

**A budget is telling your money where to go instead of wondering where it went.**

— John C. Maxwell

## SAVING CAN BE ELECTRIC

BY MARK JOHNSTON GENERAL MANAGER



MARK JOHNSTON

**A**long with renewable energy, the most frequent feedback we receive from consumers is that our rates are too high — perhaps somewhat predictable input, given the current economy. Even though our rates have not increased since 2017, the price of almost everything else has.

Our recent quarterly survey reflects this concern. “Help me reduce my bill,” several consumers commented. If you just nodded your head, this column is for you. Here are some easy ways to save money on your electric bill:

### 1. Crunch the numbers

Step one is knowing how much electricity you use and when you use it. Knowledge is power. Mountain Parks Electric’s free SmartHub app ([mpei.com/smarthub-instructions](http://mpei.com/smarthub-instructions)) provides an easy way to use a computer or smart phone to see your hourly usage. The data will help you determine if something is running continually that you have forgotten about, like a crawl space heater or heat tape in the summer.

### 2. Smarter lighting

If you haven’t already, retrofit your home or business with LEDs. They use 75% less energy than incandescent lighting and don’t have mercury like CFLs. The average LED bulb in use 5 hours per day saves you \$10 to \$20 dollars per year in energy costs compared to its incandescent equivalent.

### 3. Smarter thermostats

More than 40% of the primary heating systems in our neck of the woods are more than 16 years old. If you cannot afford a heating system replacement, consider installing a smart thermostat.

Research shows that smart thermostats can reduce your heating costs as much as 23%. MPE offers rebates for these ([mpei.com/rebates](http://mpei.com/rebates)) — and for electric heat pumps, which allow you to supplement your HVAC (which can help offset the price volatility of heating with fossil fuels).

### 4. Shoot for the stars: the Energy Stars

Approximately 60% of our consumers own 10-year-old or older major appliances (refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers). Installing ENERGY STAR appliances will reduce your energy use and save money over time. Visit [mpei.com/rebates](http://mpei.com/rebates).

### 5. Ward off household vampires

An energy vampire is not a Halloween phenomenon. It is an electronic device that consumes energy 24/7/365 even when it is turned off — like phone chargers, household items with a clock, cable boxes and televisions. You can usually spot them when you see an LED light illuminated on your electronic when it is turned off. To stop these vampires, simply unplug the device when not in use or use a power strip that is easy to toggle on and off.

### 6. Sign up for our optional Time-of-Use rate

This rate offers 30% savings during MPE’s “off peak” hours, which include approximately 82% of the week. That’s all hours except, 5 to 10 p.m., Monday – Saturday.

### 7. Avoid the \$2 electronic transaction fee

Another frequent survey comment is related to our \$2 electronic transaction fee. Did you know that you can ditch the fee by signing up for a recurring ACH bank draft. This not only saves you the fee, it saves the cost of a stamp, envelope and your time. Just call us at 970-887-3378, EXT 3 to sign up.

### 8. Electrify Everything

Lastly, consider making qualifying energy investments using MPE’s Electrify Everything program. This program provides financial assistance to upgrade insulation, install a heat pump, commercial EV chargers or maybe even become greener by going solar.

Some of these ideas are easy to implement. Others will take more time and planning. But it’s always good to know that you can take control of your electric usage and not let it control you.

Steve Moran, ACCT 947009205

# CAMPFIRE CUISINE from Kremmling with love

Super Yummy, Stupid Good

Someday, we all might say we knew her when. And then claim with pride her connection to Grand County. Her name is Amelia Benson, the inventor of a campfire-ready chocolate-dipped, pretzel rod bursting in a marshmallow rainbow. It has not yet surpassed hot dogs, corn on the cob and s'mores status on a top ten list of most popular cookout items, but someday, it just might.

It is that good

Amelia's Campfire Pretzel® rekindles that "ol' campfire magic" — sparking chatter and yarn spinning, even halting everyone's texting for a while.

You can eat one as is — in its raw, eye-candy form. Or you can point the

marshmallow end downward into the flame, ignite it and let the flame roast the marshmallows into gooey, charred perfection.

After one bite, someone almost always says, "M m m m . Where'd this come from?"

The answer is Kremmling, Colorado, the birthplace of — quite possibly — the next campfire staple.

### The pretzel namesake

None of Amelia's acquaintances would be surprised to learn that her Italian name means "hard working." Amelia Benson has called the Kremmling area home

for several years now. A self-taught baker, she is locally renowned for her specialties: custom dessert bars, wedding cakes, masterfully decorated cookies and sweets of all kinds. She has even hosted cookie-decorating parties. Mountain Parks Electric published her baking tips in the December 2021 and May 2022 issues of *Colorado Country Life* magazine.

### A campfire experience is born

"Everyone asks how I got the idea," she says. "I wasn't trying to come up with something specifically. It easily presented itself to me in stages, then evolved into what it is now."

She makes the pretzel rods from scratch, dips the rods in chocolate, attaches the marshmallows and finishes by airbrushing the color. They are produced in shared commercial kitchen spaces, including Big Shooter Coffee in Kremmling.

Amelia's Campfire Pretzel officially became a registered trademark in April 2021.

### Campfire cooking history

The practice of cooking or baking over an open flame is at least two million years old, according to some archaeological estimates. Roasted fish, meat and poultry are likely the oldest campfire fare, cooked using a long stick or a skewer. The s'more — originally dubbed "some more" is a 20th century sensation. The recipe first appeared in print in a 1927 Girl Scout leader magazine.

Amelia's Campfire Pretzel is less sweet than a s'more, but still delivers that salty-sweet finale that completes the cookout experience. Could it replace s'mores as the preferred campfire dessert? Quite possibly. There's a twinkle in Amelia's eyes when she talks about consumer reaction and ramping up production and distribution as the demand increases.



### Where to purchase Amelia's Campfire Pretzel® locally:

- Kremmling Mercantile Grocery Store
- Locals Liquors (Silverthorne)
- Middle Park Meat Market (Kremmling)
- River Run RV Resort (Granby)
- Colisco Wearables (Frisco)
- The Flying Crane Boutique (Frisco)

### To place custom orders, for large quantities and shipping options, contact Amelia directly:

- EMAIL: [amelia@ameliascampfirepretzel.com](mailto:amelia@ameliascampfirepretzel.com)
- FACEBOOK MESSENGER: Amelia's Campfire Pretzel @campfirepretzelexperience

### For More information:

- WEBSITE: [ameliascampfirepretzel.com](http://ameliascampfirepretzel.com)
- FACEBOOK: Amelia's Campfire Pretzel @campfirepretzelexperience
- INSTAGRAM: Amelia's Campfire Pretzel

V J Valente, ACCT 600047102

## MPE's Green Power Program

More than \$300,000 in local renewable rebates awarded since 2011



Darcy Macgregor, ACCT 200529002

It's no secret, but it often raises eyebrows of those hearing it for the first time. Mountain Parks Electric, through its Green Power Program, offers one of the most — if not the most — generous residential and commercial renewable rebates in the state of Colorado: \$1,000 per installation for small renewable energy systems: solar, wind or hydropower. To date, rebated systems account for more than 800 kilowatts of installed generation.

MPE's Green Power Program is voluntarily funded by more than 1,500 consumers, approximately 7% of the total consumer base. Contributors donate \$1 to \$100 a month, an adder to their monthly MPE electric bill.

Learn more at [mpei.com/content/green-power-program-history-stats](http://mpei.com/content/green-power-program-history-stats).



## JOIN US FOR LUNCH AND ENTER TO WIN A NEW EBIKE

Kick off the summer with Mountain Parks Electric as we Electrify the Outdoors! Test an electric mower, leaf blower and weed eater then enjoy a free lunch on MPE and register to win a 26" VIVI fat tire eBike.

### ELECTRIFY THE OUTDOORS EVENT

Tuesday, June 7 - 11am-1pm  
Mountain Parks Electric Warehouse  
425 West Agate Avenue  
Granby, CO 80446

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR ELECTRIFY EVERYTHING PROGRAM AT [WWW.MPEI.COM](http://WWW.MPEI.COM)

## WAYS TO SAVE

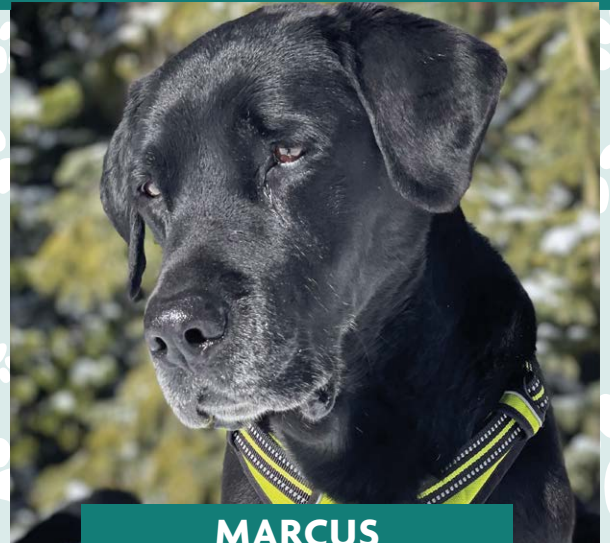
BY LINDSAY MCCANN  
MEMBER SERVICE SPECIALIST

### SAVINGS ARE IN BLOOM

#### Energy-Saving Tips

- Plug electronics that don't need to be reset into a power strip you can turn off when not in use.
- Give your clothes dryer a break. Hang up clothing to dry in the fresh summer air.
- Unplug or turn off any appliances not in use that do not need to be reset.

## PET OF THE MONTH



MARCUS

Marcus is a 10 ½ year old black lab. He trained in Virginia and New York for Guiding Eyes for the Blind and then worked as a guide dog for the past 9 years in southern California. He recently retired and now enjoys hiking on trails and going on evening walks through the neighborhood. Marcus is very friendly, and he wants to let everyone know that. Since he is no longer working, you are welcome to pet him if you happen to see him on the trails.

Owner: John Farabaugh

Email your pet photos and pet bio to [rtaylor@mpei.com](mailto:rtaylor@mpei.com)



## Find Your Name, Win \$5

If you find your name in this magazine, contact Mountain Parks Electric to receive a \$5 credit on your power bill. Winners must contact MPE within one month of the date of issue.

# LOWERING YOUR HOME HEATING COSTS

BY CHRIS MICHALOWSKI POWER USE ADVISOR

If you heat your home with natural gas or propane, you've probably noticed the cost has gone up significantly over the past year. That's because such commodities are subject to price volatility. Although not immune to inflation and other factors, Mountain Parks Electric has been fortunate to not have a rate increase since 2017. When it comes to affordably heating your home, heat pumps are a solution that are now more competitive than ever. MPE offers rebates of up to \$6,000 per installation, and our Electrify Everything program provides 1% interest financing to help lower the upfront cost.



### Five reasons you should consider installing a heat pump:

- Save on heating costs
- Easy to retrofit without tearing apart your house
- Powered by an increasingly renewable grid
- Combine heating and cooling in one system
- Extremely quiet

### The following Grand County heat pump contractors have participated in MPE's quality install program:



**Elite Heat LLC**  
970-798-8167



**NOCO Energy Solutions**  
970-310-6240



**High West Heating & Cooling**  
970-724-9208

## 3 CHANCES TO WIN!

### ENTER MPE'S 2022 BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION DRAWINGS (ON FACEBOOK)



This summer, Mountain Parks Electric, your Touchstone Energy Cooperative, will conduct random drawings to give away one electric chainsaw, one solar generator and one induction cooktop plus cookware.

**Why electric?** The grid is becoming increasingly renewable. Replacing fossil fuel-powered tools and appliances with their electric counterparts can reduce your carbon footprint.



**For more details and to enter**, just visit MPE's Facebook page, comment under the drawing prize post and tell us which prize you most hope to win. *Good luck!*

**Scan this QR code with your smartphone camera to see the post on Facebook and enter to win!**