

# UNDERSTANDING THE WHY OF YVEA RATE INCREASES

BY STEVE JOHNSON PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER



STEVE JOHNSON

## PART 2:

### INFRASTRUCTURE: IMPORTANCE OF SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND UPGRADES

As mentioned in the May 2022 issue, we are providing a three-part series that dives into the “why” of the rate increases that are necessary for Yampa Valley Electric Association to operate in a healthy, fiscally-responsible manner. YVEA is raising rates due to three main drivers: power supply costs, maintaining and investing in our infrastructure, and the rising cost of doing business. Last month I examined the rising cost of the power we purchase from our power suppliers. This month I will focus on the importance of maintaining and investing in our infrastructure.

YVEA maintains nearly 3,000 miles of power lines in our 7,113-square-mile territory. Those power lines, combined with the required utility poles to hold them, substations and other infrastructure, require constant maintenance and upgrades in order to keep your electricity flowing. In addition to purchasing the power that serves you, YVEA spends millions of dollars annually to maintain and improve our electric infrastructure to improve capacity and reliability.

YVEA's electricity distribution system is designed to decrease the voltage from high-power transmission lines to deliver electricity safely to members. The investment in overhead poles, wires, transformers and technology continues to grow with the goal of increasing reliability. Additionally, we have prioritized investments toward Wildfire Mitigation. This not only includes clearing rights of ways throughout our territory, but also means installing more electronic closures to give us the ability to put us in Fire Protection Mode on red flag days or in times of increased fire danger.

YVEA has worked diligently in recent years to upgrade substations, repair and replace poles and wires lost in large wildfires, and to help harden our system to improve reliability for homes and businesses while keeping rates low.

We know these upgrades are necessary for YVEA to continue to deliver safe and reliable power. Reliable power is important to our members and important to us. An outage or even a momentary blink can cause problems for commercial and residential members, which is why we are constantly working to harden our system and improve reliability.

For more details on our rates and answers to some frequently asked questions, please visit: [www.yvea.com/2022-rate-increase](http://www.yvea.com/2022-rate-increase).

# YAMPA VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JULY 2022



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Steamboat Springs, CO 80487



#### STEAMBOAT SPRINGS SERVICE CENTER

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#### Yampa Valley Electric Association

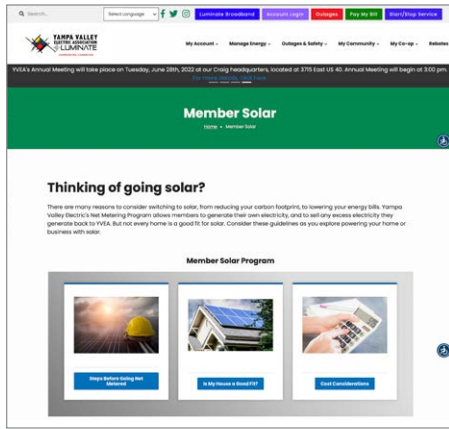
is a cooperative that provides value to its member-owners through technology that delivers safe and reliable electrical service in an environmentally and financially responsible manner.

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



## YVEA RULES & REGS CHANGES

The YVEA Board of Directors has approved changes to the YVEA Colorado Rules and Regulations, effective August 1, 2022. To see the updated Rules and Regulations as well as the redlined copy, please visit: [www.yvea.com/service-rules-and-regulations](http://www.yvea.com/service-rules-and-regulations)



## OUR NEW SOLAR WEBSITE IS HERE!

Have you been thinking about switching to solar, but aren't really sure where to start? Our new Member Solar website is here to help. We have the answers to many of your solar questions, from making sure your house is a good fit to understanding the costs associated with solar, the process for interconnecting to the YVEA grid, and how to find a qualified solar installer. Visit [yvea.com/member-solar](http://yvea.com/member-solar) to learn more.

## WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

### ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A WILDFIRE?

With the increasing frequency of wildfires throughout the year, it is important to be prepared for the worst-case scenario. Here are a few quick tips to be aware of:

1. Have a safety kit or go bag prepared, should you have to leave with a moment's notice.
2. Sign up for emergency alerts through your county.
3. Be aware of downed power lines and stay at least 35 feet away from them.

For a complete list of what you need in your go bag, how to sign up for alerts, and more storm and wildfire preparedness plans, visit: [www.yvea.com/outage-center](http://www.yvea.com/outage-center).

### Wildfire Evacuation Checklist

If evacuation is anticipated and time allows, follow this checklist to give your family and home the best chance for survival. Complete the Family Communications Plan on the opposite side for steamboating/boating.

#### EVACUATION ORDER

Leave immediately (Do not delay to gather vehicles or prepare to leave). Follow any directions given in the evacuation order.

#### EVACUATION WARNING

Leave as soon as possible. A short delay to gather your Go Bag and prepare your home may be okay. Leave if you feel unsafe or conditions change.

#### IF TIME ALLOWS

##### INSIDE THE HOUSE

- Shut all windows and doors (interior and exterior) and leave them unlocked.
- Remove combustible window shades and curtains; close metal shutters.
- Move furniture to the center of the room away from windows.
- Leave of indoor and outdoor lights.

##### OUTSIDE & IN NEIGHBORHOOD

- Place combustible outdoor items (patio furniture, toys, doormats, trash cans, etc.) in garage or 30' from structures (optional: place in pool).
- Shut off gas at the meter or propane tank; move small tanks at least 15' away from combustibles.
- Connect garden hose with squeeze-grip nozzles to outdoor spigot for use by firefighters.
- Fill water buckets and place around decks and terraces.
- Clean your gutters and blue leaves away from house.
- Back your car into driveway, loaded, with doors and windows closed.
- Prop open fire and side gates; remove obstacles to emergency exit.

#### WHEN YOU LEAVE

##### PROPERTY DEPARTURE

- Leave immediately if ordered.
- Don't wait for an evacuation order if you feel unsafe or conditions change; leave early if unsure.
- Always deliver or deliver to neighbors.
- Carpool with neighbors to reduce traffic.
- Take only essential vehicles with adequate fuel.
- In your car, turn on headlights, and AC, turn to local radio.
- Drive slowly and deliberately; be observant.
- The best evacuation route is usually the one you know best. Take the fastest paved route to valley floor, away from the fire if possible.
- Proceed downhill, away from the fire if possible. Know two routes. If roads are impassable or trapped, take shelter in a building, car or an open area; park in an open lot if trapped on a hillside; stay far from vegetation, power lines, and other hazards.
- Inside a building or vehicle, stay in the center; if trapped, stay in the center; if trapped, stay in the center.

#### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN

HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION	SCHOOL, CHURCH, WORKPLACE	EMERGENCY MEETING LOCATIONS
Name _____	Name _____	Location 1 _____
Address _____	Address _____	Instructions _____
Phone _____	Phone _____	Location 2 _____
Email _____	Email _____	Instructions _____
Name _____	Name _____	Location 3 _____
Address _____	Address _____	Instructions _____
Phone _____	Phone _____	INSURANCE
Email _____	Email _____	Home/renters Policy _____
Name _____	Name _____	Auto Policy _____
Address _____	Address _____	Medical Policy 1 _____
Phone _____	Phone _____	Medical Policy 2 _____
Email _____	Email _____	OTHER
Name _____	Name _____	Physician _____
Address _____	Address _____	Vaccination _____
Phone _____	Phone _____	Radio: 550AM, 1230AM, 88.5FM, 93.5FM, 97.5FM, 99.5FM, 101.5FM, 103.5FM, 105.5FM, 107.5FM
Email _____	Email _____	Newspaper: Steamboat Pilot & Today

#### WILDFIRE & EMERGENCY 'GO BAG'

- Put together an emergency 'Go Bag' in advance for each family member and keep it easily accessible. Plan to be away from your home for an extended period of time. Each person should have their own GO BAG.
- Bandana, N95 respirator, goggles, leather gloves, long shirt & pants, boots & hat
- Flashlight and headlamp with spare batteries
- Extra car keys, credit cards, cash
- Map (marked with two evacuation routes if possible)
- Prescription medications
- Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
- First aid kit
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports, insurance policies, etc.)
- Pet food and water, leashes, pet supplies and medications
- Water bottles and food
- Sanitizer, supplies, etc.
- Change of clothing
- Items to take only if time allows
- Easy carried valuables
- Family photos, small heirlooms and other irreplaceable items
- Personal computer data and digital information backups on hard drives and/or disks

## WHAT THE HECK IS STREAMING?

There was a time when, if you wanted to watch a movie or television program on your TV, you'd turn it on, wait for the picture tube to warm up, and then you'd be able to watch what was available. You were also limited by the power of your antenna, the strength of the signal that was being transmitted, and the small number of channels available. This meant that frequently people were only able to see fuzzy black and white images of programs they didn't really want to watch.

With the rise of the VCR in the 1980s, people were delighted to find they had a choice about what they wanted to watch and when. Video rental stores, both large and small, opened so you could rent your favorite movies. Video tapes were eventually displaced by DVDs, and then Blu ray discs.

Now physical media is now on the decline as streaming has taken hold.

### HOW DOES STREAMING WORK?

Simply put, streaming today means sending and receiving packets of data in a continuous flow over the internet, rather than the public airwaves. These packets of data contain the digital information that represents the media content you're watching, listening to or playing.

Nowadays, people are able to stream what they want whenever they want — movies, TV shows, concerts, music and video games — on a variety of devices, such as their phones, tablets, PCs, laptops and Smart TVs.

As long as you have a reliable broadband connection, the device you're using can play the content smoothly without interruption.

If you've ever watched videos on Netflix or YouTube, or listened to music on Spotify, you've already been streaming. And if you've ever spent too much time waiting for a movie or video to stop buffering, you've felt the effects of having internet service that wasn't serving you the bandwidth you required.

Want to know more about streaming and whether or not you have the broadband speed you need? We're here and we'd love to hear from you!

### LUMINATE IS HERE TO HELP!

At Luminate, we value our role as your trusted advisor when it comes to making the most of our internet services.



# WHERE YOU PLANT YOUR TREES MATTERS

Summer is here and it is time to get planting, right? Before you start digging, have you given thought to what you're planting and where you're planting? Living in the arid West means putting time, thought and consideration into what you're planting and where, to make sure you're keeping your home as safe as possible.

## WHAT SHOULD I PLANT?

Native trees that can survive in our climate, shrubs that help pollinators and any greenery that requires less water should all be considerations when it comes to planting. Through your local state Forest Service, you can find out what trees or shrubs would best suit our environment here:

- For Colorado, visit [csfs.colostate.edu/](https://csfs.colostate.edu/)
- For Wyoming, visit [wsfd.wyo.gov/forestry-assistance-programs/community-forestry/educational-technical-resources](https://wsfd.wyo.gov/forestry-assistance-programs/community-forestry/educational-technical-resources)

## I HAVE MY TREES OR SHRUBS. NOW WHAT?

An important and largely forgotten **next step is to call 811** before you dig. Many utility lines are buried, and 811 offers a free-to-you service to come and do utility locates on your property. Call before you dig, as any damage to buried lines could not only be deadly but may also be costly. And if you're bringing in large equipment to plant or dig, always be aware of overhead lines.

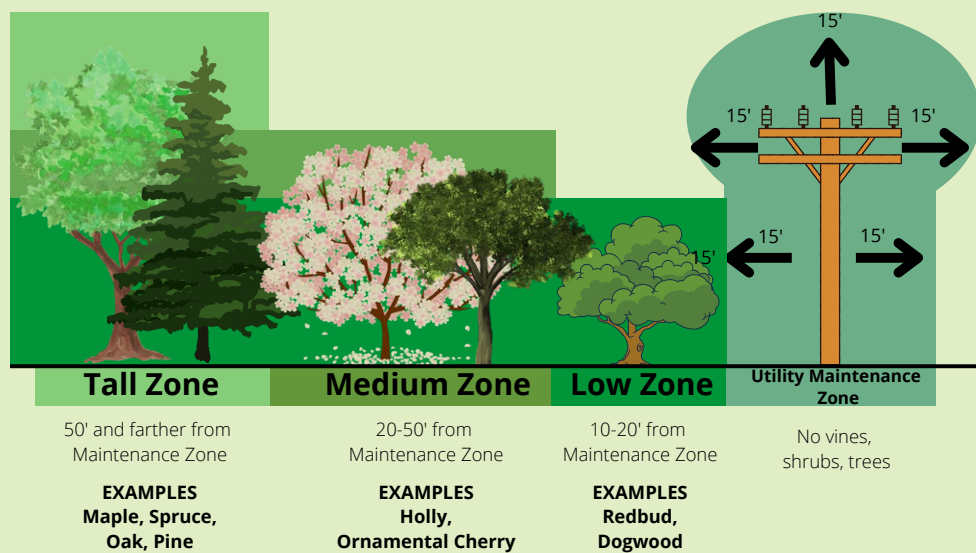
Planting in the arid West means you need to plan for defensible space, as well as staying clear of the utility right of way. Keep in mind that while shrubs may stay relatively small throughout their lifetime, trees will undoubtedly grow over time. When you plant a pine tree, learn about how wide and tall it will be in 50 years and take that into account when planting. Below is a graphic that shows how to plant and give your home shade while also creating a defensible space.

**This graphic shows** that how far away from the utility you should be planting your trees depends on the height at maturity of the tree you're planting. Keep in mind that anything that is built, planted, or installed within the right of way can be removed by a utility company.

## This is a lot to think about for planting trees. Why does it matter?

With an increased risk for wildfires, we all need to do as much as we can to protect our homes and communities. You can protect your home by strategically planting trees near your home, but not so close that should a tree catch on fire, your home would be in danger. The work you do now could help firefighters save your home in the future. And you can help protect your communities by planting away from utility lines. During summers of low moisture and high winds, a tree or tree branch encountering our line could lead to a fire. YVEA commits millions of dollars every year to help clear rights of way around our system, but we need your help too, and this is why where you plant matters.

**Thank you for doing your part in planting smart!**



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

# YVEA proud to announce our Standards of Apprenticeship have been accepted by the Department of Labor

YVEA worked with the Department of Labor to have YVEA's apprenticeship program recognized. When a lineworker goes through the YVEA apprenticeship program, they have met all the listed criteria in the program, as well as having passed all of their required testings. They are not only recognized by the course they are taking during their apprenticeship, but they are issued a Journeyman Certification by the Department of Labor, which is recognized nationwide. This Department of Labor certification means that they are recognized at any future electric utility they would apply to in order to continue their career path. President and General Manager Steve Johnson, along with Operations Manager John Cromer, created this program so we could provide additional documentation to our apprentices as they continue their careers. We are proud to know that this certification

shows that YVEA's apprenticeship program meets the highest of standards set forth by the Department of Labor. YVEA has felt the strains of a tightened labor market, and this certification will help us to attract more apprenticeships to YVEA, which will in turn aid us in fulfilling open positions in our operations department. **All of us at YVEA are immensely proud of this program and look forward to continuing our storied tradition of providing the best training for our apprentices.**

## JOIN US AT COFFEE WITH YOUR CO-OP

Do you have questions about what's going on your the co-op? Would you like to learn more about programs we have? Now is your chance to meet with us and have a chat! We're kicking off our Coffee with Your Co-op series, where we will visit the communities in our service area. Come grab a cup of joe and learn more about what we as your co-op are up to!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 13, 2022

North Routt: Clark Store

8 – 10 a.m.

July 20, 2022

Hayden: Wild Goose Coffee at the Granary

8 – 10 a.m.

Follow us on Facebook for announcements on more upcoming events!



**LUMINATE AND YVEA  
OFFICES WILL BE  
CLOSED FOR THE 4TH  
OF JULY.**

We wish you and  
your family a safe and  
happy 4th of July.





## Breathe Easier.

Regularly changing your cooling system's air filter provides multiple benefits.

- Improved indoor air quality
- Cleaner home
- Fewer indoor allergens
- Improved system efficiency



Green Choice is an attainable renewable energy program that allows our local community to set renewable portfolio goals that are reachable within a short period of time. Green Choice is now available to any member who want to offset their energy usage with renewable energy certificates. Because the YVEA power mix is already 42% renewable, our members only need to offset 58% of their usage to become a 100% clean energy user. As we add more renewables to our power mix, we will adjust the percentage Green Choice participants need to purchase to reach 100%. To sign up, please visit [www.yvea.com/green-choice-program](http://www.yvea.com/green-choice-program).



## ENERGY HERO TIP OF THE MONTH

### SUMMER ENERGY SAVINGS

While our YVEA service territory is known as an outdoor paradise with moderate temperatures and lots of sunshine, summers can get warm during the day. Stay cool and comfortable this summer with these no-cost and low-cost energy efficiency tips.

- Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.
- If you have air conditioning, set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you are away.
- Turn off lights, ceiling fans and any portable fans when you leave a room.
- Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space. It's low maintenance and uses the sun to generate electricity

## SUMMER CONSTRUCTION

This summer you will see YVEA and Luminate crews working on various construction projects. From Lynx Pass to North Routt, and in Hayden, Craig and Baggs, teams and contractors will work to improve the reliability of service you receive.

We know construction can be frustrating, and we thank you for your patience as we make improvements throughout our territory. Please give crews space while they are working and contact YVEA at 970-879-1160 with any questions about the ongoing construction.

### **Mt. Werner Substation Work Continuing Throughout the Summer**

YVEA is working on improving service and reliability with work taking place at the Mt. Werner Substation (near Casey's Pond), and continuing up to the base of Christie III.

### **YVEA continuing a capital work project running from Tamarack to Steamboat Blvd.**

This project will be a combination of excavating and boring roads and driveways to run underground conduit to improve reliability.