EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

APRIL 2022

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RELIABLE BY DESIGN

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

ANDY CARTER

Reliable power delivery to your homes and businesses is part of Empire Electric Association's primary mission. Electric power has become an important part of our lives. Making sure you have power when you need it, in sufficient quantity to use everything you want, can only happen if we design a properly sized system and maintain it to withstand the environment it lives in. Anticipating growth and designing for the future is a must.

EEA cannot accomplish its mission without partners. One partner is Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, EEA's wholesale power provider. As implied by its name, Tri-State procures the power we use and operates and maintains its electric transmission system, allowing it to deliver power to substations across EEA's service area.

In keeping with its responsibility to serve EEA and other Tri-State member co-ops, Tri-State regularly requests updates from co-ops it serves on load growth and incorporates that into its planning process. In 2021, Tri-State completed the Montrose-Nucla-Cahone transmission line upgrade that began in 2013. This project increased operational capacity and flexibility while improving reliability and lowering maintenance needs. Its termination point is one of EEA's largest substations and EEA receives a direct benefit from Tri-State's investment.

On the power supply side, Tri-State is beginning the third year of its Responsible Energy Plan, which is designed to increase its supply from clean energy sources, reduce emissions, and increase member flexibility while maintaining reliability and affordability. Tri-State will have completed over 1,000 megawatts of new renewable energy projects by 2024, bringing its clean energy supply up to 50% of its portfolio. The recent rate reduction is evidence that Tri-State is following through with its affordability promise.

Another partner in our goal to maintain high reliability is you, our consumer-members. Even though technology has advanced and enabled us to find and isolate outages faster, we still rely on you to let us know if you are experiencing an outage or are having power quality issues. Calling 970-565-4444 or 800-709-3726 is still the fastest way to alert EEA to an outage. Social media accounts are not monitored 24/7. We continue to upgrade our software suite and in the next few months hope to provide outage maps online as well as text or email alerts for outage and restoration notices.

Part of our reliability improvement plans include designing our system to

EEA will connect a transmission line to a substation on the east side of Monticello to allow better reliability to its western service area.

provide multiple power sources to each substation on our system. A substation is the interconnection between the high voltage transmission system and the distribution system where a transformer steps the voltage down. The most common transmission voltage in our area is 115,000 volts, and EEA uses distribution system voltages of 7,200 and 12,500 volts. In an ideal situation, if one substation loses power, the circuits fed from it could be supplied temporarily from another substation or substations. There are limits to "backfeeding" power, but good system design can keep the power flowing while repairs are made.

One limitation to backfeeding for emergency supply is line loss. Line loss is the loss of power that occurs due to the resistance of current flow in a conductor. The longer the distance, the higher the resistance and the more pronounced the line loss and drop in voltage. It works like pressure in a water line. Given a fixed inlet pressure, the longer the line, the lower the water pressure at the outlet. Electric appliances have a minimum voltage at which they can safely operate. Trying to operate an appliance at lower than the minimum required voltage will mean poor performance and can even damage the appliance.

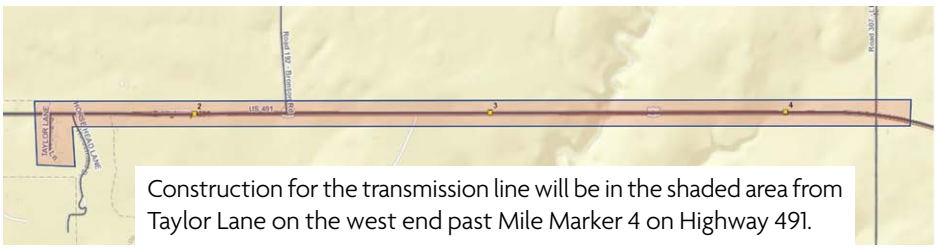
Two of EEA's substations on the western side are fed in-line from another larger substation. Any power disruption at the main substation or between the other two can mean most members in the Dove Creek and Monticello areas are without power. Because of the distances involved, it is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain minimum voltages while backfeeding to supply power when we have an outage.

EEA has been planning for several years to secure an emergency supply feed on its western side. Beginning this month, construction will start on a transmission line connecting a substation owned by Rocky Mountain Power on the east side of Monticello to EEA's Rural Monticello Substation. This connection will allow the western side of our service area to receive power in emergency situations should there be an outage that disrupts the normal supply.

The construction will involve removing and replacing poles along Highway 491 on the east side of Monticello. Safety is very important, and we will be using appropriate markers and signage. Please do your part and obey warning signs and flaggers; watch for equipment that will be involved in the construction; and be patient. Construction is anticipated to be completed in June.

For consumer-members who live in the Monticello area, there will be a few planned outages required for our line crews to safely move load from one circuit to another. Those specific homes and businesses that will be impacted will be notified individually by phone with specific times and dates. If you have a new phone number or are not sure EEA has your correct contact information, please log on to SmartHub and update your contact information, or call EEA at 970-565-4444 or 800-709-3726 and provide updated information.

The upgrade in Monticello is just one way we are working to make sure we deliver power to your homes and businesses when you need it. We appreciate your understanding as we upgrade our distribution system to make it as reliable as possible.



Construction for the transmission line will be in the shaded area from Taylor Lane on the west end past Mile Marker 4 on Highway 491.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25% to 30% less energy than standard equipment.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Co-op Photo Contest Winner April 2022 — *Horses Running at Sunset by Sharma-Jean Chaffe*

ELECTRICITY + WATER = DANGER

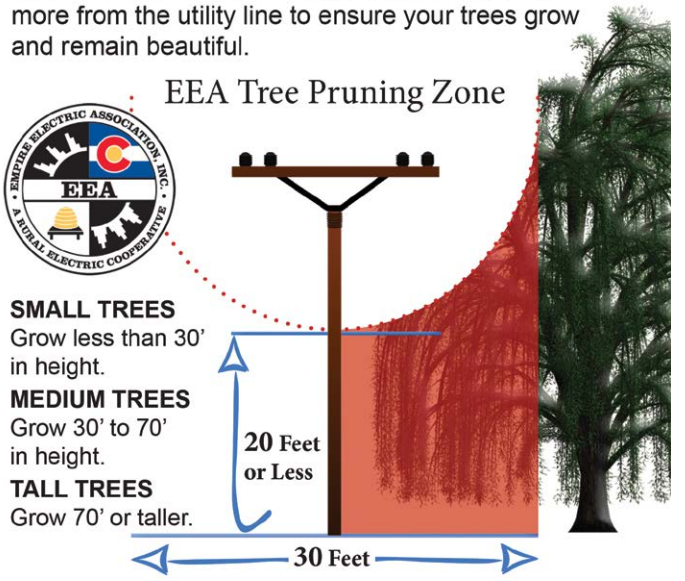
If it's raining or the ground is wet, don't use electric power or yard tools. Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you're wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.

For more tips on how to stay safe around water when working around your home, visit safeelectricity.org.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

Planting trees under utility lines leads to misshapen trees when we trim them for safety. Plant new trees 50 feet or more from the utility line to ensure your trees grow and remain beautiful.



Monthly **Calendar**

April 8 — EEA's board meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at its headquarters in Cortez. The agenda is posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at eea.coop. Members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting restrictions due to health concerns may require the meeting to be held remotely.

April 11 — Lineworker Appreciation Day

April 17 — Easter

April 29 – Arbor Day

Empire Electric Association, Inc.
2022 Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 23, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
Registration begins at 4:30 p.m.

Location will be at the Engineering and Operations Center 23999 Road L.4, Cortez, CO

Dial 811 Before You Dig

Digging without locating underground utilities could leave neighborhoods in the dark, cause thousands of dollars in damages or cause severe electrical shock. This is true regardless of how much area your project will cover or whether you consider the job to be large or small. To help stay safe, make use of the free national underground utility-locating service by calling 811.

The 811 "Call Before You Dig" number will route you to your local utility-locating service. Make sure to tell the operator where and when you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your public utilities with flags or spray paint.

There are different colors of paint and flags that mark underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried:

Red – Electric
Orange – Communications, Telephone/CATV
Blue – Potable Water
Green – Sewer/Drainage
Yellow – Gas/Petroleum Pipeline
Purple – Reclaimed Water
White – Premark site of intended excavation

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain where they are before putting a shovel in the ground.

It is also important to understand that 811 locators do not locate privately installed facilities. If you have any private utilities, you will need to hire a private utility locator. Examples of private utilities include underground electric lines on the customer side of the meter, sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private irrigation water systems or gas piping to a garage or other outbuilding.

Once all your public and private underground utilities are located, it is time to start digging. Colorado law requires you to use reasonable care when digging within 18 inches of the marked utilities. This area is known as the tolerance zone, and hand digging is suggested. In Utah, excavators should maintain a minimum clearance of 24 inches between a marked and unexposed underground facility and the cutting edge or point of any power-operated or earthmoving equipment. If excavation is required within 24 inches horizontally of any marking, the excavation should be performed with extreme care, utilizing hand tools or vacuum excavation techniques. Be sure to wear proper protective gear when digging.

For more information about 811 and digging safety, visit Call811.com and SafeElectricity.org.

YOUR CO-OP EMPLOYEES

Orly Lucero: After more than 32 years of service, Senior Engineering Technician Orly Lucero retired from EEA on March 25, 2022. Orly is well known in our community because of his willingness to serve and his positive attitude. General Manager Josh Dellinger said, "Whenever I asked Orly how he was doing he always responded, 'I'm living the dream!' Coworkers and members alike have appreciated his friendly, optimistic attitude." Orly looks forward to spending more time with family and continuing his passion of serving our community. We wish Orly the best as he continues to "live the dream!"

Ana Jimenez: We at EEA are excited to welcome Ana Jimenez as our new consumer services coordinator. Ana will be the immediate supervisor for EEA's consumer service representatives and will support member service activities including membership applications, account transfers, record maintenance, payments and collections. Ana is a lifelong Cortez resident and has 15 years of customer service experience, including six years as a supervisor. She enjoys traveling with her husband, Christian, and their three children and loves to watch movies. Please join us in welcoming Ana to our co-op team.