



Skijoring putting
Ouray County on
the Map



SMPA Rate
Increases
Ahead



SMPA Youth
Scholarships are
Still Available!

DECEMBER 2019

ENERGYWISE



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
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YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



CONTACT INFORMATION

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

PREVENT A CHRISTMAS TREE FIRE

- Choose a fresh tree. Look for flexible needles and a trunk with sap.
- Top off the tree stand water at least every other day. Your tree will drink a lot more than your house plants.
- Don't choke the cord. Attach a maximum of three strings of lights to any one extension cord.

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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.

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

Three Heartbeats

OCRA's Recipe to make San Juan Skijoring the Best in the Nation

A SKIER, A RIDER AND A HORSE. PUT THEM TOGETHER ON A 800 - 1000 FOOT TRACK WITH BANK TURNS, GATES AND JUMPS (INCLUDING ONE OVER A STANDARD SIZED PICKUP TRUCK), AND YOU'VE GOT A SPECTACLE THAT CAN DRAW THOUSANDS!

Not sure what it's all about? Get yourself acquainted with the sport of skijoring. In this timed event, a rider and horse pull a skier through a series of jumps, tasks and turns to compete for prize money and other awards. It's a rapidly growing sport that has come to Ouray county in a big way, thanks to the Ouray County Rodeo Association (OCRA), San Miguel Power Association and to major donors like Tri-State Generation and Transmission and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

"After I got to experience it, I said, 'Wow, we ought to have it here in Ridgway every year,'" said Ouray County Commissioner, John Peters. "It brought a lot of new faces from all over the Western United States... It was very exciting and a big boost to our communities." According to event organizer, Richard Weber, last year's event drew over 3000 spectators, and 105 competing teams from six different states. One organized group of spectators hailed from Salt Lake City, and another ... from Australia.

"Restaurants, bars, hotels/motels gas stations, and retail shops are all seeing a huge benefit during that weekend," said Weber. "One restaurant, for example, processed 76 tickets on the Saturday night of the event, whereas they'd only processed 13 tickets the

previous Saturday. The owner stated that the weekend of San Juan Skijoring was, by far, the biggest weekend of the winter for his business."

You'd think that Weber and the OCRA would be satisfied. Not so. According to Weber, the goal is to be "the best skijoring race that there is." The idea may not be so far-fetched considering that Skijoring America Competitors rated it the #1 event in the west for the 2019 season. Next year, OCRA wants to include two Jumbotrons for instant replay and for local advertising opportunities, a 3-camera crew, switch boards and a live feed that may reach a viewership in the millions.

Of course, such an undertaking is not free. The OCRA has much work to do in soliciting donations. Thankfully, consumer-controlled cooperatives like San Miguel Power and power suppliers, Tri-State and Basin Electric recognize the opportunity. After Weber's petition to the SMPA Board of Directors, he was pleased to learn that \$10,000 was headed to OCRA's coffers in order to put on the 2020 event. "Without the support of co-ops like SMPA, Tri-State and Basin, we'd never be able to boost this event to the degree that we've been able to do," said Weber. "We're very grateful for that."



Please Note: As of October 2019, SMPA had exhausted the available funds for corporate donations. Therefore, we were not able to directly support the Skijoring event this year. We were pleased to request assistance from Tri-State and Basin Electric and were very grateful for their investments into our communities.

Starting in 2020, SMPA will, again offer direct donations and sponsorships to community programs and events that benefit our members. Thank you to all who have helped make the 2019 corporate donations program a success.

Proposed 2020 Access Fee Increase

San Miguel Power Association, Inc. (SMPA) proposes to increase its access fee. For most residential consumers, the increase will amount to approximately \$1 per month (or \$12 per year) above the current charge. The updated fee is proposed to take effect January 1, 2020. Consumers will make their first payments of the new fee in February, when January's electricity use is billed.

While consumers' variable electricity use is billed via a separate per kilowatt-hour (kWh) rate which is proposed to remain flat in 2020, SMPA's access fee is a fixed charge assessed regardless of how much energy a particular consumer may use, and it covers the costs of maintaining vital equipment and infrastructure.

SMPA strongly promotes energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. Recouping fixed costs with a fixed fee is better for the overall movement toward energy efficiency. Because the co-op is not having to rely on volatile energy sales, it is in a better position to promote efficiency and renewable energy.

In recent years, SMPA has been making significant system reliability and infrastructure improvements. The next reliability project, the Red Mountain Line Re-build will be the most expensive in SMPA's 80-year history, and an increase in fixed infrastructure cost recovery is recommended.

Before the SMPA Board of Directors votes on the proposal, they are seeking comments from the consumer-members of SMPA. A rate hearing was held before the SMPA Board Meeting in Nucla last month and another has been scheduled from 9 AM to 10 AM before the regular Board Meeting on December 18th, 2019 at the SMPA Office in Ridgway (720 N. Railroad St.) Consumers are encouraged to attend this meeting, to ask questions, share opinions and help Board members make the most informed decision possible.

Learn more at smpa.com/content/proposed-2020-rates

Member Question: Why are you giving out Member Dividends during a rate increase? Why not use the member capital to avoid the increase?

The distribution of member dividends is a foundation of the cooperative business model. It is the return of capital that was invested by members and allocated to them after the books were closed in a given year. For SMPA, this represents a debt—no less legitimate than any other bill that must be paid by the cooperative in conducting regular business. SMPA pays its debts.

On the other hand, the access charge increase represents SMPA's projection of what costs will be in the future—given present and predicted circumstances—and the Board of Directors' decision on how best to recoup those costs, moving forward.

Even if this year's total member dividend distribution were to be, somehow, applied to the upcoming financial burden of system improvements, maintenance and business costs. It could only be used to temporarily delay a bill increase. Given these facts, it makes more sense, simply to return the money to the member-consumers.

SMPA Proposed Rate Changes (Example Comparison Table)		
	Current Rates	Proposed Rates
General Service (Single Phase)		
Access Charge	\$20/Month	\$21/Month (+\$1)
Energy Charge	\$0.134725/kWh	(no change)
Gen. Service Demand (Single Phase)		
Access Charge	\$30/Month	\$31.50/Month (+\$1.50)
Energy Charge	\$0.065375/kWh	(no change)
Demand Charge	\$17/kW	(no change)
Three Phase		
Access Charge	\$40/Month	\$42/Month (+\$2)
Energy Charge	\$0.128346/kWh	(no change)
Three Phase Demand		
Access Charge	\$45/Month	\$47.25/Month (+\$2.25)
Energy Charge	\$0.070926/kWh	(no change)
Demand Charge	\$17/kW	(no change)

Other Changes / Major Highlights:

- No change to Outdoor Lighting rates.
- No change to kWh rates.
- No Demand Charge changes in any demand rate classes



Apply at:
www.smpa.com>>
 Community Programs
 >>Youth Programs

Deadline:
JANUARY 27, 2020



SMPA POWER PLAY

This Month's Puzzle: RE R SANG YET
 Hint: Since 1992, this program has helped save American families and businesses nearly 4 trillion kilowatt-hours of electricity and achieve over 3 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas reductions.

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

EnergyWise
PO Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432

SCAM ALERT!

If you get a call from someone threatening to turn off your power, hang up.
 View your account status at smpa.smarthub.coop