

# YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2020



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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.

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

BY STEVE JOHNSON, GENERAL MANAGER & PRESIDENT

There's an old political saying: "If you're not at the table, you're on the menu." This adage is the perfect answer to the question, "why vote?" It's a blunt description of what happens when you don't engage in the political process.

If you don't vote, you're not only missing the opportunity to support a candidate that shares your views and concerns, you're allowing others to chart a course that impacts your future. That's why we're encouraging all Yampa Valley Electric Association members to recognize National Voter Registration Day on September 22, 2020. Whether you're registering yourself or others to vote, or helping members of our community get organized, there are many ways to get involved. This year, YVEA's Annual Meeting coincides with "National Voter Registration Day," which is especially appropriate as this is where we will be announcing the results of our annual director elections.

### Your vision, your vote

While local elections may not be as exciting as the high-profile presidential election, they are just as critical. Local elections have a direct impact on your community and your quality of life.

Like the national level, local elections represent who we are as a community and, more importantly, where we want to go. Whether it's an election for a mayor, sheriff, state representative, school board, or your local YVEA electric cooperative board member, your vision for the community in which you live is tied to your vote.

Voting keeps elected officials accountable. Elections are a direct and tangible source of feedback. For example, YVEA board members provide fiscal responsibility and strategic direction for the



STEVE JOHNSON

co-op and how it serves the membership and local communities. Local board members embody the voice and identity of the community. YVEA's directors are each elected for a three-year term by the members of the association. Each member of the association is entitled to a single vote in the election of all directors, excluding appointments. Members who have multiple meters are also entitled to one vote. Ballots were mailed on Friday, August 21, 2020. To be valid and counted, each ballot must be signed by the member whose name is on the label and the ballot must be received at the location of the third-party ballot counter by Thursday, September 17, 2020. Members may also vote in person at the YVEA annual meeting September 22, 2020, in Baggs, Wyoming, at the Valley Community Center. The results of the election will be announced at this annual meeting. (Based on State and County requirements for COVID-19, the meeting may be held virtually.)

### Staying in sync with the community

Ultimately, the role of the co-op board is fiscal oversight and governance. While day-to-day decisions are made by our employees, bigger decisions are made jointly by management and the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the members we serve. YVEA board members provide their perspective on community priorities, thereby enabling

## YOUR CO-OP NEWS

us to make more informed decisions on long-term strategies and investments.

We depend on you and your neighbors to vote so that we can stay on course, keep running smoothly, and ensure that we are in sync with the communities we serve.

A strong voter turnout shows investment in the community and ensures that a diverse number of views are represented. The whole

community benefits when more people participate in the process, because greater numbers reflect a consensus on the direction of the future and the will of the people.

By voting in national, state and local elections, you are serving as a role model for your family, friends and colleagues. The act of voting demonstrates your support for the community and helps officials chart a

course for the future.

Democracy is not a spectator sport. We encourage you to research candidates, learn about the issues that are on the ballot and get out and vote!

**To learn more about National Voter Registration Day or to get involved, visit [www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org](http://www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org).**

## It's Because We Care: Stay back and stay safe

Working with electricity can be a dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. In fact, *USA Today* lists power line repairers and installers among those having the most dangerous jobs in the United States. That's why for us at Yampa Valley Electric Association, safety is the number one priority. This is not empty talk. Over time, we created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, our consumer-members. Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but getting our employees home safely to their loved ones at the end of the day is equally important. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance — and your help.

### DISTRACTIONS CAN BE DEADLY

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety.

Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a lineworker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample

room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews — and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while lineworkers are on or near your property. While most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish between a burglar and a utility worker. Our crews work best without a pet "supervising" the job.

We recognize, for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property. You will recognize YVEA employees by their high-visibility shirt emblazoned with the YVEA logo, and the service trucks with our name and logo on them. You may also recognize our lineworkers because they live right here in our local community.

### SLOW DOWN AND MOVE OVER

In addition to giving lineworkers some space while they are near your property, please follow state law and move over and slow down when approaching a utility vehicle on the side of the road. This is an extra barrier of safety to help those who help all of us. There may be times where traffic is limited to one lane or the road is closed completely. Please help us out by finding an alternate route or waiting for us to complete our work. A little patience goes a long way for our employees who are trying to complete their task safely and get off the road to get you on your way.

Check our website for more information and a video interviewing utility workers who had close calls while working when drivers were distracted: [www.yvea.com/electrical-safety](http://www.yvea.com/electrical-safety).

✓ YVEA crews repair broken pole after car/pole incident on RCR 129.



# YVEA POLE TOP RESCUE TRAINING

Pole top and bucket rescue is an annual training requirement for all employees in the YVEA line department. This training simulates a coworker that has had either a medical emergency or made contact with energized lines.

The purpose of this training is to rescue the employee as safely and as quickly as possible. The maximum time they have for a rescue is 4 minutes. The reason behind this is to start CPR and first aid as quickly as possible to the injured employee.

Once someone receives an electrical shock and needs CPR, for every minute they are not cared for, their chance of survival drops approximately 10%.

The average time YVEA employees performed pole top and bucket rescue is approximately 2 minutes equating to approximately an 80% chance of survival. The goal is for this to be a tool in our tool belt and never have to use it because of safe work practices we perform day in and day out.



YVEA is a proud sponsor of the Moffat and Routt County fairs.

## Unclaimed Capital Credits

Yampa Valley Electric Association will be posting on September 25 in local newspapers a list of names from 2017 who have patronage capital refund checks that were either returned by the postal service as undeliverable or have remained uncashed for more than three years.

These refunds must be claimed within 30 days after the published notice. You may claim your refund by calling Yampa Valley Electric Association at 970-879-1160 or toll free at 888-873-9832, or by emailing [capitalcredits@yvea.com](mailto:capitalcredits@yvea.com). You will be asked to identify yourself, provide your current mailing address and telephone number and verify the years and/or location of your service with YVEA.

We strongly encourage you to contact us and update your information so that future funds may be distributed without delay. You may also visit [www.yvea.com/what-are-capital-credits](http://www.yvea.com/what-are-capital-credits) for a complete listing of unclaimed capital credits.



## The Luminare Difference

**Say goodbye to slow telephone DSL and cable company internet.** Luminare is rapidly growing, delivering voice and broadband services over fiber optics. Fiber optics-based broadband service isn't just a catchy phrase; it is fundamentally superior to other networks including old legacy copper (telephone company DSL) and clunky coaxial (cable company) networks, which are outdated, overutilized, lack appropriate maintenance, and are inferior to the short- and long-term capability of fiber. (More about wireless in an upcoming edition.)

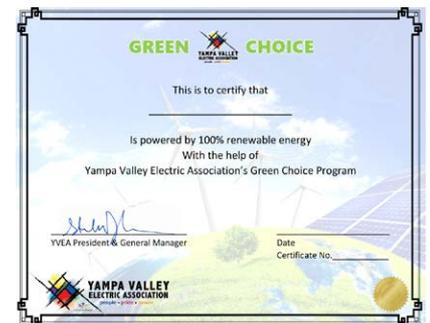
While fiber is the term we hear most often, the measurable differences are speed, capability, reliability, sustainability and overall performance — characteristics that set Luminare apart. Moreover, Luminare's pricing is arguably better than any other area provider while providing impeccable service and increased overall bandwidth.

We are local, we care and our network is ready for your data — ditch overpriced cable television, stream your service of choice, game without guilt and work without worry with Luminare. If we aren't in your area yet, know the team is working hard to get it there. Check us out today at [luminarebroadband.com](http://luminarebroadband.com) and register your interest so we know where to build next. Internet the way it should be.

## Introducing Green Choice Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) Program

Green Choice is an attainable renewable energy program that allows our local community to set renewable portfolio goals that are reachable within a short period of time.

For more information on Green Choice, visit [www.yvea.com/green-choice-program](http://www.yvea.com/green-choice-program).



**OFFICES CLOSED  
SEPTEMBER 7  
FOR LABOR DAY**

## Stay in the Know: Let us Contact You

At Yampa Valley Electric Association, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for you, our consumer-members.

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most current and accurate contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

We want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by us to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by emailing [billing@yvea.com](mailto:billing@yvea.com), logging into your SmartHub account, going to [www.yvea.com/contact-us](http://www.yvea.com/contact-us) or calling member services at 970-879-1160. To sign up for a free SmartHub account, visit [www.yvea.com/download-smarthub-app](http://www.yvea.com/download-smarthub-app). By doing so, you will help us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.

## Operation Round Up

Attention nonprofits: The grant application deadline is October 15.

Non-profit organizations within the YVEA territory that continue to provide much needed programs and projects that are important to our communities are encouraged to apply for Operation Round Up funds. Applications are accepted two times per year, May 15 and October 15. For application and more information visit [www.yvea.com/operation-roundup](http://www.yvea.com/operation-roundup).



## New Residential Level 2 Electric Vehicle Charger Rebate

YVEA has a new rebate for residential level 2 EV chargers. Visit [www.yvea.com/rebates](http://www.yvea.com/rebates) for more information.



## YVEA Contractors Working Throughout Our Territory

YVEA works year-round to keep your power flowing. As part of its 2020 construction work plan, YVEA will have several contractors working in the service territory.

- Intermountain Electric Service, Inc. has completed the work in Baggs and Dixon, Wyoming.
- Work in the Craig area around Pizza Hut, McDonalds and Centennial Mall is almost complete.
- Work in Steamboat Springs in the areas of Meadow Lane, Delta Queen, Highland Way, Natches Way, Robert E. Lee Lane, Anglers Drive, Apres Ski Way, Alpenglowl Way, Melrose Lane, Val D'Isere, Anthony's Circle & Laurel Lane will continue through September.
- Work on Glacier Ridge will be held off until late summer.

If you have any questions, please visit our website or contact Dan Trevithick at YVEA at 970-871-2253.

The contractor crews will be wearing yellow safety vests and hats emblazoned with "Yampa Valley Electric Association Contractor" on them. For the public's safety and the safety of its crews, YVEA asks that you use caution near contractors' worksites. YVEA wants you and its contractors' crews to get home safely.

For more information, please visit [www.yvea.com/current-construction](http://www.yvea.com/current-construction) or follow YVEA on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

## 2020 Annual Meeting is on September 22

The YVEA 2020 Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2020 at the Valley Community Center, 255 W. Osborne Street, Baggs, Wyoming.

Based on state and requirements for COVID-19 in the fall, the meeting may be held virtually. Members may RSVP on their ballot or call 970-879-1160 to RSVP. Attendees will be required to follow COVID-19 social distancing regulations. Masks are required.

The election process remained the same for petitions for nominations of directors being returned to YVEA by May 8, 2020. Ballots were mailed on August 21. To be valid and counted, each ballot must be signed by the member whose name is on the label and the ballot must be received at the location of the third-party ballot counter by Thursday, September 17, 2020. If the meeting is held virtually, the director election will be complete by mail in ballot process only. For updated information please visit [www.yvea.com/board-directors-information](http://www.yvea.com/board-directors-information).