

# ENERGYWISE

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives  
The power of human connections®

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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

[www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com)  
[www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower](https://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](mailto:energywise@smpa.com)  
(970) 626-5549 x212

## SAFETY TIPS

### THANKSGIVING SAFETY TIPS:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stove top.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.
- Never leave children alone in room with a lit candle.

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.

Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, 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](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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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

## Spotlight on Solar

From your high school science class, you might remember the maxim, "All energy is solar energy." Organic life here on earth gathers light and radiation energy from the sun and converts it into pretty much everything else, from plants that feed animals to fossil fuels.

With this principle in mind, we thought it would be interesting to investigate the many options that you have, as a member of San Miguel Power Association, to directly harvest this abundant, renewable energy source.

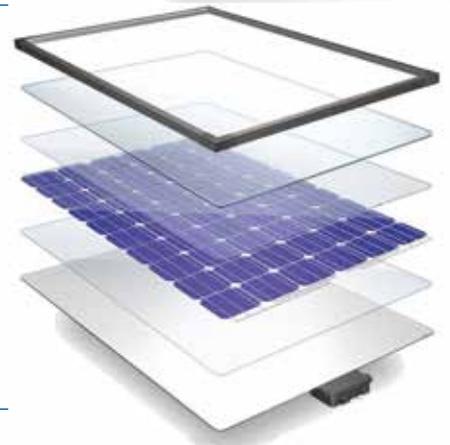
### SOLAR THERMAL COLLECTION

A solar thermal collector is any device that collects heat by absorbing sunlight. The most common use of this technology is commercial and residential solar hot water heaters. Solar water heaters come in a wide variety of designs. These appliances can result in substantial money savings for the owner over time. And they help the environment by lowering demand for electricity. See [www.smpa.com/content/renewable-rebates](http://www.smpa.com/content/renewable-rebates) for rebates on these.



### SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) GENERATION

Photovoltaics get their name from the process of converting light (photons) directly into electricity (voltage), which is called the photovoltaic effect. Many homeowners can realize savings on their energy bills by mounting these arrays on or near their homes and self-supplying electricity before tapping into the local utility. This is called "net metering." Not only does SMPA allow members to do this, but we also provide rebates to help make the economics even more attractive.



### COMMUNITY SOLAR

In cases where installing panels on site is impractical, Community Solar, in which the benefits of a single, offsite solar project flow to multiple customers, may be the best option. SMPA currently has three Community Solar arrays that provide electricity to the grid and savings to their subscribers. Each of these projects are fully-subscribed, however, SMPA is looking to build a fourth. The first hurdle is finding a site. If you know of 10 - 15 acres near three-phase power lines that can be leased at a low cost or no cost, for the installation of a Community Solar Array, please let us know at [energywise@smpa.com](mailto:energywise@smpa.com).



## No Rate Increase in 2022!

Here's good news for budget-conscious electric consumers: The SMPA Board of Directors approved the staff-recommended 2022 budget without a rate increase in 2022. For another year, SMPA members can rely on their access charge and energy rate to remain the same.

The Board has discussed raising the access charge in the future as a way to help mitigate risk for the cooperative but, since the Board determined that the time was not right, the move will have to wait.

# Red Mountain Recap

No one said it would be easy. In 2020, SMPA announced it would begin the Red Mountain Electrical Reliability and Broadband Improvement Project, which aimed to re-build the backup power line that serves Ouray County to improve electrical reliability and expand the local broadband network. The first stage of the project was the clearing of hazard trees from the right-of-way for fire mitigation.

Difficulties of the clearing project included rugged work zones, extremely limited access, limited resources, and unpredictable weather. However, the greatest challenge of all may have been the fact that Highway 550, the so-called "Million Dollar Highway" needed to be closed to do the work.

With little time to prepare communications, SMPA did not send information to the affected communities well ahead of schedule. Afterward, it became necessary for SMPA to postpone fire mitigation work three separate times in response to stakeholder outcry and political action and permitting issues.

This shrank the window of opportunity for work and, due to a late start, the clearing operation had to be stopped before it was finished.

For the sake of fire mitigation, this vegetation removal will pick up again in the spring. The highway will need to be closed again for that work to continue. The dates have not yet been scheduled.

This experience has caused SMPA to put a hold on the construction phase of the project, which will delay any work on redundant power or broadband expansion. However, the newly cleared right-of-way will improve fire mitigation in the region substantially.



Above Highway 550, a timber loader and a logging processor turn felled trees into lumber. Photo: Alex Shelley

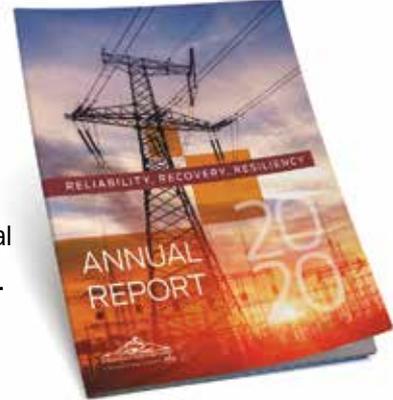


Tree removal by helicopter is the only practical method of vegetation clearing in the high mountain terrain. By law, wherever a helicopter bearing load will cross the highway, the road must be closed.

## Reliability, Recovery, Resiliency

### 2020 was a doozie. How did your electric cooperative fare?

Learn how SMPA's cooperative mission, and its strategic objectives combined to bring reliability, recovery and resiliency to the grid and the members it serves. Order your free copy of the Annual Report at [energywise@smpa.com](mailto:energywise@smpa.com) or view the online version at [www.smpa.com/content/reports](http://www.smpa.com/content/reports).



**2021 SHARING SUCCESS**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

To improve the financial stability of local businesses, expand entrepreneurial opportunities and bring revenue to our towns and counties, SMPA awards grants to selected applicants.

Qualifying projects should:

- Stimulate job creation
- Promote economic growth
- Create/improve local commerce

[www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com) » Community Programs » Sharing Success Grants

SAN MIGUEL POWER ASSOCIATION  
**COBANK**

## Congratulations to Last Year's Winners



Member organizations and businesses may apply for up to \$20,000 (rounded to the nearest \$500) depending on the costs of their initiatives. *Apply for a grant today: [smpa.com/content/sharing-success-economic-development-grants](http://smpa.com/content/sharing-success-economic-development-grants). Applications Due November 29<sup>th</sup>*

## 2022 Scholarships: Time to Apply!

### BASIN ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIP & RMEL ELECTRIC INDUSTRY SCHOLARSHIPS

- Deadline: January 31, 2022
- [www.smpa.com/content/scholarships](http://www.smpa.com/content/scholarships)

### SMPA COLLEGIATE & VOCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

- Deadline: March 14, 2022
- [www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=telluridescholarship](http://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=telluridescholarship)



# SMPA POWER PLAY

**This Month's Puzzle:**  
**AR ARM YOR SUN CITY LOAM**

**Hint:** When you can't build one on your roof.

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



**REMINDER:**  
**SMPA Offices will be closed**  
**November 22nd & 23rd**  
**We'll see you after**  
**Thanksgiving!**