

# THE POWER OF WORKING TOGETHER

BY TOM WALCH CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



TOM WALCH

Long-time Grand Junction residents are accustomed to seeing a small forest of utility poles near the Riverside and 29 Road intersection. These poles have been there for decades. They don't deliver electricity to anyone. They don't provide telephone, cable or internet service. But these poles are an essential part of the infrastructure that provides safe, affordable and reliable electricity to folks across Colorado and the Mountain West. These poles are part of an electric lineworker training facility used by Mesa Hotline School. This nonprofit, volunteer-run organization has provided critical training and education to lineworkers since 1966. Today, about 80 electric cooperatives, municipal utilities, trade associations, manufacturers and consultants belong to the organization. The Mesa Hotline School provides one of the best training deals out there, as Hotline School board members' and instructors' volunteer efforts and in-kind donations of materials and equipment from vendors, cooperatives and other member utilities keep costs low.

The school was started more than a half century ago by a group of operations managers and superintendents from Western

Slope rural electric cooperatives working closely with Mesa State College. As you can see, the innovative public-private partnerships that our local university is known for have been around for a long time.

The facility's property used to be known as the "College Farm." Hotline School volunteers built the training field. The school uses it for continuing training and education for lineworkers a few weeks out of the year. The rest of the year it's used by Western Colorado Community College as part of its electric lineworker training program.

This year, the Mesa Hotline School is facing one of the biggest challenges in its 56-year history. It's being forced to relocate due to commercial development of the existing site. The new site is only about a quarter mile away. However, it still requires the relocation of poles, transformers and underground facilities, along with enough road base to keep an old cow pasture from becoming a quagmire any time it rains.

The volunteer efforts and generous in-kind donations made by Colorado's electric cooperatives and other members that keep the school affordable are simply not enough to support the relocation. The school

has set a \$100,000 fundraising goal to help fund the move. Grand Valley Power's Board of Directors has stepped up and responded with a \$5,000 donation, using funds from its unclaimed patronage capital fund. Other cooperatives from across the state are following suit, and the school is on its way to meeting its funding target.

The kind of cooperation that makes the Mesa Hotline School successful is getting a little harder to find these days. But you can find it in abundance in the rural electric cooperative world. Cooperation among cooperatives is an overarching cooperative principle. This cooperation helps keep our costs down, expand service options, and provide resources that otherwise might not be available. As our work with the Mesa Hotline School demonstrates, GVP has a great history of working with its fellow cooperatives. We know this is a powerful way to help bring value to our members.

## COMMENTS TO THE CEO

You are a member of a cooperative and your opinion does count. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please let me know by writing to Ask the CEO, P.O. Box 190, Grand Junction, CO 81502, or send an email to me at [twalch@gvp.org](mailto:twalch@gvp.org). Check our website at [gvp.org](http://gvp.org).

## BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Grand Valley Power board meetings are open to the members, consumers and public. Regularly scheduled board meetings are held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the headquarters building located at 845 22 Road, Grand Junction, Colorado.

The monthly agenda is posted in the lobby of the headquarters building 10 days before each meeting and posted on the GVP website. If anyone desires to address the board of directors, please let us know in advance and you will be placed on the agenda.



MESA  
HOTLINE SCHOOL

*Cooperation Among Cooperatives*

# SUPPORT MESA HOTLINE SCHOOL

Help us relocate our facilities and support electric lineworker education!

*Learn more*  
[mesahotlineschool.com](http://mesahotlineschool.com)



# MAPPING OUTAGES TO ENHANCE CO-OP PREPAREDNESS

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

In 2021, Grand Valley Power’s System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) was under 45 minutes. This number is an important statistic that measures the total number of outage minutes per consumer over an entire year. While these results are trending in the right direction, past performance does not guarantee future success. To keep us on the right track, GVP is exploring the capabilities of data mining and mapping technology to help reduce outages in the future.

## OPPORTUNITY AWAITS

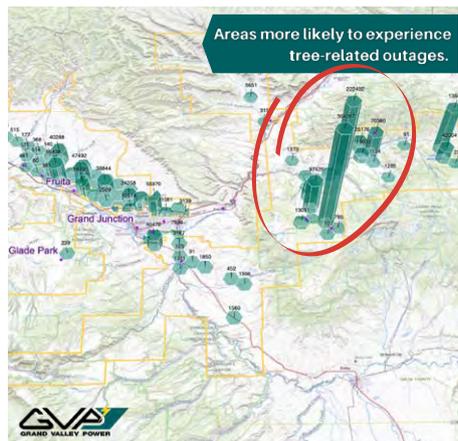
GVP utilizes an outage management system to track and log power outages on our distribution system. When an outage occurs, it is displayed on a map. Dispatch personnel input data about the outage, such as date, time, duration, cause and equipment affected. There’s only one major problem: When the outage ends, it disappears from the map, and no location information is saved. To combat this software flaw, GVP looked to its geographic information systems (GIS) analyst, Ethan Schaecher, for assistance.



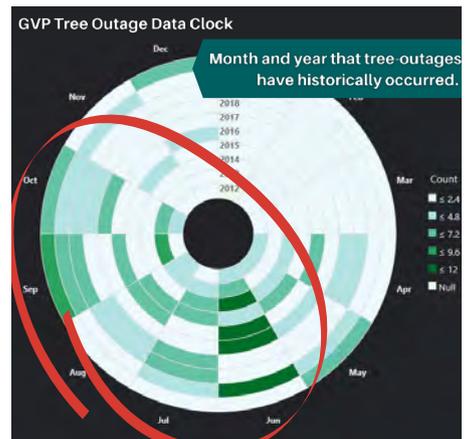
**GIS ANALYST  
ETHAN SCHAECHER**

outages as points, I categorized the data into 12 different outage cause types, such as trees. I also had the ability to visualize the outage severity for each cause using hexagons on a 3D map,” Schaecher explained.

Using the graph below, you can see that over the past 10 years, GVP members located on the Grand Mesa have experienced the most tree-related outages. This is unsurprising as the Grand Mesa is home to some of the most unique typography and forestry on the Western Slope. “The 3D map illustrates tree outage severity across GVP’s distribution system. The height of the hexagons depicts the number of minutes customers were out due to tree outages in that area on the map,” Schaecher said. Simply put, the taller the bar graph, the more likely a tree-related outage will occur.



To take this a step further, Schaecher compared the cause of the outage to the time it occurred using a modern graphing technique, better known as a data clock. “Each ring represents a year, and the innermost ring is 2012. The darker the bin, the higher the outage count for that given month of a year. As you can see, tree outages occur



most frequently in the summer months, particularly in June,” Schaecher said.

Schaecher applied the methodology to 12 outage causes:

- Trees
- Bird or Animals
- Ice or Snow
- Lightning
- Power Supply
- Equipment Damage or Failure
- Electrical Overload
- Wildfires
- Public-Caused
- Wind
- Planned
- Unknown

You can view them in an online, interactive map by scanning the QR code below.

While you may only see the tip of the iceberg, this GIS technology provides an excellent opportunity for cooperatives nationwide. For decades, maps have been a critical component of GVP’s success for viewing, editing and inspecting data on co-op lines. However, GVP can now visualize patterns in time and space to help solve complex problems and increase reliability to you, our members.

To learn more about Schaecher’s project, visit <https://bit.ly/GVP-GIS>.

**There’s more to the story! To view the full interactive map, scan the QR code!**

or visit <https://bit.ly/GVP-GIS>

SCAN  
ME



## Stay Visible and Safe on Halloween

BY RITA-LYN SANDERS DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

This Halloween don't let the frights extend beyond those little ghouls and goblins in search of treats. Keep scary moments to a minimum by following our safety tips and visiting us at Grand Valley Power.

We want to help make your evening safe. **Stop by our offices — costumes are encouraged — on Friday, October 28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for a Halloween goodie bag of treats, crafts and a glow stick.** We'll be waiting in the lobby at 845 22 Road in Grand Junction to see our members, or you can text us upon arrival for curbside pickup. (Visit our Facebook page at [facebook.com/GVRuralPower](https://facebook.com/GVRuralPower) on October 28 for the number to text.)

We've also put together a list of Halloween safety tips. Of these, visibility is paramount. It's important to be seen to stay safe after dark. You can help drivers see you by choosing costumes in bright colors and wearing or carrying reflective materials and flashlights.

- Be seen! Keep trick-or-treaters safe by choosing highly visible costumes. Incorporate reflective materials into your child's costume or attach battery-operated lights, flashing lights or glow sticks. Carry a flashlight or wear a headlamp.
- Consider wearing costumes that do not obstruct your vision or restrict your movement.
- Choose fire-resistant costumes and materials. Avoid costumes with long, trailing fabric.
- Dress for the weather.
- Join your kids for trick-or-treating and help them make safe decisions.
- Always cross roads at street corners, using crosswalks and traffic signals.
- If you're driving, slow down and stay alert for kids and families.
- Do not accept treats unless they are commercially wrapped; and throw out anything with a broken seal or torn wrapper.
- If you have food allergies, check labels.
- Never use electrical products that are marked "for indoor use" outdoors. You could get shocked — or worse.
- Inspect decorations before use and discard any with cracked, frayed or bare wires.
- Turn off electrical decorations and extinguish open flames before leaving home or going to bed.
- Use only electrical lights and decorations that are approved for safe use by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, Intertek (ETL), or CSA.
- Keep flammable decorations such as dried flowers, cornstalks, hay and crepe paper away from open flames and other heat sources — including lightbulbs and heaters.
- Use a flashlight or battery-operated candles in a jack-o-lantern to prevent burns and fires.

Join us for a spooky celebration with costumes, sweet treats, and **FREE** glow sticks!

**JOIN US**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28**  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**GRAND VALLEY POWER**  
845 22 Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81505

**GVA**  
GRAND VALLEY POWER

**GVP.ORG/HOMETOWN-PARTNERSHIPS**

# EMPOWER HOUR

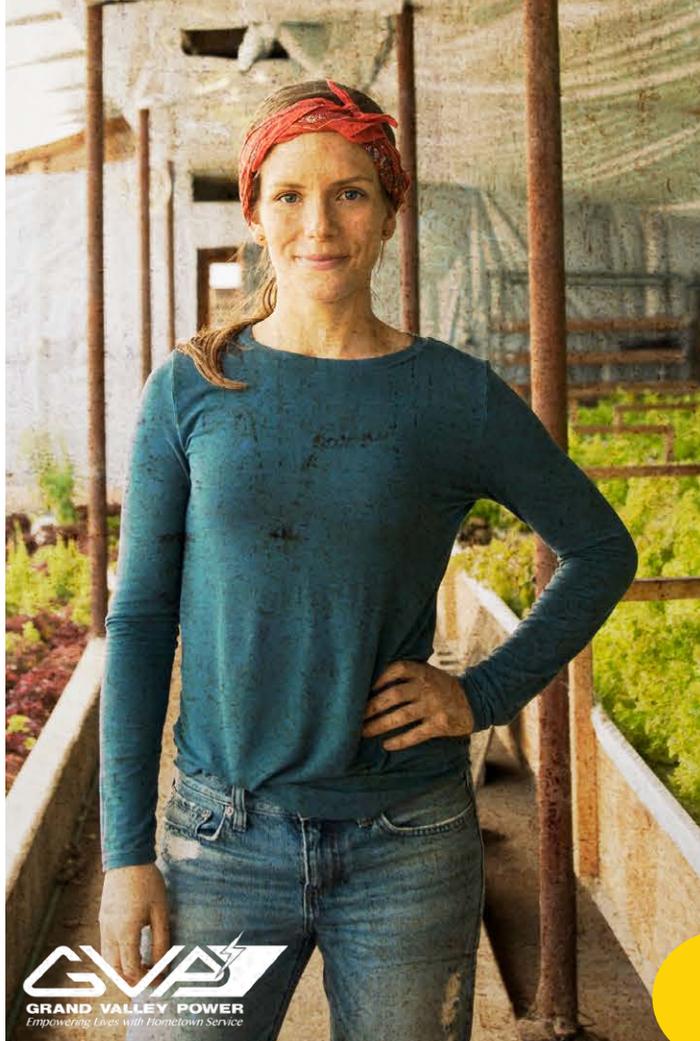
## Educational Opportunity for Members

As your hometown electric cooperative, it's our mission to provide you, our members, with the education, training and information to make smart energy choices.

This month, Grand Valley Power welcomes our members to attend the first-ever Empower Hour on Thursday, October 27, from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Ute Water Conservation District. This event

is designed to provide co-op members an in-depth perspective of GVP's Time-of-Use rates, ways to save energy, energy service opportunities and more.

If you're interested in attending this event, we kindly request that all guests RSVP by Monday, October 24. Please visit <https://bit.ly/GVPEmpowerHour> to RSVP.



# EMPOWER HOUR

Join us for an informational session about Grand Valley Power's Time-of-Use rates, ways to save energy, co-op news and more!

  
**Thursday, October 27, 2022**  
**5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.**

  
Ute Water Conservation District  
2190 H 1/4 Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81505

Please RSVP by Monday, October 24, 2022.  
To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/GVPEmpowerHour>



### CO-OP CALENDAR

- October 22 - Fruita Truck n' Treat | 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Fruita Civic Center
- October 27 - Empower Hour | 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. | Ute Water Conversation District
- October 28 - Glow Halloween | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | GVP Headquarters
- October 31 - Happy Halloween!

