

GUNNISON COUNTY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Powering Possibilities

JANUARY 2022



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 180
Gunnison, CO 81230-0180



STREET ADDRESS

37250 West Highway 50
Gunnison, CO 81230



ph 970-641-3520
tf 800-726-3523
fax 970-641-7333
web gcea.coop
email gcea@gcea.coop



facebook.com/
GunnisonCountyElectricAssociation



@gcea_news

A GLIMPSE INTO GCEA'S FUTURE

BY MIKE MCBRIDE CEO

In 2021, GCEA undertook its most extensive strategic planning process in many years. In fact, as I write this on November 21, the strategic plan is still under development so I cannot outline the full strategic plan just yet. I do want to share some insights relative to 2022 and beyond, though.



MIKE MCBRIDE

Safety and power supply

Safety will remain a high priority as will providing reliable electric service. Good governance, dedicated employees and effective use of technology have been and will continue to be important.

Wholesale power supply represents about 50% of GCEA's total costs, so let's talk power supply. Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association is GCEA's power supplier. GCEA believes that Tri-State is GCEA's best power supply option now and in the future. Why? First, Tri-State is aggressively pursuing a clean-energy transition that will result in 70%-80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 versus 2005, and as much as 78% versus 2015 (the local baseline year). Second, Tri-State policy allows GCEA to locally self-supply up to 7%. Third, Tri-State can purchase solar energy for less than one-third the cost that GCEA can. Fourth, Tri-State is striving to maintain and even lower its rates to GCEA.

Local projects

We do continue to move forward in the pursuit of local projects, too, and hope to meet nearly 7% of our power requirements through local renewable projects in 2024 and beyond. We are currently working with engineers and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on the design and permitting of a 500-kilowatt generator at Taylor Dam, which would supply about 3% of GCEA's total power supply. The Taylor Dam project

is anticipated to provide both a cost savings as well as environmental benefits.

We also continue to pursue two local solar projects, which, along with two smaller existing facilities, would provide about 3.7% of GCEA's total power supply. Energy from these projects will cost about 58% more than what we would pay Tri-State, but we are working with potential partners who are interested in the renewable attributes of these projects to cover the difference. The bottom line is that, for the membership as a whole, these solar projects will have no impact on rates.

Beneficial electrification and cost savings

Going forward, we see a role for GCEA in both beneficial electrification and in support of our community's climate action plans and goals. According to the Beneficial Electrification League, beneficial electrification includes the application of electricity to end-uses where doing so satisfies at least one of the following conditions, without adversely affecting the others:

- Saves consumers money over time
- Benefits the environment and reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- Improves product quality or consumer quality of life
- Fosters a more robust and resilient grid

We see two potential ways to save members money through beneficial electrification. The member making the change may save money, but the entire membership

may benefit as well. Increased kilowatt-hour sales help keep rates down as GCEA's fixed costs are recovered over more sales.

I hope this glimpse into the future of GCEA has been informative. If you want to know more about GCEA's strategic plan, we hope you will join us at one of our quarterly member forums, our annual meeting or one of the monthly board meetings.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you by providing safe, reliable electricity.



Annual Meeting Preliminary Notice

The **election for the board of directors** and the 83rd Annual Member Meeting for Gunnison County Electric Association, Inc. (GCEA) will be held on **Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at 6 p.m.** at 37250 W. U.S. Highway 50, Gunnison, CO 81230.

Board districts up for election are districts 2 and 3.

Information on how to become a candidate, ballot mailing deadline, and meeting format will follow soon.

For questions, please call Chief Executive Officer Mike McBride or Executive Assistant Sherry Shelton at 970-641-3520 or email directorelections@gcea.coop.

JANUARY WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Marcia Wireman

Chief Financial Officer – 26 years

Bruce Stephens

Staff Engineer – 10 years

Logan Rhodes

Lake City Lineman – 8 years

Shane McGuinness

Systems Administrator – 5 years

Ali Ackley

Member Support Specialist – 3 years



GCEA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MOUNTAINEER THEATRE IN LAKE CITY, COLORADO

BY ALLIY SAHAGUN MEMBER RELATIONS SUPERVISOR

If you're like me, there is nothing quite like a night at the movies. The smell of popcorn and the fizz of a soda while settling in for a good movie is so satisfying. With limited movie theatre choices nearby, my husband and I decided to head to Lake City for our movie date night and I was beyond impressed with my experience at Mountaineer Theatre. From the moment we stepped inside and were greeted by the friendly high school concessions staff, we felt welcomed and appreciated for making the trip from Gunnison.

Owner Phil Virden enthusiastically greeted the packed crowd before the film and drummed up excitement with local announcements and raffle giveaways. Surrounded by murals of classic film characters on the walls, the one-screen theatre offers a variety of films including the newest blockbuster hits as well as throwback classic films.

For over 40 years, the Virdens have remained committed to having the Mountaineer be a true community movie theatre by holding down ticket and concession prices and providing special showings for veterans, emergency services volunteers, school community, family reunions, anniversaries, birthdays and others. To see the calendar of upcoming films, visit mountaineertheatre.com where tickets may be purchased online. See you at the movies!

2022 REBATE INFORMATION

Gunnison County Electric Association partners with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association to provide our Energy Efficiency Rebate Program. We offer a wide variety of rebates from home appliances to outdoor power equipment. To view the 2022 rebate information, please visit gcea.coop/energy-efficiency/rebates. **Starting January 1, 2022, all rebates must be submitted within 90 days of installation.**



GCEA Gives Weatherization Support to Members in Need

GCEA is pleased to support the Gunnison Valley – Home Energy Advancement Team as it seeks to make households in the Gunnison Valley more energy-efficient, affordable and safe. During 2021, 29 GCEA members received weatherization rebates from GCEA and Tri-State with a total paid out of over \$31,000. Weatherization services included air sealing, adding insulation to attics and crawlspaces, adding pipe and duct insulation, installing new storm windows, and recycling old refrigerators and replacing with new refrigerators.

GCEA's contribution to GV-HEAT and the Town of Crested Butte's Green Deed Program allowed seven members to have their homes weatherized; the Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority received \$7,000 directly from GCEA for the work (\$1,000 per home). An additional five members had their homes weatherized through the Green Deed program and GVRHA received additional Tri-State and GCEA rebates totaling \$4,520 and 114 LED rebates totaling \$286.63.

Lastly, through the Energy Outreach Colorado CARE Program, 12 members had homes weatherized and CARE received \$12,000 directly from GCEA for the work (\$1,000 rebate per home). In addition, five more members had their homes weatherized through the CARE program, and CARE received additional Tri-State and GCEA rebates totaling \$6,759.12 and 124 LED rebates totaling \$351.



GCEA provides weatherization support through GV-HEAT Program contributions

POWERING YOUR FUTURE

2022 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Do you need financial assistance to help further your education?

GCEA is here to help students pursue their dreams of continuing their education.

Scholarship details and applications for new and return students may be found at www.gcea.coop.

*A student is eligible to receive a scholarship if the student, their parent, legal guardian, or foster home receives electrical service from GCEA.

APPLICATION DEADLINE **MARCH 1**

For questions, please visit www.gcea.coop or call 970-641-3520.



NextEra Energy Resources, Tri-State Dedicate the Niyol Wind Energy Center

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association celebrated the commissioning of Colorado's newest wind project with a dedication ceremony November 4, 2021, at the Niyol Wind Energy Center near Fleming. The project, owned by a subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, features 74 wind turbines capable of generating up to 200 megawatts of renewable energy, which is purchased by Tri-State as part of its Responsible Energy Plan. The project includes Colorado state trust lands and will generate additional revenue to support Colorado schools and children.



NIGHT OF LIGHTS



- ▲ **Lake City** – GCEA lights up Lake City during the annual Parade of Lights down Silver Street
- ◀ **Gunnison** – GCEA staff volunteer to hand out goodie bags at the Gunnison Night of Lights

POWERWISE PLEDGE™

GCEA INVITES YOU TO TAKE THE POWERWISE PLEDGE™



GCEA is leading the way in the transition to cleaner sources and uses of energy. The time for action is now to develop innovative solutions that promote a cleaner community today and for years to come. How can you help us move to a more sustainable future?

Electricity is the answer. When you choose electricity to power your life, you are not simply flipping a switch or pushing a button. You are making a conscious choice, a wise choice.

Make the Choice. Take the Pledge. Be PowerWise.

WHAT IS THE POWERWISE PLEDGE™?

Starting January 1, 2022, GCEA invites members to take the PowerWise Pledge™ and help support local efforts to reduce harmful carbon emissions.

Taking the PowerWise Pledge™ will show your financial commitment to supporting GCEA's efforts to “green the grid” through local renewable projects and by electrifying where possible through beneficial electrification.

WHY IS BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION IMPORTANT?

1. BE saves consumers **money** in energy costs
2. BE helps the **environment** by reducing emissions
3. BE supports a robust and **sustainable grid**
4. BE improves consumer **quality of life**
5. BE is enhanced **local renewable energy** development

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION?

Take a look around your home, and there are plenty of opportunities to choose electric over another fuel source. Some examples include electric vehicles and e-bikes, electric stoves and induction cooktops, on-demand and high-efficiency water heaters, heat pumps, electric-powered garden equipment, smart home technologies, and energy-efficient appliances and lighting. When you have a purchase choice, consider all the benefits of choosing electric over a fossil fuel source such as propane, natural gas or gasoline.

HOW CAN I TAKE THE POWERWISE PLEDGE™?

OPT IN - \$1 per month will be added to your GCEA bill in support of reducing carbon emissions through beneficial electrification and development of local renewable energy projects.

OPT UP – If you'd like to contribute more, you may add any monthly amount to your bill.

OPT OUT – If you'd like to waive your participation in the PowerWise Pledge™, you may do so at any time.

On March 1, 2022, all GCEA members who have not made their choice early will be automatically enrolled in the PowerWise Pledge™ and \$1 will be added to their bill. We welcome early participation or opt out of the program, and are happy to answer questions about the program. Please call 970-641-3520 or visit gcea.coop for more information.