

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

BY TOM WALCH CEO

NRECA, a trade organization representing electric cooperatives across the nation, recently asked me and several other cooperative CEOs to identify the biggest challenge confronting our respective organizations in the next five years. At first I thought this would be an easy task, but when I considered some of the high-stakes challenges we face, it was hard to pick just one and call it our biggest. As I thought about it more, I was led to subtitle my response “Those 4 O’Clock in the Morning Thoughts that Make Sleep Hard to Find.” Some of these challenges will define our industry — and Grand Valley Power — for years to come.

One of the issues that keeps cooperatives leaders across the country up at night is the changing political and regulatory climate. Energy policy and legislation have always been important and impactful, but things are different lately. More and more, changes in the political climate seem to reflect a big divide between urban and rural interests. Spend a weekend in the traffic and smog of Denver, and you’ll understand why folks there might have different objectives than we have here on the Western Slope. While we have always looked at things a little differently than our big city neighbors, we have usually managed to find enough common ground to make our way.

This is becoming more difficult in recent years, because rapid population growth in metropolitan areas has expanded the political clout of urban interests. During the past legislative session lobbyists and legislators representing rural interests expressed frustration because they were frequently shut out of the process without adequate opportunity to provide input regarding critical legislative initiatives. Some of the measures

passed will impact our rural economy and threaten jobs, particularly in coal and natural gas production. Others could threaten the reliability of electric generation and lead to higher costs for Grand Valley Power consumers in the future.

There are no quick and easy fixes to the challenges the changing political landscape poses for rural Colorado. At Grand Valley Power, we recognize the importance of rural values for our consumers, and we will continue our efforts to promote balanced, workable solutions that preserve and protect the hometown fabric that makes life in the Grand Valley special.

For the full CEO article written by NRECA, visit gvp.org/news-center.

COMMENTS TO THE CEO

You are a member of a cooperative and your opinion does count. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please



TOM WALCH

let me know by writing to Ask the CEO, P.O. Box 190, Grand Junction, CO 81502, or send an email to me at twalch@gvp.org. Check out our website at gvp.org.

BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Grand Valley Power board meetings are open to the members, consumers and public. Regularly scheduled board meetings are held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the headquarters building located at 845 22 Road, Grand Junction, Colorado.

The monthly agenda is posted in the lobby of the headquarters building 10 days before each meeting, and posted on the GVP website. If anyone desires to address the board of directors, please let us know in advance and you will be placed on the agenda.

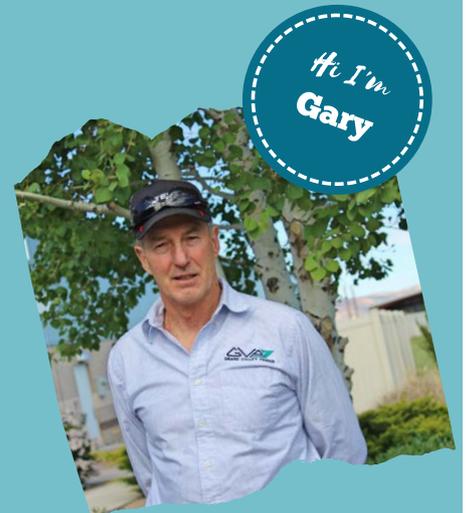
New Employee Spotlight

Meet Gary B.

SERVICE PLANNER

A little about Gary:

- I grew up in Minnesota, but have been in Colorado since the 70s.
- I have over 14 years of experience as an electrical service planner.
- Before I came to Grand Junction, I was working for Mountain Parks Electric another electric co-op in Colorado!
- My wife and two labs love what GJ has to offer! We enjoy fishing, camping, riding ATVs and boating.



Hi I'm
Gary



WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

BY CHRISTMAS WHARTON

Most of us lead busy lives. We find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email to keep up with the demands of modern life. Thanks to technology, we can accomplish many tasks electronically and remotely to be more efficient. And with so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time. Invitations to attend in-person meetings and gatherings are weighed carefully as we decide whether or not our time and effort to attend is beneficial. The answer to the question, “What’s in it for me?” must be compelling. You may think attending Grand Valley Power’s Annual Meeting would be easy to lump into the “no benefit to me” category. However, I’d like you to consider the following.

Grand Valley Power **exists** to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its members (that’s you!). Equally important

is its mission to empower lives with hometown service and to serve the long-term interests of local communities. This is where you can help.

As a member of the community, you have a perspective that is valuable — and we invite you to share it with the co-op. At the annual meeting, co-op leaders will discuss priorities and challenges, and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. One item under consideration includes future programs or processes that will bring great value to our members and employees. Do you have an opinion on that? We want for you to share it. We also have some new member benefits to share with you all, so look out for the annual report mid-July to get a sneak peek. The annual meeting is a night that’s packed with updates on what we’ve been doing as an organization in our communities and how

we’re impacting you. The annual meeting is also the time to vote for new board members who will represent you: the members of the co-op. It’s an important vote because they determine how we steer the ship each year. Board members are local members, just like you, so they understand and listen to each community.

Lastly, there are times when there is no substitute for in-person engagement. When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we improve the quality of life for all in our corner of the world. If you’ve never attended our annual meeting, or if it’s been awhile, please stop by. Our co-op family looks forward to visiting with you. We’ll have food, live entertainment and door prizes — all for free — so mark your calendar for the annual meeting on August 8, 2019, at the Colorado Mesa University Ballroom from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

Grand Valley Power presents

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Colorado Mesa University
August 8, 2019 | 5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

**RAFFLE PRIZES
FREE GIFTS
FREE DINNER
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**

**WATCH FOR YOUR RSVP CARD MID-JULY
IN THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

RMPBS
FUN FEST

Saturday, August 10

10AM to 1PM

Lincoln Park, Grand Junction
**IDEAL FOR KIDS FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH
SIXTH GRADE, RMPBS' KIDS FUN FEST IS
EDUCATIONAL, INSPIRING, ENGAGING...
AND SERIOUSLY FUN!**

more information available at:
rmpbs.org/gjfunfest

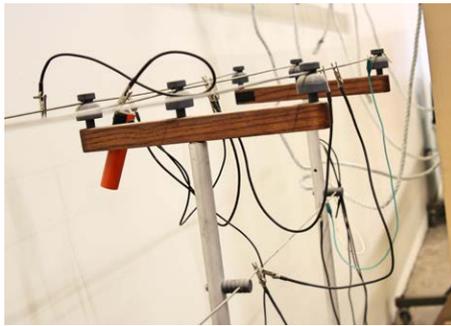
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Grand Valley Power
will be **CLOSED** July 4
in observance of
Independence Day.

Have a fun and safe holiday!

The Power of Your Future

BY DANA POGAR
COMMUNICATIONS INTERN



- ▶ Mesa Hotline students and instructors debrief and wrap up the day at the Western Colorado Community College training facility located at 29 Road and D ½ Road.
- ◀ The Mesa Hotline School includes indoor and outdoor training tools, like the electrical demonstration board pictured, that teaches students how to ground a line and simulates electrical safety for the lineman.
- ▶ Mesa Hotline students learn how to take a hoist off the power lines.



Not all superheroes wear capes but some wear climbing spikes. When the power goes out, who do you call? The answer is linemen. These hard-working men and women are passionate about their jobs and are dedicated to servicing their community.

Becoming a lineman is no easy task and takes years of education and experience to meet job requirements. Students must complete 65 semester hours to earn their Associate of Applied Science as an electrical lineworker. Once they complete their courses, students gain experience outside of the classroom and in the field, some at Mesa Hotline School.

Grand Junction is home to one of the most prestigious hotline programs in the West. Mesa Hotline School offers advanced training programs and certifications that provide students with the experience and education required to work in the field.

Western Colorado Community College and Colorado Mesa University have worked to build a state-of-the-art training facility for their lineman students located at 29

Road and D ½ Road. Students learn the basics of electricity and cover such topics as transformer connections and underground repair and installation.

The instructors at Mesa Hotline School include generations of current and former linemen who have decades of combined experience. The instructors are screened by a panel of committee experts to provide students with the most advanced education and techniques. Mesa Hotline School instructor and Grand Valley Power lineman Matt Mason says, “We work hard. We are here for our consumers and students and we all strive to keep the lights on.”

Grand Valley Power is a current member and supporter of the Mesa Hotline School along with several other electrical organizations. Many of our employees dedicate their time and knowledge to share their passion and educate students on their lineman experience.

Classes are held the first two weeks of May and participants travel from all over the United States including Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas,



We work hard. We are here for our consumers and students and we all strive to keep the lights on.”

— Matt Mason, Grand Valley Power Lineman

Nevada, Oregon, Washington, California and Alaska. Whether it’s your first day on the job or you have been a lineman for 30 years, Mesa Hotline School is designed to teach new techniques and educate students about the electrical field. All who are eager to learn about the ever-changing electrical industry are encouraged to register.

We want to recognize those who are continuing their education as linemen with Mesa Hotline School at WCCC, and we wish those students the best of luck with their careers. Thank you to all participants, instructors and supporters of the Mesa Hotline School. These students are the undercover heroes of our community who light the future.

Not Out of the Woods Yet: Wildfire Prep

BY CHRISTMAS WHARTON

More than 1 million acres of U.S. woodland burn every year. The majority of wildfires — about 85% — are started by humans.

In some cases, a lightning strike can start a wildfire. According to the U.S. National Park Service, lightning strikes the earth more than 100,000 times a day, and 10 to 20% of lightning strikes can result in a fire.

Grand Valley Power offers the following best practice safety tips from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Ready.gov and other local agencies:

PREPARING NOW

- Gather emergency supplies, including N95-rated respirator masks. These masks filter out particles in the air you breathe. Keep in mind the special needs of those in your household, including prescription medications. Don't forget the needs of pets.
- Sign up for Mesa County Emergency Alerts, our community's warning system. Visit <http://bit.ly/MesaCountyAlerts> to sign up today.
- Know your community's evacuation routes and scout several ways to leave your area. Drive the routes and become familiar with shelter locations. Have a plan for pets and livestock.
- Keep important documents in a fireproof safe.
- Review your insurance coverage to make sure it is adequate.
- Research and implement "defense zones" or defensible space to protect your home. Zone 1 is a 30-foot circle around your home that is free from leaves, debris and flammable materials.
- Trim branches that overhang the home, porch and deck, and prune branches of large trees (depending on their height) at least 6 feet from the ground.
- Use fire-resistant materials when building, repairing or renovating your home.
- Communicate your evacuation plan to friends, family and loved ones to prepare them in case of an emergency.

DURING A WILDFIRE

- If authorities say to do so, evacuate immediately.
- If trapped, call 911 and give your location.
- Listen to alerts for emergency information and instructions.
- Wear protective clothing and footwear to protect yourself from flying sparks and ashes.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE, PREPARE YOUR HOUSE

- Remove combustibles, including firewood, yard waste, barbecue grills and fuel cans, from your yard.
- Close all windows, vents and doors to prevent a draft.
- Shut off natural gas, propane or fuel oil supplies.
- Fill any large vessels — pools, hot tubs, garbage cans or tubs — with water to slow or discourage fire.

IF CAUGHT IN A WILDFIRE

- Don't try to outrun the blaze. Instead, look for a body of water, such as a pond or river, to crouch in.
- If there is no water nearby, find a depressed, cleared area with little vegetation, lie low to the ground and cover your body with wet clothing, a blanket or soil. Stay low and covered until the fire passes.
- Protect your lungs by breathing air closest to the ground through a moist cloth, if possible, to avoid inhaling smoke.

AFTER A FIRE

- Do not return home until after authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Use caution when entering a home or building and avoid all standing water, which may have an electrical charge.
- Check all utilities and electrical components. If you see damage outside your home (downed power lines or damaged power or gas lines), vacate the area and call 911 to have the utility dispatched.

For additional resources, visit gvp.org/safe-homes (also available in Spanish).

BE READY

WILDFIRE ZONE CHECKLIST

SIMPLE STEPS FROM ROOF TO FOUNDATION TO MAKE A HOME SAFER

- Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and pine needles that could catch embers.
- Reduce embers that could pass through vents in the eaves by installing 1/8 inch metal mesh screening.
- Create at least 30 feet of space between your home and any flammable materials - mulch, flammable plants, leaves, firewood piles- anything that can burn.
- Remove anything store underneath decks or porches.
- Make sure your address is visible from the street.



VISIT GVP.ORG/SAFE-HOMES FOR MORE WILDFIRE RESOURCES