3. Put ceiling fans on low speed and turning clockwise.
4. Only heat rooms you use. Close vents and doors to guest rooms and others.
5. Moist air holds heat better. Add moisture with a humidifier & house plants.
6. Turn down the thermostat 10 - 15° at night.
7. Apply foam weather stripping to doors and windows.
8. Keep furnace vents clean and unblocked.
9. Decorate with LED lights for the holidays. Save up to 75%
10. Exhaust fans pull heat out of your home. Only use them when necessary.

As the streets of Silverton go through this transition, you can still see some of the old high-pressure sodium lights next to the new LEDs. It's a rare opportunity to compare.

