

YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2021



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Yampa Valley Electric Association

is a cooperative that provides value to its member-owners through technology that delivers safe and reliable electrical service in an environmentally and financially responsible manner.

YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CO-OP

BY STEVE JOHNSON PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER



STEVE JOHNSON

In the co-op world, our day-to-day used to be steady and predictable. With these changing times, we have continued to look for ways to innovate and we as a co-op have sought ways to keep current with changing technologies and focus on the future. In September, we held our first strategic planning session for 2022, and we are excited about the results from it. Here were a few topics we focused on.

MEMBER FEEDBACK

Every year, we send a survey to our membership to gain a better understanding of how members feel we are serving them, areas where there are opportunities for improvement and where they see the future of the co-op going. The feedback from these survey helps us have more focused intentions when it comes to setting our goals. This is why we put great importance on our members signing up for our annual survey and ask that all members give us honest feedback that will assist us in how we plan the co-op's goals. **To sign up, please call member services at 970-879-1160 and verify your email address, and we will send you a link to the 2021 survey.**

COMPANY STRATEGIC PLANNING

As I discussed earlier, we had a strategic planning session at the end of September. We changed our methods with this planning session by including managers and individual contributors from all departments and all levels of the organizations. Our thinking behind this was that we wanted to gather ideas from different contributors to form a comprehensive company plan. The two-day planning process was intense, and I am excited by the ideas brought forth by our employees. Every employee at Luminate and Yampa Valley Electric Association sees the greatness in our businesses and is excited to push us into the future. We realized our main priorities as a company should be

on reliability, an enhanced member and customer experience, improved communications, beneficial electrification and an intentional rollout of broadband in our service territory.

I am grateful for the enthusiasm and focus our employees brought to this planning process and know this process will be beneficial to both of our companies moving forward. Now, what does this mean for you as the members? When the new member survey comes out, you will see questions that will be important in driving some of the plans and decisions we made in this strategic planning session. **Please know that your feedback has the ability to drive future plans of YVEA and Luminate, and we are looking forward to the feedback you all provide through the survey.**

BUDGET REVIEWS

Being intentional with our goals as a co-op also ties into where our dollars go when we are planning our yearly budget. We will always dedicate dollars to maintaining and improving our current system, as we are dedicated to providing value to our member-owners through technology that delivers safe and reliable electric service in an environmentally and financially responsible manner. What we are focusing on is being purposeful in creating new jobs to help with our strategic plans, identifying new projects that benefit our communities and membership and creating new programs for our members to enhance their daily lives. We are looking at ways our current programs serve our community, where we can improve on these and what the future is for our programs. Currently, we offer rebates to help you go electric, green choice renewable offsets, surge protection and Luminate Broadband. How do we

YOUR CO-OP NEWS

increase these offerings in a fiscally responsible manner? Both planning the budget and finishing the strategic planning session tied in to these questions and helped drive our vision for the cooperative going forward.

At YVEA, our eyes are always on the future, and we want to make sure that we are always viewed as your valued partner in northwestern Colorado and southern

Wyoming. Please remember you can be a part of our planning process by filling out our annual member survey and telling us what you would like to see us do as a co-op.

Until then, we will continue to push forward and innovate to bring you the best in service.

Steve Johnson
General Manager

MEMBER SURVEY

Do you want to take part in YVEA's annual member survey? Please call member services at 970-879-1160 to verify your email address today. In November, the survey will be emailed to members with an email address on file, and will be done electronically. **Respondents will be entered to win one of five \$50 local chamber dollars gift cards.**

To Travel or Not to Travel

Here come the holidays, and with that comes travel and winter weather. While snow can be visually stunning, it can also be an unwelcome passenger. Watch weather updates and think safety before hitting the road.

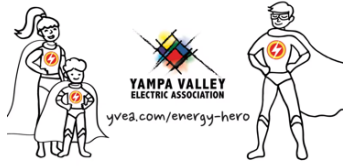


**YVEA's offices will be
CLOSED
November 25 and 26
for the
Thanksgiving Holiday.**

AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible by calling 970-879-1160.



TEMPERATURES ARE STARTING TO DIP

You can be an Energy Hero!

Space heater kWh usage

- A portable space heater can use as much as 36 kWh per day, which can add up to an extra \$100 on your monthly electric bill
- Remember to unplug when not in use
- A majority of high bill concerns are related to space heaters and heat tape. Watch our videos on space heaters and heat tape at <https://bit.ly/3AWLs9M>

Heat tape kWh usage

- Just 100 feet of heat tape can use as much as 30 kWh per day — that equals 900 kWh per month, which can add up to an extra \$80 on your monthly electric bill
- YVEA recommends setting hourly timers to run during daylight hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. to be most effective
- Apply for a heat tape timer rebate from YVEA

Electric baseboard heater kWh usage

- One 6-foot electric baseboard heater can use as much as 36 kWh per day — that can add up to \$100 on your monthly bill
- Turn off baseboard heater when not needed or in use
- Apply for a programmable thermostat rebate from YVEA to help you control costs

For more details on all of our rebates, and for more Energy Hero tips and tricks, visit yvea.com/be-energy-hero-your-home

2022 YOUTH TRIPS

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS

Win a trip to Washington, D.C., or a week at camp at Glen Eden Resort!

Yampa Valley Electric Association is now accepting applications for the 2022 summer youth programs. Students have the opportunity to attend the Washington D.C. Youth Tour and the Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Each program is all expenses paid. Current high school students between the ages of 16 and 18, as of June 2022, are encouraged to apply.

Join other students from Colorado co-ops and co-ops across the United States **June 12-19, 2022** for the **Washington D.C. Youth Tour**. Once in Washington, D.C., students will meet Colorado congressional members and learn about electric cooperatives. There will be plenty of time for fun and touring. Visit Mount Vernon, the National Cathedral, the Holocaust museum, Arlington National Cemetery and the Library of Congress. Students will stroll through the Smithsonian museums, visit the monuments and memorials and much more. There will be an opportunity to learn about electricity generation, transmission and distribution while having the time of your life with over 2,000 other students. An evening at the theater, a cruise on the Potomac River, dancing and mingling are all a part of this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

About 100 students are chosen and sponsored by rural electric cooperatives from all over Colorado, Kansas, Wyoming and Oklahoma to attend the **Youth Leadership Camp July 16-21, 2022**. The camp is designed to provide a better understanding of cooperatives, the legislative processes, energy prices, power generation and the rural electric cooperative program. It also focuses on developing leadership skills. Field trips are planned to tour a large open-pit coal mine and an electric generation power plant. There is also time for fun and sightseeing. Free time is spent playing volleyball, swimming, whitewater rafting, dancing, attending a banquet and meeting many new friends.

Yampa Valley Electric Association covers all costs to participate in either program, including travel, lodging and food. The only costs to the students is spending money for souvenirs or extra snacks.

Interested students must complete an application form and short essay. For more details, visit yvea.com/washington-dc-youth-tour for Youth Tour and yvea.com/youth-leadership-camp for the Youth Leadership Camp. **Application deadline is January 15, 2022.**

Choose EV

YVEA is proud to announce the launch of its Choose EV webpage, in partnership with the City of Steamboat Springs. When a member visits yvea.com/yvea-electric-vehicle-information they can learn facts about electric vehicles, use a savings calculator, find nearby chargers and so much more.

If you are thinking of purchasing an EV and would like to install a residential charger, visit yvea.com/rebates to take advantage of our rebate program.

YVEA Energy Solutions Program Director Mike Beyer (middle) speaks to members at an EV event in Steamboat Springs. 



WI-FI 6: WHAT IS IT?

Wi-Fi continues to grow in popularity around the globe. By 2022, about half of all IP traffic across all devices will be delivered via Wi-Fi, and by 2023 it's estimated there will be a total of 628 million public Wi-Fi hotspots worldwide, up from 169 million in 2018. The great news: Wi-Fi is about to get ever better.

Wi-Fi has become virtually indispensable. Faster and faster internet is constantly in demand. And more apps, games and videos means more bandwidth needed. So how do we keep up with the demand? With Wi-Fi 6.

WHAT IS WI-FI 6?

Wi-Fi 6, the next generation of Wi-Fi, is more than just a simple speed boost. Wi-Fi 6 takes a slightly different approach. It focuses on improved performance in the real world, particularly in densely populated environments. It will still connect you to the internet, but it will happen more efficiently and speed up your connections in the process.

HOW FAST IS IT?

We're buying more connected devices than ever before, and that number is growing rapidly. By 2023, North America will have a total of 5 billion connected devices, up from 3 billion in 2018, and an average of 13.4 devices per person, up from 8.2 in 2018. These include personal devices such as tablets, smartphones, wearables, gaming systems and smart TVs, but also a wide variety of devices used for home automation and monitoring.

More devices means more speed is needed. So, how fast is Wi-Fi 6? The short answer is 9.6 Gbps, up from 3.5 Gbps on Wi-Fi 5, a significant increase. That 9.6 Gbps is a speed that you're unlikely to reach in the real world of Wi-Fi. This speed is still important. The 9.6 Gbps does not have to go to just a single computer. It can be split

across a whole network of devices, meaning more speed for each device connected to your Wi-Fi network.

Keep in mind, however, that these are the speeds achieved between the device and the router, not to the world or traversing the internet. These speeds are often used out of context and leveraged as speed indicators by many providers — which is factually incorrect. If you are a Luminate customer, and we hope you are, the true speed is represented in your fiber connection from the router to internet — the package you purchase from Luminate. Wi-Fi 6 gives all your devices less congested airway routes, which lets all your devices communicate swiftly without collisions.

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT FASTER SPEEDS

At first, Wi-Fi 6 connections aren't going to be noticeably faster. This starts to change when more and more devices get added to your Wi-Fi network. Where routers start to get overwhelmed by a multitude of devices, Wi-Fi 6 routers are designed to efficiently keep all those devices performing at their maximum potential.

Luckily for you, Luminate Broadband recently began providing Wi-Fi 6 capable equipment. The GigaSpire Blast u6 and GigaSpire Blast u4 routers ensure you are going to have the best Wi-Fi experience possible. However, if you are equipped with the GigaCenter equipment, which was provided to Luminate customers before June 2021, you are still on Wi-Fi 5. If you are interested in upgrading, please call Luminate.

Of course, there are many benefits to Wi-Fi 6 other than just enhanced speed and performance. Here are the ones that are likely to make the biggest impact:

- Improved Wi-Fi network coverage by as much as 30%
- Increased device security
- Extended battery life for connected devices
- 37% faster than Wi-Fi 5 technology
- Increased throughput by up to 4 times
- Better performance in dense environments

HOW TO GET WI-FI 6

It's simple. You need to get new, upgraded devices. Wi-Fi 6 relies on new hardware, not just software updates. The good news is that new devices will start coming with Wi-Fi 6 by default. As the time comes to replace your old phone, laptop and more, the new devices you bring home will include the latest and greatest version of Wi-Fi.

The one thing you do need to consider, though, is ensuring your router is Wi-Fi 6 compatible. If you are a Luminate customer, our new GigaSpire Blast u6 and GigaSpire Blast u4 routers are Wi-Fi 6 compatible. As mentioned earlier, if you were a Luminate customer before June 2021, your router is Wi-Fi 5 compatible. Give us a call today to upgrade to the newest Wi-Fi 6 technology.

With demand for bandwidth showing no signs of letting up, and the connected home continuing to grow in popularity, Luminate is thrilled to now provide Wi-Fi 6 compatible routers that deliver the best possible Wi-Fi experience for subscribers.

Ensure you're getting the best Wi-Fi experience today with Luminate Broadband.

If you have questions or would like to sign up for Luminate Broadband, please call 970-870-4320.

