



DAVID CHURCHWELL

K.C. ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2023

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Our mission is to provide our members with safe, reliable service at the lowest cost, while maintaining an environmentally responsible, accountable and sustainable operation now and in the future.

2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

BY DAVID CHURCHWELL GENERAL MANAGER

I hope everyone enjoyed Christmas and safely rang in the new year. The older I get, the quicker the years seem to fly by. I'm hopeful we can keep the pandemic in the rearview mirror this year and see some easing in the supply chain problems that have impacted each of us. I'm grateful that K.C. has been able to keep rates stable the past several years and have been able to put some money back into our members pockets with our recent capital credit retirement and December bill credit.

In 2022, we continued to make progress on our four-year construction workplan. K.C. crews upgraded several miles of three-phase overhead line around the town of Cheyenne Wells and worked extensively on the voltage conversion project in Hugo. These projects were constructed entirely by K.C. crews and will increase system capacity and improve system reliability. K.C. crews also continued the installation of infrastructure and equipment for our new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system. Even though supply chain issues continued to challenge our ability to receive material for this project in a timely manner, significant progress has been made.

In June, our annual meeting was held in Kit Carson and we celebrated 76 years since K.C. was first incorporated. Dave Ritchey from Cheyenne County, Wayne Parrish from Kit Carson County, and Eric Poss from Lincoln County ran unopposed and were elected to serve another three-year term on the board of directors.

In July, K.C. Electric was once again recognized by our statewide organization CREA for another year of no lost-time

injuries. Not only did K.C. employees work the entire year without a lost-time accident, but they also worked the entire year without experiencing any reportable medical incidents. This is a great accomplishment for K.C. employees, considering the varying and sometimes dangerous work conditions they must endure throughout the year.

K.C. is governed by democratic principles and you, the membership, elect our board of directors to guide and govern the cooperative. Along with approving rates and our annual budget, the board of directors also monitors K.C.'s equity, debt, capital credits and overall financial health.

In October, the K.C. Electric Board of Directors approved a general capital credit retirement of more than \$1.2 million; in addition, more than \$77,000 in capital credits were returned to estates throughout the year for a total 2022 capital credit retirement of over \$1.29 million.

Our power supplier, Tri-State G&T, lowered the wholesale rate it charges us for electricity by 2% on March 1, 2021, and an additional 2% on March 1, 2022. In October, the K.C. Board of Directors approved a staff recommendation to pass this savings on to you, our member-owners. When you received your December bill, you may have noticed a credit that was applied to each of your accounts. This bill credit reflects the 4% wholesale rate reduction.

The K.C. board and employees continue to make every effort possible to keep our costs down even with the current level of inflation and supply chain issues affecting our industry. Future bill credits may not be possible if material, equipment and

YOUR CO-OP NEWS

wholesale power costs continue to increase and put upward pressures on our rates.

In November, the board of directors deemed K.C.'s financial status healthy and supported a staff recommendation for no rate increase in 2023. Even though we have seen significant price increases for almost every product or service we purchase, the K.C. Board of Directors made it a goal for staff to continue to focus on controlling costs by managing debt, making investments to improve operating efficiencies and implementing technologies to improve internal processes so that we can keep our rates stable and our service reliable.

Legislative and environmental changes continue to keep the electric industry changing at a rapid pace. Colorado legislation mandated that coal generation facilities

in the state be shut down by the end of the decade and replaced with renewable energy sources. This transition will continue to put upward rate pressure on the power we purchase from Tri-State G&T. Extensive planning will need to be undertaken to ensure that reliability isn't negatively impacted.

The year ahead will continue to bring new challenges both financially and operationally for us, but the board of directors and employees of K.C. Electric continue to do everything in our control to keep expenses down and customer service and reliability high.

On behalf of everyone at K.C. Electric, I want to wish each of you a successful 2023.



Scholarship Applications Due Soon

Application forms and copies of rules and procedures for the scholarships are available online at kcelectric.coop.

Copies are also available by calling George Ehlers at K.C. Electric at 1-800-700-3123.

All completed applications must be received at K.C. Electric by **February 9, 2023**.

Send all applications to:

K.C. Electric Association, Inc.
Attention: George Ehlers-
Manager of Member Services
PO Box 8
Hugo, CO 80821

If you have questions or need an application mailed to you, please call George Ehlers at 719-743-2431.

Pole Testing Reminder

Pole testing using 4-wheelers and trucks on K.C. Electric's right of way begins in the Burlington and Seibert areas soon. If you have questions of a suspicious vehicle on or around your property, please do not hesitate to contact K.C. Electric directly for information.

Claim Your Savings



Each month, K.C. Electric consumer-members have a chance to claim a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. All you must do is find your account number, call the Hugo office at 719-743-2431 and ask for your credit. The account numbers are listed below. How simple is that?

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine (check the date on the front cover).

- **Rebecca Pease, Seibert** — 810400002
- **Dennis Towns, Stratton** — 1113240002
- **Lee McCormick, Flagler** — 1107140000
- **Jerry Clevenger, Flagler** — 1116360000

In December, two consumer-members called to claim their savings: Ellen Smith, Kit Carson; and Todd Beek, Arapahoe.

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment such as printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.

Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting.



KNOWING THE RIGHT THING TO DO AROUND POWER LINES CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Stay in the car or cab and call 911

Seventeen-year-old Mary Gehrig was driving home from a friend's house on a stormy June night in North Dakota. Although some cars had pulled over to wait out the rain and wind, Mary was close to home and thought she could make it.

Around 25 minutes into her 30-minute drive, Mary turned onto the county road that would take her home. Although there was near-zero visibility due to the storm, which had become much more severe than originally forecast, she noticed two white lines in the distance. As she got closer, she realized those lines were across the road, in her path, and they were anything but small.

"I realized I was not going to (be able to) drive over it," Gehrig recalls. She slammed on the brakes and her car struck the first of the objects lying across the road, one of two high-voltage transmission power lines. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's electrical system was immediately damaged, and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

The next thing Mary did was pick up her phone to call her parents. When her dad heard there was a downed power line involved, he told her to stay where she was, remain in the car and call 911.

Fire Chief Rich Schock, who was part of the team at the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a pad-mount transformer or other related equipment, drivers should remember these safety tips:



 Mary Gehrig

- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility workers say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.
- Call 911 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.

Exiting the vehicle is the last resort and should be attempted only if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.

To watch Mary's full story or to learn more, visit bit.ly/3j5WmGX.

YOUR CO-OP NEWS

2023 K.C. Electric Board

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE SOON

CHEYENNE COUNTY, KIT CARSON COUNTY AND LINCOLN COUNTY

Three directors will be elected to the K.C. Electric Board of Directors this year: One from Cheyenne County and two from Kit Carson County. Directors' terms expiring are: Robert Bledsoe from Cheyenne County, Dan Mills from Kit Carson County, and Kevin Penny from Kit Carson County.

To be nominated, a person must be a member of K.C. Electric and a bona fide resident within the director's district for which he/she is nominated.

THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE YOUR 2023 ELECTION COMMITTEE:

Archie Cloud P.O. Box 51 Kit Carson, CO 80825 719-962-3236	Troy McCue 221 Pine. Arriba, CO 80804 719-768-3493	Tim Pautler 20587 CR 33 Stratton, CO 80836 Cell 719-349-1424
George Ehlers PO Box 815 Hugo, CO 80821 Cell 719-740-5002	Jeff Cure PO Box 370 Burlington, CO 80807 719-346-7080	

THE TIMETABLE FOR NOMINATIONS

Official nominating petitions shall be issued by the association not earlier than ninety (90) days prior to the meeting at which the election is to be held. Petitions must be signed by at least fifteen (15) members, not more than one (1) member in a joint membership, of the association and returned to the association for filing with the board no less than sixty (60) days prior to the election. Qualified candidates may pick up official nominating petitions at K.C.'s Hugo or Stratton office. Official nominating petitions will be issued on March 3, 2023 and must arrive back at K.C.'s Hugo or Stratton office by April 2, 2023.

Circulators of the petition should attempt to verify the accuracy of the name and address of each signer and must require that the signature take place in the presence of the circulator. The circulator should sign the affidavit at the bottom of the petition and have the affidavit notarized before submitting the petition to K.C. Electric. Please print the name as it appears on the electric bill. If you are a spouse of a member and not listed on the electric bill, please indicate by printing your name as well as signing the petition. If your listing is a business and the name on the bill is a business, please print the name of the business, then print your name and sign the petition.

Candidates must turn in a short biographical paragraph with the petition to Member Services Manager George Ehlers located at the Hugo office.

Directors are elected at the Annual Meeting, June 1, 2023, in Stratton, Colorado.

Thank You, K.C. Electric Employees

K.C. Electric Association's greatest asset is its employees. We would not be able to provide the exceptional service we do without the continued hard work and dedication of our staff. Currently, K.C. has 24 employees with a combined total of 329 years of service. Employees receiving years of service awards in 2022 were:

- Paul Norris – Operations Manager – 30 years of service
- Kristie Salvador – Billing Supervisor – 20 years of service
- Austin Talbert – Lead Lineman – 15 years of service
- Louden Hornung – Area Foreman – 15 years of service
- Jodi Withington – Cashier/Receptionist – 10 years of service



Power Lines that Gallop Could Mean an Outage

“Galloping” power lines may sound ridiculous, but they really do occur and can be dangerous. These lines can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage, or even fall to the ground.

“When wet snow or ice builds up on power lines, it changes the shape of the normally round and aerodynamic line, giving it an uneven (asymmetric) profile,” CREA Director of Safety Jenna Hirsch explains. “High winds can then start to move the lines up and down in a bouncing motion which is called ‘galloping.’ If the lines swing together this can result in a fault or short that can cause an outage.”

Once galloping starts, there is not much a power company can do to alleviate it until winds die down. This is why many power lines have objects such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These are devices placed on power lines to help reduce the galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

If you encounter galloping lines, stay away, warn others to stay away, and contact K.C. Electric. In addition to the possibility of power outages, there is a danger of the lines or other electrical equipment breaking loose and falling, and of ice being dislodged from the lines and falling to the ground.

Hirsch adds, “Galloping lines aren't the only danger in a wind storm. Strong winds can break power lines or utility poles, damage equipment, and blow trees or their limbs into lines, which can cause power outages or interruptions. Damaged lines can also fall to the ground where they can energize nearby objects and risk accidental contact with people or vehicles.”

Storms at any time of the year can pack damaging winds. The Safe Electricity program and K.C. Electric urge you to pay attention to and be aware of weather forecasts so that you can be prepared and not get caught off guard by a wind or ice storm.