

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2023



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 521
La Junta, CO 81050-0521



STREET ADDRESS

27850 Harris Road
La Junta, CO 81050



ph 719-384-2551
tf 800-332-8634
fax 719-384-7320
web www.secpa.com



facebook.com/secpaonline

Our primary mission is to provide high-quality, reliable electric service at a reasonable cost to our members, improve their quality of life through new technologies and services, be a visible and active member of the community and serve our members with respect, courtesy and responsiveness.

SOUTHEAST COLORADO
POWER ASSOCIATION IS
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER



HOW DO WE MAINTAIN RELIABILITY?

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO
KEVINB@SECPA.COM



KEVIN BRANDON

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) is the nation-wide entity responsible for the reliability of the electric grid, and their 2022-2023 Winter Reliability Assessment should provide a wake-up call to us all. NERC's assessment finds that a large portion of the North American Bulk Power System is at risk of insufficient electricity supplies during peak winter conditions. Specifically, higher peak-demand projections, inadequate generator weatherization, fuel supply risks, and natural gas infrastructure are contributing to risks to the grid across North America.

The report isn't all bad news though. There's some good news later in the report for Southeast Colorado Power (SECPA) and our members as their regional evaluation for our part of the country determined that the expected generating resources meet operating reserve requirement under normal and extreme peak-demand scenarios this year. Is that good enough? Can we take that assessment and rest assured that our grid will remain reliable? Unfortunately, the answer is no. We will likely have a battle ahead of us to maintain the reliability which we've all come to expect.

One major risk to grid reliability stems from the current legislative and regulatory environments in Colorado. The legislature has mandated an energy transition that will shut down hundreds of megawatts of dispatchable resources such as coal and natural gas power plants and replace them with intermittent resources such as solar and wind farms by the end of this decade. This transition, in and of itself, is

not the problem, but it does require that every utility engage in a thorough planning process to carefully implement the changes without negatively impacting grid reliability, which leads me to the current regulatory situation in Colorado.

SECPA's power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., along with many other generation operators in the state are required to undergo periodic resource planning exercises under the watchful eye of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. The reliability problem is that this planning requirement does not extend to all utilities that serve in the state. Xcel Energy is concerned enough with this gap in regulatory oversight that they are introducing a bill in the 2023 legislative session to address the issue.

There's an old saying—a lack of planning on your part doesn't constitute an emergency on my part. Unfortunately, that couldn't be further from the truth when it comes to the electric grid. Xcel Energy is the "Balancing Authority" responsible for ensuring that there are adequate generation resources to serve the majority of Colorado, and not just for their own consumers. Our electric grid is like a perfectly balanced seesaw, where the amount of electricity being produced must match the amount of electricity that consumers want to use at that moment. If there's too little generation running for the electric demand, then the whole thing starts to fail. Historically the amount of generation running was ramped up and down under control of the Balancing Authority to match the electricity consumed, but as dispatchable generators

are replaced with renewable resources which cannot be controlled in the same way, Balancing Authorities may have to instead control the amount of electricity consumed in the form of controlled black-outs. If any entity serving load in Colorado fails to adequately plan and ensure their generation resources can serve their loads, then there could be reliability issues across the entire system which we share.

The bill Xcel is proposing isn't perfect, but we are working with like minded entities across the state to amend the bill. It is possible that we will need your help to get this bill across the finish line at the Colorado legislature. While it's too early to tell, we may ask you to participate in a letter writing campaign during the legislative session. It is imperative that we let our elected representatives know that unreliable electric service is not an option, and every utility must pull their weight to avoid causing problems for all of us. WIN*Tim Beebe acct 801000802

DITCH YOUR PHONE WHEN DRIVING

Activities like texting, talking on the phone, reading, and watching a video significantly impair a driver's attention. Always put your phone away and pay attention to the road and driving conditions. Keep an eye out for potential hazards, such as road construction, downed power lines and accidents, so you can make it home safely.



KEEP SAFE AND WARM THIS WINTER



When the chill of fall and winter set in, be aware of **potential fire hazards that are lurking in your home.** Whether keeping warm with heat from your furnace, space heater, fireplace, or electric blanket, **Safe Electricity offers these tips to prevent a fire in your home:**

Always place your space heater on a **steady surface** and away from curtains, tablecloths or other flapping fabrics. Use a space heater with an automatic shut-off switch.



Have your furnace inspected annually.



Inspect electric blankets for scorch marks or visible damage regularly.



Be sure your **chimney is clear** before each use, and cover your fireplace with a screen to keep children and pets away from flames.

For more **tips on fire prevention**, visit 

Save the Date!

You're Invited to SECPA's
Annual Meeting

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

Eads Community Building
Eads, CO 81036

Registration 5:00 p.m.

Dinner 6:00 p.m.

Meeting 6:45 p.m.

BOARD DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

SECPA Board positions up for election in 2023 are:

- District 4: Western Baca County & Eastern Las Animas County (incumbent is Director Randy Phillips)
- District 5: Otero County (incumbent is Director Kevin Karney)
- District 7: Crowley County (incumbent is Director Clint Anderson)

Cash prize drawings throughout the meeting!



SECPA \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS

Southeast Colorado Power Association (SECPA) is once again making scholarships available to area high school Seniors. **Students' parents must be members of SECPA.**

SECPA is offering ten \$1,000 scholarships and also administers through Tri-State, an additional two \$1,000 scholarships. Eligible applicants must be a high school Senior graduating in 2023 who plans to attend a two or four-year college, or trade or other non-traditional secondary educational institution.

Students interested in applying for the scholarships are asked to submit the completed SECPA application form available on the SECPA website at <https://www.secpa.com/scholarships>. Applicants will be required to provide a school transcript, letter of recommendation and a short essay on the benefits of cooperative membership.

Applications for the SECPA scholarships are due no later than FEBRUARY 13, 2023. For additional information, please visit the SECPA website or contact Debbie Howard at 719-383-1314.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2023



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YOU COULD BE A WINNER THIS MONTH

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719.384.2551 or 800.332.8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill. **Last month's winner was Susan Lusher.**

