

KNOW THE SIGNS OF A SCAM

BY KAREN ALLEN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas or electricity connection have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the COVID-19 pandemic. As consumers became more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce, scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device via email, phone or text.

COMMON TYPES OF SCAMS

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in-person, by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time to think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call us at 970-242-0040. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, gvp.org. If the scam is by email or text, delete it before taking any action. If you're unsure, you can always contact us directly, or use SmartHub, our secure online portal, to check the status of your account. Remember, Grand Valley Power will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice, and we will never ask you to pay with gift cards.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a Social Security number for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone

number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it, and if possible, block the sender. When in doubt, contact us.

DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST SCAMS

Be wary of calls or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

We want to help protect our community against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim. To learn more about how to report imposter scams or see the most recent ones reported in Mesa County, visit gvp.org/cybersecurity-and-scams.



KAREN ALLEN

MY MARKETPLACE – A NEW ONLINE STORE COMING SOON!

BY CHRISTMAS WHARTON COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Smart technology can transform your home, making certain tasks easier, energy bills cheaper and your house safer. But with the plethora of smart devices and appliances out there, you may be overwhelmed as you consider what to buy. As your trusted energy partner, Grand Valley Power is preparing to launch an online marketplace, stocked with top-rated, energy-efficient products to purchase. GVP is providing this added value to all our members to help make your home and wallet a little greener.

Keep the following tips in mind as you plan out your smart home to ensure that you avoid the stress while enjoying all the benefits smart technology has to offer.

[continued on page 8]



[continued from page 7]

DO:

Make your home more secure

Many smart devices can make life more convenient, but some also keep your home and family safe. Smart doorbells, locks and security cameras can help you catch a burglar in the act, know when your family arrives home safely, and even lock up if you forgot to before heading out.

Buy compatible devices

If you already own some smart technology, you should choose others that work with your current setup. Smart devices can communicate through Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or a smart home hub that could use Zigbee or Z-Wave protocols. Ensure that any prospective devices can connect seamlessly.

Check for rebates

Some smart tech can be pricey, but you don't have to empty your bank account to create a smart home. When you combine sale prices with instant rebates, savings can add up. GVP now offers rebates on smart thermostats that can help you save energy and money on the one of the largest energy users in your home. Plus, you can schedule your thermostat to reduce consumption during on-peak hours (4-9 p.m.), all through the thermostat's app.

DON'T:

Invest in smart tech you won't use

Adding a bunch of smart devices and appliances may seem like a great idea, but will you actually use them? A smart thermostat, speaker and power strip are a good start, but before purchasing something large like a smart clothes washer, consider if the features are worth the cost and effort for your family.

Be afraid of the install

Setting up smart devices can seem daunting, but it's surprisingly easy. Once one device — like a smart speaker — is plugged in and connected to Wi-Fi, other devices can be easily integrated by following step-by-step instructions in the connected app.

Assume your router can handle it all

Some routers provided by internet providers can begin to struggle to provide a consistent connection if more than 20 devices are connected. Consider adding a Wi-Fi extender or additional router to boost the signal throughout your home.

Now that you know what to look for and what to avoid, you can make the smart move of integrating devices to save time, energy and money. To explore GVP's new marketplace, visit gvp.org/marketplace for additional details.

GVP RECEIVES 5 NATIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN CO-OP COMMUNICATION

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Grand Valley Power recently received recognition in the national 2022 Spotlight on Excellence Awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The Spotlight on Excellence Awards program recognizes the outstanding work created by communications professionals from electric cooperatives across the nation. Entrants competed with electric cooperatives of similar size in 18 categories. Over 600 entries were submitted to the Spotlight on Excellence program this year and Grand Valley Power received five national awards.

GVP received a Gold Award in the Best Total Communications Program category for the co-op's communications efforts during the Winter Storm Uri — Xcel Fuel Cost Adjustment. GVP communications team, Christmas Wharton and Dana Pogar, were given 21 days to prepare a strategic communications plan that often takes months. "Our top priority was to provide members with the information and resources needed to navigate this price

spike," GVP Communications Manager Christmas Wharton said. While GVP was not the only electric utility impacted by this storm, the cooperative displayed outstanding leadership and advocacy for members during this time.

Speaking of leadership, GVP also received a Silver Award in the Best Wild Card category for our High Voltage Electric Demonstration. During the pandemic, the Mesa County Safety Fair was moved to a virtual setting. As a result, GVP created a virtual high-voltage electric demonstration and lesson plan for students and educators across Mesa County. To view this demonstration, visit gvp.org/safe-kids.

From all of us at GVP, we want to thank CREC, NRECA, and especially our members for supporting the cooperative as we continue to innovate and excel in co-op communications. Here is the complete list of GVP's awards:

- Gold Award in the Best Annual Report category for "Grand Valley Power Annual Report — 85 Years of Staying Power"



Dana Pogar (left) and Christmas Wharton were nationally recognized for their outstanding work as communications professionals.

- Silver Award in the Best Wild Card category for "High-Voltage Demonstration"
- Gold Award in the Best Graphic Design for "85th Anniversary Logo"
- Gold Award in the Best Individual Ad for "Glow Halloween"
- Gold Award in the Best Total Communications Program for Xcel FCA Communication Campaign

MAINTAINING RELIABLE AND SAFE POWER TAKES ALL

BY CHRISTMAS WHARTON COMMUNICATION MANAGER

Recently, the news about the Supreme Court deciding to restrict the Environmental Protection Agency regulatory authority on carbon emissions made waves across the industry. Both sides of the fence shared differing opinions on the matter, of course. What's important to know is that electric co-ops, such as Grand Valley Power, balance environmental protection with the need to provide reliable, safe and affordable electricity. Co-ops work with policymakers to help shape a just and reasonable transition that recognizes the need for environmental protection; maintains a diverse and reliable energy mix; preserves co-op flexibility to meet new requirements; and limits the economic impacts on members.

"The circuit court's decision would unconstitutionally allow EPA to determine the type of electric generation used within the states' borders. Congress has recognized that every state is different, and the court's decision should recognize this fact," National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Jim Matheson said.

"The energy decisions we make today will determine whether there are sufficient resources for the lights to come on tomorrow. Electric co-ops are investing in a diverse energy mix to keep the lights on reliably and affordably for American families and businesses. As our nation depends on electricity to power more of the economy, policymakers must recognize the need for time, technology development and the importance of always-available energy sources to maintain reliability and affordability. That's particularly true in light of recent warnings that dozens of states may struggle with rolling blackouts this summer due to policies that promote the disorderly retirement of existing generation resources."

Today, GVP's renewable resource mix is at 41.2%, with the majority comprised of wind. Our power supply is mostly provided by Xcel Energy, although a portion of our power also comes from Western Area Power Administration and cooperative-owned renewable generation. Combining all three sources, GVP has exceeded the minimum renewable energy standard and

files the Renewable Energy Standard report each year with the Colorado Public Utilities Commission.

While renewable energy use continues to increase, we will still depend on traditional forms of energy, such as natural gas or coal, to keep power flowing reliably to your home. After all, solar and wind energy are referred to as "intermittent" power since the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow.

As the energy industry continues to evolve, GVP strives to take advantage of technology advances and market opportunities as they become available. In order for GVP to meet the growing demand for renewable energy and ensure the reliability and affordability of our power supply, we must constantly make operational adjustments that takes all power supply resources into consideration.

For additional information about renewable energy standards, please visit gvp.org/CleanEnergy.



CHRISTMAS WHARTON

WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2022 LINWORKER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Congratulations, Tyler!



GRAND VALLEY POWER
Empowering Lives with Homebased Service
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
A Division of Colorado Mesa University



TYLER DRAPER
2022 WCCC Electric Lineworker
Scholarship Recipient

SUPPORT OUR HOMETOWN HEROES

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Grand Valley Power is supporting our troops this summer by partnering with Operation Interdependence.

This nationwide 501(c)(3) organization provides military care packages and support to active military members overseas and veterans at home. We encourage our members to join us in giving back to our hometown heroes by participating in the following fundraising efforts:

CARE PACKAGE SUPPLY DRIVE

GVP is an official drop-off location for care package items for the armed forces. Please consider supporting Operation Interdependence by donating care package items until August 17. All donation items can be brought to the main office Monday to

Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For an extended list of suggested donation items, please visit gvp.org/hometown-partnerships.

THANK YOU NOTES

GVP encourages members to express thanks by writing a thank you note or card to troops. All notes will be included in care packages sent to U.S. war heroes overseas from Operation Interdependence. Coloring sheets will also be available online and in GVP's main lobby for younger members who would like to express their gratitude more creatively. Notes and coloring pages may be delivered to the main office until August 17, 2022. For additional letter guidelines, please see the "Do's and Don'ts" document by visiting gvp.org/hometown-partnerships.



DANA POGAR

DONATE TODAY

Operation Interdependence accepts donations toward purchasing care package supplies, shipping materials and postage to send care boxes to troops overseas. To donate, please visit oidelivers.org.

From everyone at GVP, we thank you for helping us recognize our hometown heroes. We encourage members to follow us on Facebook and Twitter @GVRuralPower or by searching "Grand Valley Power" for more information and updates on this community impact project.



Donate Care Package Items!

In 2021, Operation Interdependence sent over 33,000 kits to troops overseas. Support our hometown heroes and donate today!

Drop off items through August 17, 2022.

GVP.ORG/HOMETOWN-PARTNERSHIPS

