

GUNNISON COUNTY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Powering Possibilities

JANUARY 2019



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LOOKING BOTH WAYS

BY MIKE MCBRIDE CEO

This past year was certainly one of success and progress. We had an unusually long construction season, which certainly made a difference, but the most important factor was the hard-working, dedicated employees who work at Gunnison County Electric Association. Like a small dog that thinks he's a big dog, we took on a lot — almost too much. Nevertheless, I am thrilled with all we accomplished.

First and foremost, we got through 2018 without a rate increase. We also completed the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program inspection with outstanding results.

With respect to our environmental efforts, we completed an expansion of our community solar garden in Crested Butte. We drew on grant funding to install three new electric vehicle charging stations in the valley. We saw a 27 percent increase in member participation in the voluntary Green Power Program. We secured approval from our power supplier for the construction of two 0.5-megawatt solar arrays. We also acquired a second electric vehicle to loan to members and provided more than 60 members with a weeklong EV experience.

On the construction front, we completed two large projects in addition to the normal workload. A 4-mile rebuild of a three-phase line east of Gunnison was completed for improved reliability. We also completed a 7.8-mile line extension to serve critical communication infrastructure on Hill 71 in the Lake City area.

I could go on, but I better leave some room to talk about what we can expect in 2019.

While a small, 2 percent retail rate increase is needed, the board once again decided to implement the rate increase on May 1 to



MIKE MCBRIDE

make it easier on members by waiting until the higher winter bills have passed.

On a brighter note, we are rolling out an option this month for members who want to cash out their accumulated equity in GCEA early. Watch for details.

One of two solar projects is on track for completion later this year. We are still looking for a suitable site for the second array, but our goal is to complete that as well.

In addition, we hope to start permitting and designing work on a small hydropower project at Taylor Dam.

We will apply for grant funding again and hope to add another three electric vehicle charging stations. We will also be working with Sandia National Labs to study the viability of a grid-scale battery and plan to install a consumer-scale battery at our headquarters as a pilot project to ascertain the potential benefit to GCEA.

2018 was a busy year for GCEA and we will continue to power possibilities for our members in 2019. We have many new projects on the horizon we cannot wait to share with you.

Employee Anniversaries

Marcia Wireman, chief financial officer

23 years

Bruce Stephens, staff engineer

7 years

Logan Rhodes, Lake City lineman

5 years

Go Green in 2019

ENERGY AUDITS

Make a New Year's resolution to be more energy efficient! Sign up for a free energy audit today!

GCEA offers free energy audits to residential and small commercial members. GCEA can help you identify how much energy your appliances, electronics and lighting use and how they contribute to your electric bill. Call Alantha, energy use specialist, at 970-641-3520 today.

PAPERLESS BILLING

Paperless billing is a win-win situation for everyone. It's easy and convenient for you, saves your co-op money and helps the environment by reducing paper waste. Members who are not already participating in paperless billing and sign up during 2019 will be entered into our paperless billing contest.



Visit <https://gcea.smarthub.coop>. If you do not already have a user name and password, you will need to create one. Once you are logged in, click on "My Profile," then "Update My Printed Bill Settings" and select "Turn Off Printed Bill Status." If you have any questions, please call GCEA at 970-641-3520.

Each fiscal quarter, GCEA will hold a drawing for members signing up for paperless billing for the first time during that quarter. Two lucky winners will each receive a \$50 Visa gift card.

GREEN POWER CLUB

GCEA is powering possibilities with green choices. Did you know that 30 percent of your green power comes from renewable resources supplied by Tri-State Generation and Transmission?

Join one of the following green power club choices.

GREEN POWER PLUS — 130% OFFSET OPTION

100% OFFSET + 30% FROM TRI-STATE = 130% OFFSET OPTION

GREEN 100 — 100% OFFSET OPTION

70% OFFSET + 30% FROM TRI-STATE = 100% OFFSET OPTION

25 PERCENT OF WHAT YOU PAY FOR GREEN POWER WILL GO INTO A LOCAL RENEWABLE FUND TO HELP FINANCE FUTURE LOCAL RENEWABLE PROJECTS.



▲ Almont charging station



▲ Elk Creek marina charging station



▲ Crested Butte charging station



▲ GCEA headquarters charging station

3 New EV Charging Stations Ready to Charge

To continue the growth of EV and EV infrastructure, GCEA added three new level II (240 volt) electric vehicle charging stations to the area and upgraded a fourth station with help from the Charge Ahead Colorado grant. The stations are strategically located to enable greater use by existing EV owners and to encourage EV adoption by other drivers. The National Park Service provided a site at the Elk Creek Marina, which will reduce the gap between Montrose and Gunnison. Almont Resort offered space in its back parking lot. The town of Crested Butte provided two more parking stalls to accommodate growing demand, this time in the parking lot at First Street and Elk Avenue. Lastly, GCEA upgraded its public headquarters station.

Jeff: Moving Departments

After working in the member services and billing department for seven years, Jeff Stanley moved to the operations department. He will be the new advanced metering infrastructure and meter tech, replacing Vic Dean. Jeff is excited to learn the operations side of the company and expand his knowledge.



"I am looking forward to troubleshooting meter issues and getting out in the field more often," Jeff said. Congrats on your new adventure at GCEA.

2019 Rebate Information

RESIDENTIAL AND SMALL COMMERCIAL LED LIGHTING REBATES

This program is terminating on December 31, 2019, at 3 p.m. All submissions must be received before the deadline.

Gunnison County Electric Association and Tri-State Generation and Transmission offer rebates for LED lightbulbs and fixtures with LED lighting built in for residential and small commercial use within our service area. GCEA members are eligible to receive a rebate of 50 percent of the LED cost up to a maximum of \$8 per bulb or fixture (not including any shipping or taxes). LED bulbs must be 500 lumens or greater. Qualified applicants must apply for rebates for a maximum of 50 bulbs and/or fixtures per member account each year for installation within GCEA's service area until December 31, 2019 at 3 p.m.

COMMERCIAL LED LIGHTING REBATES

Gunnison County Electric Association and Tri-State Generation and Transmission offer incentives for member businesses to retrofit existing lighting systems with energy-efficient LED systems and for installing LED lighting in new construction. Rebates are available for LED fixtures within buildings and parking garages, exterior pole mounted lighting, exterior wall mounted lighting and refrigerated case lighting. The following programs have different rebate amounts and requirements and are based on preset amounts by LED fixture types, with caps on rebate amounts. One project is allowed per member-owner account per year. Contact GCEA for more information.

- Commercial LED lighting retrofit rebate
- New construction LED lighting rebate
- Pole mounted LED lighting rebate
- Refrigerated case LED lighting rebate

Visit www.gcea.coop and click on Energy Efficiency or call 970-641-3520 for information.

Last Call for Scholarships

Do you need financial assistance to help further your education after high school? Each year college gets harder and harder to pay for, but GCEA is here to help students pursue their dreams of furthering their education. Last year, 89 students received scholarships. Applications are available at the Gunnison and Crested Butte offices, all three local high schools and online at www.gcea.coop.

Returning college applicants must fill out and send in the returning student application form with current college transcripts. **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2019, BY 4:30 P.M.**

GCEA ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATE PROGRAM

GCEA partners with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association to offer the following energy efficiency rebates to our members. Members may receive rebates for any of the energy efficiency measures listed in the table below.

System or Appliance and Specifications	Rebate Amount
LED Lightbulbs and Fixtures With LED Lighting Built In PROGRAM ENDING 12/31/19 at 3 p.m. Multi LED light sources like rope-light, LED troffers or under-counter lighting will be considered as a single fixture LEDs must be 500 lumens or greater Maximum of 50 bulbs per member account per year	50% of the cost of the bulb or fixture up to a maximum of \$8 per bulb or fixture
Refrigerators or Freezers (full sized) Mandatory recycling of old appliance required Limit of two refrigerator or freezer recycles per member per year	\$110 for new Energy Star® rated appliance and recycling of old appliance
Clothes Washers	\$60 for new Energy Star® rated front load \$50 for new Energy Star® rated top load
Electric Clothes Dryers	\$30 for new Energy Star® appliance \$90 for new hybrid heat pump appliance (ventless)
Dishwashers	\$35 for new Energy Star® rated appliance
Electric Water Heaters 30- to 55- gallon only	\$50 per unit Additional \$20 per unit for lifetime tank warranty (e.g., Marathon) No incentive will be paid for a unit serving as a backup for another source such as solar water heating
Air Source Heat Pump Water Heater 30-gallon minimum Energy Star® rated residential unit or any commercial installation	\$370 per unit for primary heating by direct exchange with semi-conditioned room air No incentive will be paid for a unit serving as a backup for another source such as solar water heating
Ground Source Heat Pump Water Heater Any size qualifies Energy Star® rated residential unit or any commercial installation	\$120 per unit for primary heating by direct exchange ground source or heat pump waste heat Additional \$25 per unit for lifetime tank warranty (e.g., Marathon) No incentive will be paid for a unit serving as a backup for another source such as solar water heating
Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) and Thermal Slab Permanently installed units only Minimum qualifying load for ETS is 1 kW	\$22 per kW for ETS controlled by timer or master control system \$18 per kW for slabs controlled by timer or master control system

All rebates above must be requested within 120 days of installation.

* Exceptions to this rule include refrigerators installed in new building construction or when a home or business is purchased and a refrigerator was not present; in this case, the rebate does not include an additional recycling rebate and maximum rebate amount is \$50.

Qualifying Energy Star® equipment can be found at www.energystar.gov.

Alliy's EV Journal

BY ALLIY SAHAGUN
MEMBER RELATIONS SUPERVISOR

Thursday, October 11, 2018

Today's travels took me up to the Crested Butte office to pick up the Nissan LEAF and bring it back down to Gunnison for a member to borrow. I was a little nervous driving around in the snow, not knowing how the EV would handle, but it took me where I needed to go without any issues. It got me thinking about whether there are any differences in winter care between EVs and vehicles with combustion engines and if EVs need special treatment in the winter. Come to find out, they do. Here are some tips and tricks to prolong your EV battery in the winter, while staying comfortable during your drive.

1. PRECONDITION YOUR BATTERY

This is the single most recommended thing you should do. If your car offers the option of setting a time to depart and warming up the battery while it's still plugged in (and most of them do), use it.

Remember, a cold battery is not nearly as efficient as a warm one. Some models even go the extra step and warm up the cabin while plugged in as well.

By not using battery energy, this can increase your initial range in cold weather by 15 percent to 20 percent. It's well worth it.

2. USE THE ECO MODE SETTING

Like preconditioning, this is a must for winter driving. Most electric cars have an "eco" or lower energy-usage drive setting.

The eco mode may make your car feel slower, but it is there for a reason: It boosts range by making your electric car operate more efficiently.

Eco mode also reduces the power output of the electric motor, which can help traction in snow and ice, just like starting out in third gear in a conventional car.



3. BUNDLE UP

Another effective form of range enhancement is to bundle up: Keep your coat on, and wear a hat, scarf and gloves.

Yes, this is different from the warm cabin you can have within a few minutes in a gasoline car.

That comes from a small portion of the 75 percent of the gasoline energy that's wasted in heat and noise by a combustion engine that operates at just 25 percent efficiency.

In other words, its enormous waste of energy is keeping you warm.

Don't worry if you think you look like a dork; the real dork is the guy stranded on the side of the road because he ran out of juice.

4. USE SEAT HEATERS AND STEERING WHEEL HEATERS

Just use them; they don't use that much juice.

It turns out, based on a couple of studies, passengers whose backs and backsides are warm feel like the car is much warmer than it actually is.

The same applies to warm fingers if you have a steering wheel heater as well.

5. STAY AT 65 MPH OR LESS

Any car uses more energy at highway speeds because aerodynamic drag increases exponentially with speed. Above 30 or 35 mph, it uses more energy to push the wind aside than it does to move 2 tons of metal.

In freezing temperatures, EV batteries are less efficient, so they have to work harder to maintain highway speeds: It is a range suck.

Your car also ingests cold air and passes it over your battery at a much faster rate.

Keep your speed under 65 mph, and when you can, avoid the highway altogether.



Similarly, chill out (no pun intended,) when driving.

Think twice about passing the car in front of you or beating that other guy off the line. Electric cars are exceptionally good for that, of course.

It might be fun but you just cost yourself range and it's worse because your battery must work harder in the cold.

Stay with the flow of traffic. Look ahead to see if you need to gradually accelerate for an incline. Keep your momentum and watch your power usage gauge.

To finish reading this excerpt from Alliy's EV journal, please visit our blog at Making Sparks: GCEA'S EV blog.

Night of Lights

The GCEA Santa's Renewable Workshop float took home the top honor for the 2018 Gunnison Night of Lights. The theme for the event was *It's a Wonderful Gunnison Life*. Thanks to all the hard work from GCEA employees!



Logann Long and Alliy Sahagun represent GCEA at the 2018 Gunnison Night of Lights.



The GCEA Santa's Renewable Workshop float.