

YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2021



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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.

THE WAY FORWARD

BY STEVE JOHNSON GENERAL MANAGER



As we welcome a new year, the management, staff and Board of Directors of Yampa Valley Electric Association recognize that now more than ever we must take care of your daily electricity and broadband needs while also preparing for the future.

Even as the industry in which YVEA operates continues to evolve, the vision of providing high reliability, fair and equitable rates, responsible environmental stewardship and regional accountability endures — as does the mission that drives us to deliver a high quality of service for our members and communities.

During our recent strategic planning session the board of directors and leadership analyzed our current rate structures and the cooperative's stability through this pandemic. Our main focus and discussion was, "Are we able to keep rates stable throughout 2021 with no rate adjustments?" While we endeavor to be rate stable through this difficult period, we continue to assess our rates with the goal that they recover costs fairly, consistently and without subsidizations between rate classes.

We remain committed to reinvesting approximately \$10 million per year to upgrade our electric distribution system with our aggressive construction plan that will continue through 2024 and beyond. This is needed to replace severely aging infrastructure and increase the use of technologies that will allow us to more effectively monitor and manage our 7,000-square mile territory.

This investment into the reliability of our system has paid off exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic that began in the spring of 2020. Outages are tracked by how many members are affected and the duration of the outage. Using these metrics, we have greatly decreased our outage events; in 2019 YVEA experienced 143 outage events and in 2020 only experienced 44.

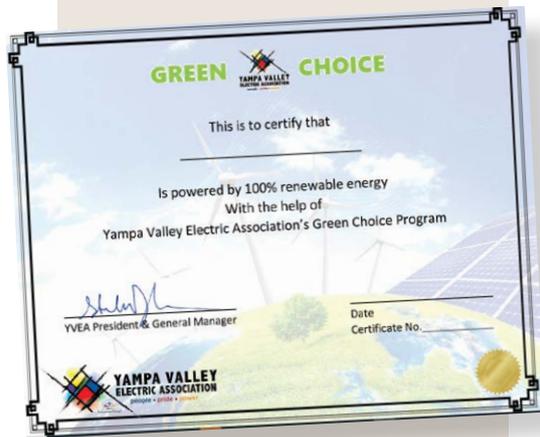
YVEA plays a uniquely valuable role in northwestern Colorado and southern Wyoming, and achieving our mission requires a careful balance between sometimes competing objectives. For example, as we seek to modernize our system operations and assets, we must also control costs and provide fair and equitable rates. The challenge of maintaining the appropriate balance is often compounded by changing industry dynamics, changing regional interests or other risks that threaten to tilt the scale in favor of one objective over another. Many times over the decades, YVEA has had to adjust its focus to address the changing conditions around us and to sustain its vital role in the territory.

Finally, I thank you for being a part of YVEA. We are grateful to the many members and organizations throughout the territory who contribute to their communities and our long-term success. Our path forward may look different than it ever has, but YVEA is committed to provide essential, reliable, affordable electric and broadband services for many years to come.

Green Choice Renewable energy credits program

Green Choice is an attainable renewable energy program that allows our community members 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.



Why Luminate Fiber?

Glad you asked. Luminate Broadband's fiber optic network is the cat's meow, the bomb-dot-com and a big "gig" deal. Luminate's fiber network compared to traditional methods of internet (cable, DSL, satellite, etc.) has many benefits including:

1. Speed! Fiber optics can modulate at much higher frequencies than electrical signals on copper, meaning the network is "future proof" to bring the best speeds today and tomorrow as the network gets future upgrades.
2. Symmetrical speeds! You receive the same download and upload speeds (up to 1 gigabit per second) instead of significantly slower upload speeds. This is most ideal for the entire family working, learning and gaming from home; uploading and downloading files regardless of size; and streaming music, shows and movies simultaneously.
3. Dedicated connection! You'll receive the speeds you select and only share your connection with your household or colleagues (if you want to).



Gone are the days of throttling or slow speeds caused by your neighbors being home and binge-streaming on an overloaded, saturated network.

4. Reliability! Luminate's fiber network has built-in redundancies to help ensure your access to the internet is uncompromised.
5. Device load! Do you have 27 devices (phones, tablets, televisions, streaming devices, cameras, IOT gadgets, etc.) connected to WiFi? Try Luminate's Valley Extreme package (1 Gbps) and experience internet that flawlessly works on all your devices.

Visit our website at www.luminatebroadband.com or call 970-GIG-DEAL (970-444-3325) for more information and to sign up to experience Luminate's fiber difference!



Share the Warmth

In December, Yampa Valley Electric Association employees and board of directors started a campaign to give back to consumer-members and communities. Employees contributed cash and food donations. The funds and food donations were distributed to Lift-Up of Routt County and LOVE, Inc., in Craig. **This was a successful campaign with YVEA employees and board contributing \$3,170.**



Elaine Gilbertson, Kelly Ehrick, Bonnie McFarland, Louise Brainard and Nancy Mucklow make desserts in the Heart of Steamboat church kitchen.

Stone Soup Suppers

Much-needed meals for the community with support from YVEA and Operation Round Up

Stone Soup Suppers was started by the Heart of Steamboat United Methodist women as a food ministry. In February 2020, they partnered with Routt County Council on Aging to fill an identified need for casseroles or individually frozen meals for the seniors in Routt County. Stone Soup has been actively providing 10-12 individual meals per week since then. These frozen dishes are prepared in the licensed church kitchen and delivered



to RCCOA for distribution to those it is serving (many in remote areas of the county such as Hayden and North Routt, and all under the control of RCCOA).

Nancy Mucklow, board chair said, “The opportunity to further the efforts of Stone Soup Suppers with the help of Operation Round Up has enabled us to spread more good food and good cheer throughout Routt County. Thanks, YVEA, for all you do for this community.”



Do you SmartHub?

SmartHub or the 24-hour pay by phone secure phone line is the most convenient way to pay your bill, and YVEA receives your payment immediately.

WITH SMARTHUB YOU CAN:

- Pay your bill
- View and track your usage
- Report and view outages
- Contact YVEA ... and more!

TO USE SMARTHUB

Download the app from your mobile device's app store. To access via computer, visit www.yvea.com. To use our secure pay by phone service, call 970-871-2260.

What to Do If You Receive a Disconnection Notice from YVEA



TO AVOID DISCONNECTION



You must respond to YVEA

Call member services at 970-879-1160 or toll free at 888-873-9832, or send an email to billing@yvea.com.

You must contact YVEA by one of these two ways. Our physical offices are currently closed to the public due to COVID-19.



Locate your account number

Your account number can be found on the disconnection notice. You will need that account number when you contact YVEA.



Be prepared to discuss a payment plan

A member service representative is available during normal business hours, (Monday - Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. MST), to discuss payment options. Call 888-873-9832 or 970-879-1160.

Additional Assistance

If members need additional assistance with utility bills, there are many additional resources in our territory. Visit www.yvea.com/payment-options.

YVEA's Great Christmas Light Fight Brightens Local Communities

We may not be as big as ABC's popular television show "The Great Christmas Light Fight," but we are huge in community spirit.

In the month of December, YVEA sponsors multiple communities around its 7,000-mile territory for Christmas lighting contests. Those include:

- The town of Yampa and the town of Phippsburg
- The Tour of Lights in partnership with *Craig Daily Press*

And new this year is the Tour of Lights Little Snake River in partnership with The Valley Community Center in Baggs, Wyoming. The communities had over 21 participants from around the valley enter the contest.

This year more than any other we were all grateful for the small moments of joy and seeing communities come together for these events that shined a light through the end of 2020.

Tour of Lights Little Snake River

Yampa Valley Electric Association was proud to partner with The Valley Community Center to sponsor a community lighting contest for Baggs and the surrounding areas.



◀ **First Place**
Craig and Teresa Jones of Baggs, WY (photo by Teresa Jones).



◀ **Second Place**
Rusty and Tom Cobb of Savery, WY (photo by Karlene Prestrud).



◀ **Third Place**
St. Paul's Episcopal Church (photo by Linda Fleming).

Tour of Lights Craig

Yampa Valley Electric was proud to partner with the *Craig Daily Press* in the Tour of Lights Event. Fifteen homes around Craig and surrounding area participated in the lighting contest.



▲ **First Place**
906 Ledford Court — the Nichols residence



▲ **Second Place**
3441 Essex Court — the Goodwin residence



▲ **Third Place**
565 8th Avenue West — the Larson residence
(Photos by the *Craig Daily Press*)

DON'T SUGARCOAT ELECTRICAL SAFETY

What better way to express your love for your children than to teach them how to be safe? Teach your littlest valentines about electrical safety and what to do in emergency instances when electricity is involved.