

SANGRE DE CRISTO ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Outlet

AUGUST 2021



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SDCEA BOARD UPDATE

SDCEA Board of Directors candidates Charles A. Abel II and Dan C. Daly were re-elected to their respective board seats during the electric cooperative's annual meeting at Mount Princeton Hot Springs Resort June 9th.

Abel represents rural Chaffee and Lake county consumers on the board. Daly is an at-large representative.

During the board's regular monthly meeting on June 23rd, SDCEA officers were elected. Voted to board leadership positions were Joseph Redetzke, chair; Daly, vice chair; Geoffrey Gerk, treasurer; and Abel, secretary.

Redetzke is an at-large representative, Gerk is the representative for Fremont County consumers.

The SDCEA Board of Directors is also comprised of David A. Volpe, representing the town of Buena Vista; Tommy G. Flower, representing Custer County; and Suzy Kelly, who represents consumers in rural Chaffee and Lake counties.



▲ Charles A. Abel II, representing rural Chaffee & Lake counties



▲ Dan C. Daly, at-large representative

Working as a group, board members employ the cooperative's CEO, establish operating policies and direct the cooperative's overall strategic business operating goals. SDCEA board members also commit to a rigorous course of ongoing education in utility operations and management to most effectively carry out the responsibilities of governing the cooperative.

SDCEA, based in Buena Vista, is an electric cooperative which provides electricity to more than 13,600 services in Chaffee, Fremont, Custer, Lake and Saguache counties in central Colorado. For more information on SDCEA, please visit: myelectric.coop.

DON'T POST ON POLES



It may seem like it's OK to put signs and other items on utility poles, but putting garage sale signs, flags, election signs, birthday party balloons, lost pet posters or other items on utility poles creates serious safety hazards.

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs — as well as the signs themselves — pose dangers to lineworkers who must climb poles when restoring power or while performing routine maintenance. The nails and tacks left behind can snag lineworkers' boots or puncture protective clothing and gloves, putting the lineworker at risk of slipping or even electrocution.

Crews respond to power outages during storms and at night, which may prevent them from seeing an item on a pole. Going pole to pole taking signs down in case work needs to be done on utility poles or lines takes time and manpower, which takes away from everyday work improving service.

Hanging things from utility poles may also present dangers to the community, putting individuals at risk of making accidental contact with energized power lines.

We appreciate your help in keeping utility poles clear and our lineworkers safe.

SDCEA CONTINUES WORK ON WILDFIRE MITIGATION

SDCEA's systemwide vegetation management program is making headway, as crews continue to work to help maintain the natural beauty of our area and to improve the reliability of electric service to our consumers.

Clearing more than 700 miles of overhead line in central Colorado will be a very challenging project over the next few years.

"As these sections are completed, our communities are going to see huge improvements in wildfire mitigation as well as benefit from better service to our consumers. Trees in lines are also our number one cause of outages," Chief Operations Officer Bryon Stillely said. "It can be slow work. But look at the terrain we're working in. It's rugged and it takes time.

"If SDCEA's rights-of-way are clear, it also allows our crews safer, better access to the lines to make repairs and upgrades," Stillely added.

Facing similar challenges to many employers in the region, hiring additional skilled crew members to work on the system also has also taken some time.

"We're fortunate Integrity Tree Services (SDCEA's wildfire mitigation contractor) was able bring on an additional crew in July. That crew is expected to work through October. One crew is expected to work through the end of the year, depending on weather conditions. We hope to achieve as much as we possibly can within our budget," Stillely said.



▲ Integrity Tree Services work trucks and other heavy equipment are used on job sites. Consumers are asked to avoid work areas for their safety.

Integrity, based in Michigan, is working on establishing a western region headquarters in the Buena Vista area. The company has employed five crew members working on SDCEA's system and has several additional employees from out of state staying in the area until this fall.



▲ Skilled, time-consuming work and an investment in specialized equipment is necessary to safely clear lines of vegetation around power lines.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROJECT UPDATES:

Chaffee County – St. Elmo, Alpine and Chalk Creek areas

Integrity has been working from the Mount Princeton Hot Springs Resort west to St. Elmo from early this past spring and into July. The project is necessary for wildfire mitigation and is in advance of SDCEA's work plan to rebuild much of the line in the area to increase reliability of service and provide Colorado Central Telecom access to the new infrastructure to provide fiber internet service to the area.

Crews have worked through challenging terrain and weather conditions throughout the project.



▲ Once a tree is cut and limbed in sections from a bucket truck, debris is fed into a chipper, which feeds into a dump truck. The chips are then hauled away.

Northern Custer and western Fremont counties

Vegetation management crews from Integrity are now in western Fremont County and northern Custer County, clearing lines that serve consumers in those areas.

Also in advance of system service infrastructure improvements, the crew is focusing on a 19-mile section of line from Verdemon Road in Custer County, north along Hwy. 69 to US 50 via CR1A along Oak Creek.


The majority of consumers in western Fremont County are served by power delivered from the Howard Substation. All electric services from the Howard Substation are scheduled for wildfire mitigation by the end of 2021 dependent on terrain, weather and other factors that impact the rate of progress on the project. Consumers can expect to see mitigation crews working throughout the area this

fall and into the winter months as weather allows.

Systemwide inventory by drone and mitigation

SDCEA began an ambitious program in July to drone our entire electrical system. This project will help SDCEA develop better information about the infrastructure and equipment on the system, identify equipment that may need to be replaced or repaired, as well as identify sections of line with vegetation that poses an immediate threat of ignition. Drone flights will begin in Twin Lakes and southern Lake County, and will move south to Chaffee, Fremont and Custer counties.



 A work crew clears line earlier this summer in Alpine.

A smaller crew from Integrity will follow the drone to trim vegetation from lines as necessary. These efforts will not fully clear SDCEA's rights-of-way in these specific areas but is designed to alleviate immediate threats of damage to lines or of ignition as those threats are identified. Work to fully clear rights-of-way in these areas will occur according to SDCEA's long-term work plans.

Once work on clearing rights-of-way on services provided through the Howard Substation is complete, SDCEA's work plan is to shift to northern Chaffee and southern Lake counties in 2022.



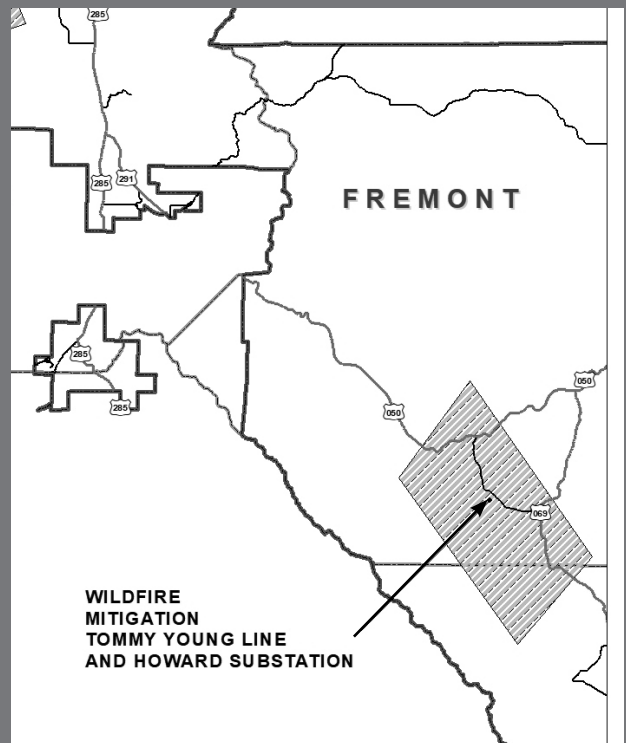
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT MONTHLY UPDATE

SDCEA contractor Integrity Tree Services is continuing vegetation management work in Custer County from Verdemon Road north into Fremont County along CO 69, then to U.S. 50 via the Cotopaxi cutoff.

All electric services from the Howard Substation are scheduled for vegetation management. Crews will move to other areas served by the Howard Substation as time and weather permit this fall.

Beginning in August, a smaller crew from Integrity will use information from SDCEA's drone program to trim vegetation from lines as necessary. These efforts will not fully clear SDCEA's rights-of-way in these specific areas, but is designed to alleviate immediate threats of damage to lines or of ignition as those threats are identified. Work to fully clear rights-of-way in these areas will occur according to SDCEA's long-term work plans. That crew begins work in southern Lake County in August and works its way south to Chaffee, Fremont and Custer counties this fall. Timing depends on the amount of work necessary on the system.

For your safety and the safety of crews working in the area, please use caution near worksites or whenever you see one of SDCEA's crews or contract crews.



SDCEA Undergoes Personnel Changes to Support Regional Growth

It has been a busy time at SDCEA, and the operations department has undergone a number of changes to continue to serve our consumers during this time of regional growth in demand for electric services.

BUENA VISTA

Joel Garza has been named the engineering superintendent at SDCEA, a promotion from his former position of lead staking technician. Garza is “wearing a lot of hats,” Chief Operations Officer Bryon Stillely said. Garza will be in charge of department interactions with consumers, SDCEA’s engineering firm, staking design, large projects and overseeing a paperless work order transition as well as the Geographic Information System (GIS) area.

Bill Hovanec is SDCEA’s lead GIS mapping person. He oversees all aspects

of digital mapping at SDCEA, including infrastructure and outage management mapping. He will also oversee the drone inventory program and the direction of outside resources used in engineering projects.

Aaron McKinney has joined SDCEA, moving to the area from Texas and working out of the Buena Vista Office. He is in his second year of his lineworker’s apprenticeship.

Sean Weston worked for a private electric contractor in Loveland. He is now working out of the Buena Vista office on his first-year lineworker’s apprenticeship.

WESTCLIFFE

Robert Tallent, SDCEA lead lineman, retired in January.

Corey Wagner, journeyman lineman in Westcliffe, was promoted to lead

lineman in February.

Kenny Patterson, formerly a journeyman lineman out of the Westcliffe office, is now moving to a position in the company as a staking technician. Staking technicians are primarily responsible for the design of new services on SDCEA’s system, as well as service upgrades.

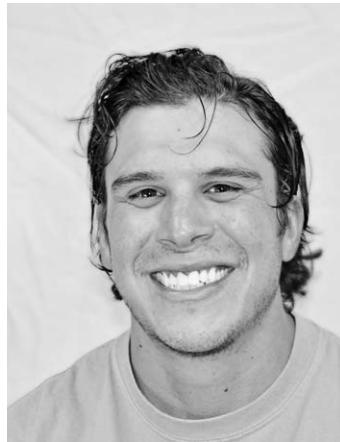
Bradon Baxter will be based in Westcliffe. He is originally from Sterling, and was formerly working for SDCEA’s electric contractor, Altitude Energy. His family has spent time in Westcliffe through the years, and he has always wanted to live in the area where his family owns property.

Anita White is now working as the Westcliffe custodian/warehouse person for SDCEA.

New to SDCEA



▲ Sean Weston



▲ Aaron McKinney



▲ Bradon Baxter



▲ Bill Hovanec

📢 SUPPLY CHAIN LEAD TIMES LONGER THAN NORMAL

SDCEA is alerting contractors, builders and members that lead time on materials is longer than normal. This may impact line extension, service upgrade projects and programs in 2021. SDCEA is working to maintain a healthy inventory of equipment to minimize the potential delays, yet we encourage stakeholders to review their project estimates and timelines closely. To ensure realistic expectations, please reach out to our engineering department regarding any changes in your project timeline.

🚫 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.