

# YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2019



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**Yampa Valley Electric Association** is a cooperative that provides value to its consumer-members by delivering safe and reliable electric service in an environmentally and financially responsible manner.

YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

COLORADOCOUNTRYLIFE.COOP

## UNDERSTANDING THE WHY OF YVEA

### Part 6: The Role of Safety and Training at YVEA

BY STEVE JOHNSON GENERAL MANAGER



STEVE JOHNSON

Safe, reliable and affordable electricity is essential to you, our members, and your way of life. Whether it be for our homes, businesses, industries, schools, hospitals, ski lifts or streetlights, electricity powers many aspects of our lives.

To bring that electricity to you, Yampa Valley Electric Association employs more than 70 people in different roles to service a territory of more than 7,000 square miles that includes more than 27,000 meters, 2,900 miles of energized line and 24 substations.

Whether working through the night, in the snow or in the heat of a summer day, our crews are on call to build back, as quickly and as safely as possible, what nature disrupts. Whether working on poles or towers, in trenches or near roadways or water, the risks are extreme. Even when there is no system crisis, our YVEA lineworkers toil under hazardous conditions daily. That is why so many hours are invested annually in employee safety training and best practices.

In addition to hundreds of hours of safety training and discussion here at YVEA facilities, we regularly send our crew members to the Mesa Hotline School in Grand Junction where they join with lineworkers from other Colorado electric co-ops and electric utilities from other states for classroom training focused on electric transformers, rigging techniques, troubleshooting problems with overhead

and underground lines, accident investigation, job briefings, chainsaw safety, critical thinking and how to stay safe while working with energized lines. That is followed by extensive outdoor training sessions, all to ensure that our crews are trained to work as safely as possible.

In addition to the comprehensive safety training for our field crews, we also provide regular safety culture training and updates to our office staff working in both of our offices. We focus on safety, as a company, because the culture of safety that we create as a company extends beyond our normal workdays and overlaps with our lives outside of work 24 hours per day, seven days per week and 365 days per year.

Through regular training and safety updates at our monthly meetings, YVEA employees work hard to be “everyday safe.” This means being aware of their surroundings, identifying risks and making smart, safe choices every day. This emphasis and focus on a companywide “safety culture” led YVEA to completing 2018 without a single OSHA recordable accident. I ask that you join us in being “everyday safe.”

We need your help in keeping our staff safe. Please use caution when driving near areas where our crews are working. If possible, move over to create a safer distance between your vehicle and the work area. Working together, we can power the valley while keeping our YVEA team safe.

## Small Change, BIG Difference: Baggs Volunteer Fire & Rescue



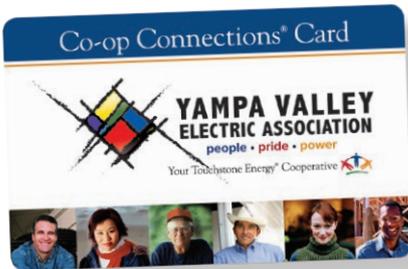
The brave members of the Baggs Fire & Rescue unit in Wyoming are being kept safe as they save lives and property because of their intensive training and new fire proof Fire Dex Wildlands jackets and pants donated by Yampa Valley Electric Association members through Operation Round Up.

The \$5,000 ORU donation helped purchase the badly needed turnout gear, including new fire boots. The gear has made a difference for these firefighters who regularly run towards fire danger so that residents are kept safe.

Thanks to participating YVEA members rounding up their bill, more than \$200,000 has been donated through Operation Round Up to organizations making a difference throughout the YVEA service territory. Be a difference maker for your community. Join Operation Round Up by visiting <https://www.yvea.com/operation-roundup>, email [OperationRoundUp@yvea.com](mailto:OperationRoundUp@yvea.com) or call 970-879-1160.

It's Here!

## Start Saving With Your Co-op Connections Card



YVEA is proud to offer members the free Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Co-op Connections program. Members should have received their cards in the April issue of *Colorado Country Life* magazine. The free program provides you with a simple card and phone app that you can present to partici-

pating businesses to help you save money and live healthier. The program also promotes local and national business discounts and other discounts on prescriptions, dental, vision and other medical services, as well as hotels, car rentals, cash back shopping, event tickets and more. Local businesses can join the program for free and have their businesses and discounts promoted for free, while members achieve significant savings year-round. Download the Co-op Connections app on your mobile device today!

**For more information, visit [yvea.com](http://yvea.com) or email [coopconnections@yvea.com](mailto:coopconnections@yvea.com).**

## YVEA Capital Credits Update

The yearly capital credit retirement process has been completed thanks to the board of directors authorizing the retirement of \$1.7 million in capital credit allocations from the year 2002. Anyone who was a member in 2002 will receive a capital credit retirement refund through several possible ways:

**ACTIVE MEMBERS** will receive a check in June if their retirement is over \$50. If their retirement is under \$50, active members will receive a credit on their electric bill. These credits started being applied to bills in the June billing cycles.

**INACTIVE MEMBERS** will receive a check once their accumulated capital credit refund reaches \$25.

If you have any questions, please call 970-871-2284 or email [capitalcredits@yvea.com](mailto:capitalcredits@yvea.com).

## YVEA 2019 Underground Construction Work

YVEA works year-round to keep the power flowing for you. YVEA's 2019 underground construction work plan includes replacing direct buried cable with new conduit and cable that is equipped for YVEA's fiber rollout.

**Work locations for 2019 include:**

- Riverside subdivision in Steamboat Springs (May/June 2019)
- Steamboat II subdivision west of Steamboat Springs (May/June 2019)
- Country Green subdivision south of Steamboat Springs (July 2019)
- Ski Ranches subdivision in Steamboat Springs (August 2019)
- Eagles Watch subdivision in Stagecoach (September 2019)

YVEA continued its injection project in May.

For the public's safety and the safety of our crews, we ask that you use caution near our work sites and whenever you see a YVEA or contracting crew working near the road. We want you, our crews and contractors to get home safely.

For more information about the YVEA 2019 construction plan and when YVEA will be in your area, please visit <https://www.yvea.com/current-construction> or follow YVEA on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



## Surge Protection Program

Protect your home electronics, appliances and other important property with YVEA's whole home, meter-based surge protection, which is warranted to protect your household's major appliances and electronic devices. This affordable protection is available for only \$5 a month and is added to your electric bill — a small price to pay to ensure you are protected.



For complete information on the surge protection program, visit our website at <https://www.yvea.com/surge-protection>, email [surge@yvea.com](mailto:surge@yvea.com) or call 970-871-2267.



### YVEA Wins Two Awards for Excellence in Newsletters

Yampa Valley Electric Association received first place in Division 3 for Best Explanation of an Industry Situation with the story in the December 2018 issue of

*Colorado Country Life* titled "Improving Quality of Service," and second place in Division 3 for Best Safety Article titled "Move Over for Roadside Crews" in the April 2018 issue of *Colorado Country Life*.

## Electrifying Education

Yampa Valley Electric Association performed an **electric safety demonstration for Moffat County fourth-graders** as part of the Moffat County Cattlewomen fourth-grade Ag Day field trip to the Moffat County Fairgrounds. Lineman journeymen James Lougee and Jake Hockett kept the students enthralled as they demonstrated what happens when small-scale models of tractors, kites, sailboats and people come in contact with power lines.



### Standby Generator Program

YVEA now offers a residential and commercial Standby Generator program to qualifying members. Under the new program, members can purchase an American-made Briggs & Stratton standby generator for 50% down, with the remaining 50% paid monthly as part of the member's monthly power bill from YVEA or obtain funding for up to 10 years through a Briggs & Stratton finance partner, a bank or other third-party financing. The generators are installed by YVEA. **For more information about participating in the program, email [generators@yvea.com](mailto:generators@yvea.com) or call 970-871-2267.**

### YVEA Wants to Advertise Your Business for FREE!

Business owners: Promote your business for free through our new YVEA Co-op Connections program. We do all the advertising for FREE; all we ask is that you provide a discount for our members. We will do the promoting to get our 25,000 members through your doors. We also have a mobile app that "geo locates" the discounts, so our members know the businesses to visit. To learn more, go to [www.yvea.com/coop-connections-program](http://www.yvea.com/coop-connections-program) to watch a short video. From there, you can sign up your business to participate or request more information. Sign up today and grow your business with the free help of YVEA and more than 20,000 of your fellow members.

## Energy Hero Tip of the Month:



**ENERGY HERO**  
FIGHT ENERGY WASTE

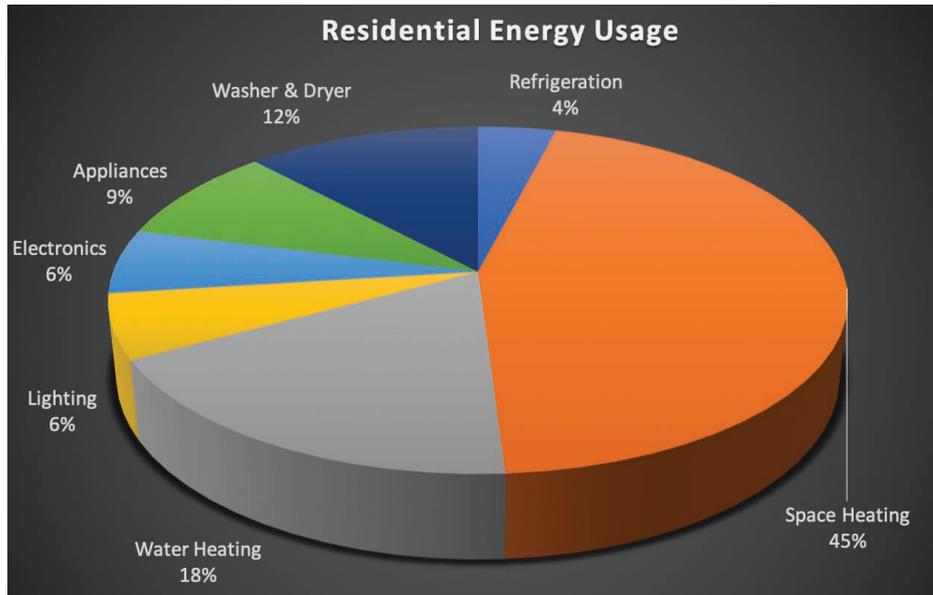
### ELECTRIC WATER HEATER kWh USAGE

An electric water heater uses approximately 14 kilowatt-hours per day.

- That equals 405 kWh per month
- This equates to approximately \$38 on your monthly electric bill.

Save energy and money by lowering your water heater thermostats to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.

Consider insulating your water heater tank, which could reduce standby heat losses by 25% to 45% and save you about 4% to 9% in water heating costs. You can find precut jackets or blankets from around \$20. *Source: energy.gov*



## FOR MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY & ANNUAL MEETING

Yampa Valley Electric Association's 2019 Annual Meeting will be held June 25 at Steamboat Springs High School. Registration will begin at 3 p.m., with the annual meeting to follow.

Prior to the annual meeting, YVEA will also celebrate Member Appreciation Day with food, prizes and informational booths on new and existing programs from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the high school. Join your fellow members and the staff of YVEA for a day of good food, great prizes and interesting information.



## Contractors Working Throughout YVEA Service Territory

YVEA contractors who are working in the service territory will be wearing clearly marked, high-visibility vests emblazoned with the YVEA logo and "Contractor" on the front and back. They will also be wearing high-visibility caps marked "Yampa Valley Electric Association Contractor" on the front.

## Clark Transmission Project

Yampa Valley Electric Association is clearing the transmission line right-of-way from State Highway 40 in Steamboat Springs to the Clark substation in Clark, for public safety and wildfire mitigation. The project is estimated to start June 1, 2019.

For more information and a map of the project, visit [www.yvea.com/clark-transmission-project](http://www.yvea.com/clark-transmission-project).