

# EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

## *Echoes of the Empire*

FEBRUARY 2020



### MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box K  
Cortez, CO 81321-0676



### STREET ADDRESS

801 North Broadway  
Cortez, CO 81321



**ph** 970-565-4444  
**tf** 800-709-3726  
**fax** 970-564-4401  
**web** [www.eea.coop](http://www.eea.coop)



[facebook.com/EEACortez](https://facebook.com/EEACortez)

## PART OF THE FAMILY

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



ANDY CARTER

Family reunions can be interesting affairs where stories are told, old acquaintances are refreshed and new connections are made. Quite often, the family line is discussed, and it can be challenging to remember just how you are related to your great-uncle, Phil. Cooperatives and families share many similarities.

Empire Electric Association, Inc., is a member-owned cooperative that was formed over 80 years ago and is a small part of the worldwide cooperative family. Data compiled for the 2018 World Cooperative Monitor report states that the 3 million cooperatives in the world provide jobs or work opportunities for 10% of the world's employable population, and the 300 top cooperatives or cooperative groups generate \$2.1 trillion in income through trading goods and services (International Co-operative Alliance, 2020).

The cooperative business model is unique in that when you engage in the service offered by the cooperative, you become part of the family. Being "family" means that you have responsibilities as well as benefits when you are accepted into the membership.

Your obvious responsibility as a consumer-member is to pay the power bill when it arrives. Paying your bill is important, but an equally important responsibility of every consumer-member is to be an active participant. A hallmark of cooperatives is their democratic form of governance. You have the power of a vote as well as the opportunity to provide input into how EEA operates. Members can provide feedback via a phone call, a letter, an email or through social media. You can also stop by the office and talk personally with a co-op employee or attend EEA's monthly board meetings where we always set aside time for members to bring their concerns and suggestions to the co-op leadership.

EEA also has responsibilities that we take seriously. Our mission is to provide electric service to your home or business in a safe, reliable and responsible manner. Our employees take pride in "keeping the lights on" while making sure we all go home to our families when our tasks are completed. EEA takes time every day to make sure we are working in a safe manner and that we are being responsive to member requests. The high reliability you experience is a product of disciplined use of resources and attention to detail.

The benefits for an EEA consumer-member start with reliable electricity but go far beyond that. EEA is an active community member and supports a variety of activities through monetary donations



## Photo Contest Winner for February 2020



**Foggy Morning**  
by Sandra Bryan

and employee involvement. Every year, EEA awards scholarships to graduating high school seniors for a variety of education opportunities and also supports the continuing education efforts of adult consumer-members. EEA provides energy efficiency recommendations and supports efficient use through energy efficiency rebates. Consumer-members also benefit from their investment over time through capital credit payments. EEA has returned nearly \$29 million in capital credits since its formation in 1939.

I have been part of the EEA family for over 13 years as a consumer-member and have had the privilege of being an employee for the past three years. I have worked in many roles in the energy industry and working for a rural electric co-op has been my favorite because of the cooperative difference. It really does feel like I work with *and* for family. So, the next time you see a lineman in a bucket truck, smile and wave ... you're related!

**Scholarship applications are due February 17, 2020.**  
**Apply and upload your application on-line at [www.eea.coop](http://www.eea.coop)**



### Co-op Calendar

**February 2**

Groundhog Day

**February 14**

Valentine's Day

**February 14**

EEA's board meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at its headquarters in Cortez. The agenda is posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at [eea.coop](http://eea.coop). Consumer-members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the meeting.

**February 17**

Presidents Day

**February 17**

Scholarship applications due

## Youth and Adult Scholarship Program

Each year, Empire Electric offers scholarships for high school seniors who are dependents of a consumer-member of Empire Electric. Scholarships for \$1,000 are available for students who plan on attending a two-year community college or a four-year college or university program. Also, \$1,000 scholarships are available for students who plan to attend lineman school. Scholarships for \$500 are available for any student who will attend a vocational or technical school and will pursue an electrical trade or related field of study that requires less than two years to complete. Homeschooled seniors and Southwest Open High School seniors are encouraged to apply and will be considered with other applicants from the local high school they are affiliated with. Scholarships are also available to adults who are

furthering their education. Applicants must be EEA consumer-members, or a spouse or dependent of a consumer-member.

Scholarship applicants can apply online at [eea.coop](http://eea.coop) or applications can be picked up at EEA's headquarters located at 801 N. Broadway, Cortez. Separate applications are available for each type of scholarship. In addition, high school seniors can pick up a student scholarship application or a lineman or other related trade vocational or technical school scholarship application from their guidance counselor's office. Only complete applications will be considered for scholarships and scholarship applications must be received by **Monday, February 17, 2020**. For more information, contact Denise Moore at [denise.moore@eea.coop](mailto:denise.moore@eea.coop) or 970-564-4458. Utah residents may call 800-709-3726 ext. 458.



February 2020

### Energy Efficiency

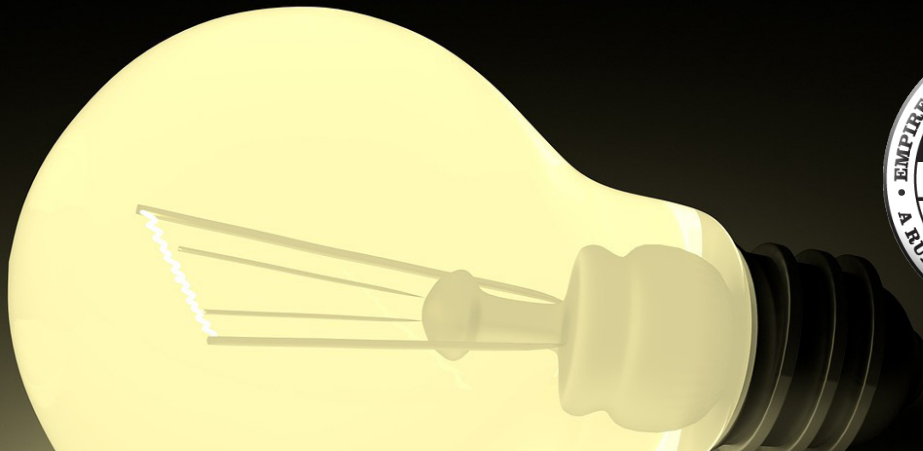
#### Tip of the Month

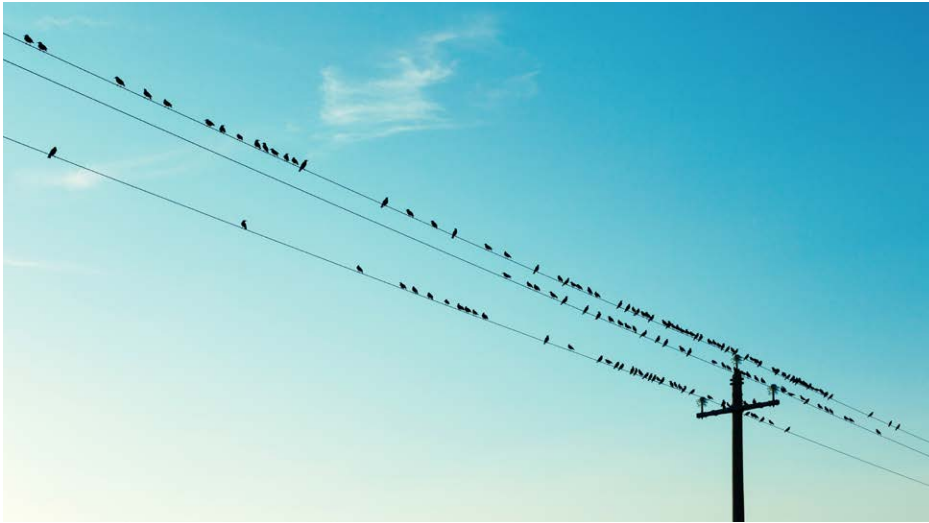
Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## By Popular Demand...

The LED Residential Rebate Program has been extended through 2020! Visit [www.eea.coop](http://www.eea.coop) for full details. Online applications are available!





## Wildlife Woes With Equipment

Besides being cute and fun to watch, animals can disrupt power. Although we do all we can to prevent animal interference by using equipment guards, antiroosting devices or other animal-friendly deterrents, sometimes our efforts are no match for persistent and curious critters who use overhead power lines as a superhighway or substations as a nesting ground. According to the Electrical Engineering Portal, the following classes of animals have caused shorts and subsequent power outages or service disruptions:

- Squirrels love to use power lines as their overhead highway. They are agile and crafty — oftentimes equipment guards and other deterrents cannot keep them away, much like a squirrel outsmarting a bird feeder. If they touch the power line and pole simultaneously, the electric current travels through them and their demise can cause problems with power transmission.
- Mice, rats and gophers sometimes cause interruptions in service by gnawing through underground cables. These offenders and others can also try to make a home in a

substation, which often does not turn out well for them and can cause a hiccup in power distribution for us.

- Birds of different species can cause different types of problems. Although small birds can sit on a wire without a problem, some larger varieties like to build nests at the tops of poles, on transmission towers and in substations. Nesting material can cause faults (abnormal electric currents), and bird droppings can contaminate insulators, according to EEP. Other times, large birds with long wing spans can touch a live power line with one wing tip and something else with the other and become a conductor for the voltage to pass through them. This is called “bridging.”
- Large animals like cattle, horses, bison and bears can cause damage to guy wires and poles. They can cause physical damage, creating an outage or making the system more prone to outages in the future. Feisty bears can climb wooden utility poles and contact live conductors.

**For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).**

## Do Your Part to Keep Lineworkers Safe

Imagine this scenario: It’s nearing 5 p.m. on a workday. Your boss wants that last-minute report and your kids need to be picked up from soccer practice or play rehearsal. You jump in your car and on the way you approach a work zone. You don’t have time to slow down so you rush through it and ignore the orange work zone signs.

Or this one: You’re having a garage sale and you think posting a sign on a utility pole won’t hurt. Everyone does it, right?

In reality, either of these scenarios could injure or kill one of our lineworkers.

The job of an electric lineworker is not easy. Lineworkers take great pride in providing safe and reliable service, but their job involves working on and around live power out in the elements.

We ask you to do your part to keep them safe:

- Slow down and move over in work zones. Cars or trucks that go too fast not only endanger workers on the ground, but driving too fast or not moving over can also put a lineworker who is working high up in a bucket in danger by causing it to move or sway.
- Do not post anything on a utility pole, especially with staples, nails or tacks. These can puncture insulated gloves or other protective clothing and expose workers to high voltages.
- Never plug a generator into an indoor or outdoor wall outlet. The power that backfeeds into the electric line could electrocute a utility worker.
- Please be patient when the power goes out. Workers need to efficiently and safely restore power.

We appreciate your help in keeping our employees safe. For questions about employee safety, contact us at Empire Electric Association at 970-565-4444.