

SANGRE DE CRISTO ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Outlet

OCTOBER 2020



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Sangre de Cristo Electric Association
Your Community Electric Cooperative



■ Dan Whitesides, (left) job training and safety instructor for the Colorado Rural Electric Association, presents SDCEA Chief Executive Officer Paul A. Erickson with a plaque commemorating a co-op safety award in August.

SDCEA EARNS CREA SAFETY AWARD

For the second year in a row, Sangre de Cristo Electric Association has been recognized with a No Lost Time Accidents safety award by the Colorado Rural Electric Association.

SDCEA received the award after no employee needed to take time away from work because of an accident on the job. While the award was made for 2019, SDCEA has gone 1,052 days without a lost time accident as of September 18.

“Every day, our line crews work outdoors in some of the most challenging conditions central Colorado has to offer. Steep and rocky terrain, hazardous trees, wind, snow and ice, wildfires and flood conditions all present hazards that can cause accidents. Receiving this award reflects a tremendous accomplishment and commitment by our employees to work as safely and professionally as possible every day,” Chief Executive Officer Paul A. Erickson said.

“Accidents happen, but what this tells me is that our team is doing the best they can and watching out for one another while working,” Chief Operations Officer Bryon Stillely added.

And, given the amount of time SDCEA employees spend traveling to job sites in five counties, SDCEA’s road safety is also noted.

“Not only have they done an incredible job with no lost time accidents, they have surpassed 1.5 million miles driven without a vehicle accident, which is a huge accomplishment as well,” Stillely added.

SDCEA crews have a busy work schedule, as new construction continues to increase to meet the needs of a growing population in the region. Crews also routinely work responding to outages through several dangerous storms a year.

“We have a great team. SDCEA’s commitment to safety is instilled throughout the organization. If you’re going to do a job, do it correctly and safely the first time,” Stillely added.

“Safety is a priority from the Board of Directors down,” Erickson said. “We are pleased to be recognized with this award, but ultimately, our greatest concern is that our employees are able to return home safely to their families each day at the end of their shift.”

PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFETY

The misuse of a portable generator following a storm can easily kill or sicken storm survivors. That misuse can also knock out more electric power as utility workers work to get the lights back on. Recently, eight of Louisiana's 15 hurricane Laura-related deaths are linked to carbon monoxide poisoning from portable generators. Following Hurricane Katrina, there were five deaths and 46 cases of carbon monoxide poisoning reported in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Read the following tips to keep you and your family safe while using a portable generator.

Never use a generator indoors or in an attached garage

- A portable generator is an internal combustion engine that exhausts a deadly gas called carbon monoxide. It is odorless and colorless, and you can be overcome if the generator is indoors.
- Be sure to place the generator outside where exhaust fumes will not enter into enclosed spaces. Only operate a generator outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes to the home. The generator should be protected from direct exposure to rain and snow.

Don't connect your generator directly to your home's wiring

- Connecting a portable generator directly to your household wiring can be deadly. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring can "back feed" into the power lines connected to your home.
- Utility transformers can then increase this lower electric voltage to thousands of volts. That's more than enough to kill

a utility lineman making Outage repairs many miles away. You could also cause expensive damage to utility equipment and your generator.

- If you wish to hardwire a generator to your home it should be installed by a licensed electrician with an approved double-throw cutoff switch that will automatically disconnect the home from the power grid when the generator is being used.

Don't plug a portable generator into an electric outlet in your home or garage

- If a generator is plugged into your home's electrical circuits, it can still "back feed" power into the utility company lines, which can injure or kill utility workers fixing the downed power lines.
- The correct way to use a generator is to connect a heavy-duty, outdoor rated power cord to the generator. Appliances can then be connected to the power cord.
- Make sure that the outdoor-rated power cord has a sufficient wire gauge to handle the electric load.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded to avoid electrical shocks

Don't overload the generator

- All generators have a power rating. They should be used only when necessary and only to power a limited number of appliances or equipment.
- The total wattage used by the appliance should be less than the output rating of the generator. If you put too many appliances on the generator, it could seriously damage the appliances and electronics. Overloading the generator could also cause fires in the power cord.

Do not store gasoline for the portable generator indoors

- Gasoline should be stored in approved, safety containers.
- Don't store gasoline in a garage if there's a water heater or fuel-burning appliance in the garage. Vapor from gasoline is heavier than air and can travel invisibly along the floor. It could be ignited by a pilot light or other source of flame, such as an electric spark.
- Shut off the generator before refueling. Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.
- Always have a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher located near the generator.

Read and adhere to manufacturer's directions for safe operation

- Read the owner's manual before you operate the generator.
- You can often download the manual from the manufacturer's website.
- Keep the owner's manual with the generator in a plastic zip lock bag to keep it dry.

Final Tips

- Many generator parts are hot enough to burn you during operation.
- Stay away from the muffler and other hot areas.
- Keep children away from portable electric generators at all times.

Want to read more?

Visit myelectric.coop under the Safety tab>Safe Generator Use and click on the American Red Cross link.



Are you thinking about, or has a company approached you about, installing solar panels? We want you to be an informed consumer before you buy a solar system, and we certainly want you to know all of your options and all of your costs before you install a system.

Call our office and ask for an energy use advisor or check our website first!

Learn more at myelectric.coop/energy-efficiency/residential-solar

CCCF Awards \$32,350 from SDCEA Community Grant Program

The Chaffee County Community Foundation awarded \$32,350 in charitable grants in early July to 18 organizations serving Chaffee, Lake, Fremont and Custer counties, funded by the Sangre de Cristo Electric Association Community Grant Program. This is the first year of a partnership between SDCEA and CCCF to manage SDCEA's matching and community grant programs.

"We are so pleased to be able to partner with CCCF and help organizations in need receive much-needed grant money. The organizations do such important work in our communities. Many are directly assisting those hard-hit by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic," SDCEA Chief Executive Officer Paul A. Erickson said. "At its core, SDCEA is a community-based organization. We are thankful to be able to help address some of our community's most pressing needs with the Power of Change and SDCEA Community Grant programs."

Applications for the community grants were taken online through CCCF's grant portal with a deadline to apply for a 2020 grant by June 5. Grants were evaluated by

six members of CCCF's grants committee, bringing more than 45 years of combined grants experience to the review and evaluation process. CCCF Executive Director Joseph Teipel shared that "this partnership with Sangre de Cristo is truly incredible and we are honored to provide this grant review and administration service to such an important community partner like SDCEA."

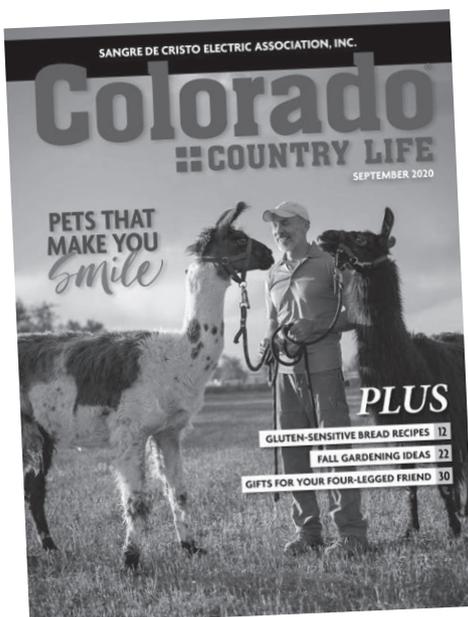
The SDCEA Community Grant Program funding is made possible by allocating capital credits donated back to the cooperative for charitable giving. Added to the total are the generous contributions of SDCEA consumers who participate in the Power of Change (formerly Operation RoundUp) program. Power of Change funds are added to the Community Grant Program fund allocation.

Power of Change participants round their bill up each month to the nearest dollar. For example, a monthly bill of \$52.74 would be rounded-up to \$53. The extra 26 cents are then pooled with other consumers' donations and placed in the Power of Change program. Power of Change

donations may be tax-deductible. To sign up for the Power of Change program, please visit SDCEA's website, myelectric.coop and read the details under the Community tab.

2020 grant recipients include: Achieve, Inc. (The Little Engine Eatery); Ark Valley Helping Hands; Ark Valley Humane Society Pet Food Pantry; Boys & Girls Club of Chaffee County; Buena Vista Optimist Club Backpack Program; Chaffee County Early Childhood Council; Chaffee County Search & Rescue North; Chaffee County United Soccer Club; elevateHER; FEDC WellStart; Greater Arkansas River Nature Association; Lake County Search & Rescue; Rotary Lending Medical Aids; St. George Episcopal Church; The Alliance: The Grainery Ministry; The Manna House; and The New Caring and Sharing.

For more information or to participate in the Power of Change program to contribute to the SDCEA Community Grant Program, visit SDCEA's website, myelectric.coop, or follow the electric cooperative on Facebook or Twitter. Interested community members can also learn more at CCCF's website at chaffeecommunity.org.



Why does SDCEA send *Colorado Country Life* to all of our members?

We are bound by state statute (HB 10-1098) and SDCEA bylaws to publish certain information in ways that are accessible to our full membership. The magazine serves as the publication that provides the appropriate level of access to our whole membership. And, we find that more than 80% of you actually read the magazine and get your co-op information from the magazine. At only 37 cents a copy, it is a cost-effective way to keep consumer-members current on SDCEA information. We have not yet found a way to cancel subscriptions to the magazine and uphold our requirements. We continue to look for alternatives for those who do not wish to receive a subscription. If that option becomes available, we will publicize its availability.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Clearing SDCEA's rights of way of trees and brush is an ongoing project expected to continue for the next several years throughout our service territory.

Why?

- ✓ Protects lives in our community
- ✓ Decreases the threat of a wildfire starting, ignited by contact with an electric line
- ✓ Improves the safety of our lineworkers in the field and aids access to our lines to restore power more quickly during an outage
- ✓ Provides safe and reliable power to our consumers

Please visit myelectric.coop under the safety tab to view videos and more information about this vital project.



SEPTEMBER STORM CAUSES OUTAGES

SDCEA line crews battled a series of outages that left as many as 3,000 services at one point without power September 8 and 9 after a late summer snowstorm caused trees and branches to fall on and damage equipment and lines throughout our system.

Hazards such as those from the storm pose a safety risk to area residents and to SDCEA's crews, as well as increases the potential for property damage. Restoring power in these conditions is very time-consuming, and caused extended outages.

The storm's aftermath highlighted the importance of SDCEA's vegetation management plan throughout our service territory to lower the threat of trees falling on lines and causing outages, and to decrease the threat of trees and vegetation sparking on one of SDCEA's lines and starting a wildfire.



REBATES

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association, Inc., and its power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., teamed up to bring you rebates for installing Energy Star-rated water heaters and Energy Star-rated appliances.

Want to learn more? Go to our website, myelectric.coop, click on Save Energy & Money and head to the Rebates tab.



MEMBERS ONLY

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association posts rates, policies, board meeting information, annual reports, board contacts and more for our consumers to access at any time. To view these items, create an account on our website at myelectric.coop. Sign in and find this information under our **Members Only** section, or on Smarthub>MyProfile>Documents. If you have any questions about how to access this information, call our office. 719-395-2412 or toll-free 844-395-2412.



OUTAGES

Do you have an outage to report? Don't hesitate to call 719-395-2412 or toll-free 844-395-2412.

DO NOT email your outage information or post your outage information on social media. SDCEA cannot monitor that information effectively, especially after hours. The only way to be sure we know you have an outage is to phone it in.