

COOPERATIVE CYBERSECURITY STAYS TOP OF MIND YEAR-ROUND

BY TOM WALCH CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

If you are a regular reader of these pages, you know that we emphasize the importance of safety. Our first and foremost guiding principle is that *we are dedicated to the safety of our workforce and the general public*. Our business is a dangerous business, and it is imperative that we protect against the hazards that threaten the health and well-being of our team members and consumers. Some of the safety hazards we deal with are apparent and recognizable. Our team members work in close proximity to high voltage electric lines; we use heavy, complex equipment. We work in traffic, in trenches, and high above the ground. We work in all kinds of inclement weather, at all times of the day and night.

But our focus on safety goes beyond this. It is part of our mission to protect our business, our assets, and our consumers from cyberthreats. You see, in addition to the physical threats that we can see, we are vulnerable against less visible attacks on the high-tech, data driven infrastructure that is critical to our ability to keep the lights on. Distribution utilities like GVP are sometimes targeted by bad actors because they are viewed as too small to adequately protect themselves. They have been targeted by international cyberterrorists who want to disrupt grid operations. Other cyberattacks are motivated by greed, where the bad guys penetrate the defenses of utilities and other businesses to inject ransomware that disables computer networks or steals data to collect ransom payments that range into the millions of dollars.

Grand Valley Power takes a leadership role in protecting against cyberthreats. When the Department of Energy partnered with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and its Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities (RC3) program a few years ago, Grand Valley Power was one of the first participants selected. The program

focuses on the development of a self-assessment that identifies vulnerabilities and areas for improvement. It is tailor-made for small and mid-sized cooperatives that have limited resources and small IT staffs. Participation in the program has helped GVP identify tools and resources that improve our ability to protect against threats. It has led us to enforce more restrictive access to networks and data, implement robust backup solutions, and remove unnecessary consumer and employee personally identifiable information from data storage.

What else have we done? GVP Information Technology Manager Karen Allen took part in GridEx, a national exercise, facilitated by armed forces personnel, simulating a cyber and physical attack on the North American electricity grid. Since our involvement with NRECA's RC3 program, we've also been a member of the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center. This membership is valuable because it provides our employees situational awareness on security threats for the electric industry. Networks, resources, bulletins and remediation plans keep us better positioned and informed on the latest grid security measures.

RC3 has also helped us recognize that one of the biggest cybersecurity risk factors is human behavior. Training for employees and members of the board of directors is a big part of our cybersecurity efforts. For the past couple of years, each employee and director consistently received cybersecurity trainings through KnowBe4, the world's first and largest new-school security awareness training and simulated phishing platform. This enables our employees to make smarter security decisions and recognize social engineering techniques, like ransomware and phishing attacks. Karen and her team also give monthly board meeting updates on cyber resilience and reviews the



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current threat landscape.

Successful cyberattacks can cost a cooperative lost time and productivity, permanent data loss, financial losses and a host of other harmful effects. By taking a leadership role in cybersecurity, Grand Valley Power can create layers of defense to prevent malicious attacks from affecting our member's safe, reliable and secure power. Our principled approach will help ensure that we continue to deliver value to all we serve.

Each October, we celebrate National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. For tips on how you can stay secure and protect yourself from cyber scams, visit gvp.org/cybersecurity-and-scams or follow our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/GVRuralPower](https://www.facebook.com/GVRuralPower).

COMMENTS TO THE CEO

You are a member of a cooperative and your opinion does count. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please let me know by writing to Ask the CEO, P.O. Box 190, Grand Junction, CO 81502, or send an email to me at twalch@gvp.org. Check our website at gvp.org.

BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Grand Valley Power board meetings are open to the members, consumers and public, but due to current COVID-19 health concerns, please call us at 970-242-0040 if you are interested in attending. Regularly scheduled board meetings are held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the headquarters building located at 845 22 Road, Grand Junction, Colorado.

The monthly agenda is posted in the lobby of the headquarters building 10 days before each meeting and posted on the GVP website. If anyone desires to address the board of directors, please let us know in advance and you will be placed on the agenda.

GRAND VALLEY POWER WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR BRIAN WOODS

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

In early August, Grand Valley Power announced the results of the 2021 GVP Board of Directors election and welcomed a new face to the team, Brian Woods.

Brian was inspired to petition for a seat on GVP's board because of his commitment and passion to serve the Western Slope community. "I recognized an opportunity to positively support Grand Valley Power and their values," he stated. "As a newly elected director, I strive to keep the cooperative's mission in mind — providing a safe, affordable and reliable source of electricity to all co-op members. I consider it a privilege to have been selected to represent the constituents of GVP and look forward to the journey ahead."

Brian first began working in the construction field and then as an underground miner for 10 years. For the next 29 years to retirement, he worked in the utility

service field at Clifton Sanitation District (wastewater) first as an operator and then as the general manager for 15 years. During this time, he earned a degree in environmental restoration engineering at Mesa State College (now Colorado Mesa University).

Brian is a fourth-generation Western Colorado native, initially growing up in the small town of Uravan, Colorado, before relocating to Grand Junction. In 1980, Brian graduated from Central High School where he met his wife, Vicki. In 1985, Brian and Vicki were married and have raised their two children, Corey, and Jennifer, in the Grand Valley. Outside of working and serving his community, Brian enjoys adventuring in the great outdoors, traveling and spending time with friends and family.

During the August monthly board meeting, Brian along with incumbents, Jesse Mease and William "Bill" Rooks were sworn



Grand Valley Power members elected Brian Woods to the board on Friday, August 6, 2021, after the cooperative's Annual Meeting of members. Woods will serve a three-year term and join the six other sitting directors on the cooperative's board.

in. Each will serve a three-year term and join the six other sitting directors on the cooperative's board. Please join us in congratulating Brian, Jesse and Bill on this achievement! For more information on director elections, please visit gvp.org/director-elections.

October 28 & 29
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

GRAND VALLEY POWER
845 22 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505

Join us for a spooky celebration with costumes, sweet treats, and **FREE glow sticks!**



CO-OP CALENDAR

- Board Meeting** - Wednesday, October 20
- Fruita Truck N Treat** - Saturday, October 23
- Glow Halloween** - Thursday, October 28 and Friday, October 29



MISSION ODIN

How GVP is helping implement standardized outage data

BY CHRISTMAS WHARTON COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Grand Valley Power's goal was simple. Does this help our members? The answer was yes. Guided by our cooperative principle, *Concern for Community*, Grand Valley Power's engineering manager, Matt Williams, reached out to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association after he heard about the opportunity to support emergency managers, infrastructure partners and neighboring utilities through the Outage Data Initiative Nationwide (ODIN).

"All we needed to do was give permission to view our outage data (which does not include any member information)," says Williams. "Grand Valley Power utilizes an Outage Management System (OMS), which helps dispatchers predict and manage outages in real-time. Since our OMS vendor, National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), was one of the original partners in the project, sharing data was simple, and integrating with ODIN was seamless."

ODIN's vision is to create a nationwide power outage map that is detailed, timely, and actionable to be utilized by utilities, emergency managers, and the public. ODIN was formed to create a standard, provide guidance to the industry, and assist in implementation. Outage Data Initiative Nationwide (ODIN) is an effort to create a comprehensive map that encompasses near real-time updates of power outages across the United States. The ODIN map provides details by county, ZIP code or latitude and longitude, including estimated times that power might be restored. ODIN was developed by the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Electricity's Advanced Grid Research and Oak Ridge National Lab. Contributing members also include NRECA and NISC.

The ODIN map was developed out of a need, like most things. Many utilities display outage data on their websites, while some only post to Twitter or Facebook. Some utilities do not share outage data information at all. There was no industry

standard or guidance on how to share this data. The benefits of joining the initiative are creating a common operating picture for situational awareness to support emergency management and creating a "universal translator" for outage data to drive improved decision support and identify, quantify and prioritize emergency response resources.

"ODIN was designed for first responders and national emergency teams," says Tony Thomas, NRECA's senior principal engineer. "It's a place for emergency service crews to see exactly what the electrical environment looks like at the moment." Other benefits include real-time updates to other stakeholders like local, state and federal emergency partners; improved utility response and restoration activities; improved dispatching of first responders for public safety; and reducing unnecessary calls to utilities seeking status updates. "If this is going to help emergency managers and first responders, we're all about sharing this information," says Williams. "As more utilities sign up, we can start to benchmark our outage performance against others."

Phase 1 of ODIN in 2018 led to the successful integration of a statewide power outage map for Washington state. Phase 2 expanded integration and an ongoing Phase 3 is targeting the entire nation connecting with utilities, outage management system vendors and state emergency managers to adopt ODIN standards to improve interoperability among grid stakeholders. "ODIN is now in Phase 3 of the effort, and we're engaging additional utilities and regions and vendors to support implementation. We're also developing an energy and power outage data workshop and future plans to integrate with EAGLE-I," says Chris Irwin, Department of Energy, Smart Grid Interoperability Program Manager. EAGLE-I is an interactive geographic information system that allows users to view and map the nation's energy infrastructure and obtain near real-time information concerning the electric, petroleum, and



CHRISTMAS WHARTON



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— Matt Williams, Grand Valley Power engineering manager

natural gas sectors, although not public.

While there are some web crawling tools that map current regional or nationwide outages out there, this data is collected in a variety of ways that are not robust and often not comprehensive. Even though some states are attempting this, there is no coordination between states, and therefore regional and national common operating pictures are not available. Coordination is important because storms and emergencies do not recognize utility, county and state boundaries. Mutual aid often comes from neighboring states or from regions not affected by the emergency. ODIN will provide a national view of outages in one location. "The ODIN system boosts interoperability among grid stakeholders and creates a conduit for sharing outage related data in real time under any situation," stated Irwin.

To view the current Nationwide Outage Map, visit odin.ornl.gov.

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NISC is an industry leader providing advanced, integrated IT solutions for consumer and subscriber billing, accounting, engineering & operations, as well as many other leading-edge IT solutions.



OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH: CELEBRATING THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Ace Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O’Lakes and Grand Valley Power all share something in common. Each organization listed is a cooperative business. We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time but also discuss what makes your cooperative unique.

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Our co-op is well-suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Grand Valley Power’s leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our

board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you.

We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that’s why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

HOMETOWN SERVICE

If there is one thing that distinguishes Grand Valley Power from all the rest, it’s five-star customer service. When you call your cooperative, a real person answers the phone, which is something that’s hard to come by nowadays.

“It’s so great to receive service from a real person! Every time I call, a friendly and helpful voice always answers the phone; don’t change how you do business,” said one valued co-op member.

With over 19,000 consumers, Grand Valley Power is dedicated to providing each member with the hometown service and support they deserve — that’s the co-op difference.

HOMETOWN PARTNERSHIPS

The seventh cooperative principle is *Concern for Community*. Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through employee involvement in local organizations, through charitable contributions to community efforts and through support for schools.

In 2020, Grand Valley Power contributed \$146,000 in community donations and awarded over \$20,000 in scholarship funds to local students. The co-op is determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the communities it serves — now and in the future.

Please join us in celebrating National Co-op Awareness Month this October by following us on Facebook and Twitter searching for “Grand Valley Power” or @GVRuralPower. On behalf of everyone at the cooperative, thank you for being a valued member!