



GCEA

POWERING POSSIBILITIES

MARCH 2023



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We want to be social with you!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to find out about GCEA events, energy efficiency tips, safety tips and so much more.



facebook.com/
GunnisonCountyElectricAssociation



@gcea_news

GCEA OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

FUEL SWITCHING: IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

BY ALANTHA GARRISON ENERGY USE ADVISOR



ALANTHA GARRISON

Here at GCEA, we believe there are many benefits to switching from natural gas or propane to electricity to power your appliances and heat your home. Some of those benefits include cleaner air, fewer emissions during use and lower operating costs. One way to fuel switch in your home is to swap out a gas stove for an induction cooktop. Induction cooktops generate electromagnetic energy that interacts with compatible pots and pans to turn the cookware into its own heat source. This allows for faster cooking because the heat doesn't have to transfer through the cookware's surface. Using induction, a pot of water boils in less than half the time — 90% of the heat made by induction reaches the food, compared to 65%-70% for electric stoves and 40%-55% for gas stoves.

Cooking efficiency was a primary reason for Bud and Carol Spector of Gunnison to make the switch from a gas stove to an induction cooktop. "When we heard about the induction stove, we researched it as an alternative to both an electric and a gas stove. It was said to boil water much faster and permit much tighter control of the heat generated. Reviews of the new stove online and in Consumer Reports all indicated that the stove was user-friendly. So, after much consideration, we decided to purchase an induction stove. We have been very pleased with the new stove. It does boil water very quickly and it also allows tight control over the heat, much like the control available with a gas stove. Furthermore, the top is much easier to clean."

Financial reasons influenced their decision as well. Bud notes, "We added solar panels to our house in the summer of 2021. From 2021 to 2022, we tracked our electricity usage. At the end of that time, we found that

we were generating more electricity than we were using. The result was that, at the end of the year, we received a small cash refund from GCEA for selling that excess electricity back to the grid. Going forward, we decided to use the extra solar energy generated rather than sell it back for a refund. The retail rate value of electricity used was greater than the wholesale rate credited for a unit of electricity. So, it was better financially to match what we generated with what we used. When we learned of that differential, we decided to convert our gas appliances to electric."

Besides the offset of the Spector's solar production, they took advantage of GCEA's rebate program to defray some of the costs. GCEA and Tri-State G&T offer a \$500 rebate to members who replace a natural gas or propane stove with an induction cooktop or who install one during new construction. An induction cooktop can cost between \$1,000 and \$4,000; the average cost is \$2,200, including installation and labor costs. In addition to GCEA rebates, through the Inflation Reduction Act, low- to moderate-income households may receive rebates covering 100% of costs for low-income households and 50% of the costs for moderate-income households, up to \$840 for their purchase, including installation and labor costs.

Combining these rebates can bring the cost of installing an induction cooktop within reach for more of our members. It can also make cooking more efficient and improve indoor air quality. This may make fuel switching from gas to an electric appliance the right move for you.

For more information on induction cooktops and rebates, contact me at 970-641-3520.



POWER WITH PURPOSE

ANNUAL MEETING 2023

Come connect with us at the Gunnison headquarters for a barbecue, displays, door prizes, and more!



Tuesday, June 20, 2023, 5 p.m.



GCEA Headquarters
37250 W. US Highway 50
Gunnison, CO 81230



GCEA

Value of Electricity



1 cup
from the
coffee shop

38 hours
of brewing
at home

Based on 13 cents per kWh, a \$5 cup of coffee and a coffee maker that uses 1,000 watts/hr.

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures.

Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: energy.gov





▲ Line Locator Lisa Lucas works to find and mark underground lines at a job site in Crested Butte..

SAFE DIGGING – CALL 811 – DON'T BE THE CAUSE FOR AN OUTAGE

Springtime is upon us, and that means thoughts of skiing and snowmobiling are coming to an end and digging, planting and building are now on our minds. You may have springtime dreams of beautiful landscaping or moving ground for a new foundation. But before you dig, it's wise to think first about what might be underground. Here are some helpful tips for safe spring digging:

1. **LINE-LOCATE REQUEST:** Visit colorado811.org or call 811 to submit a line-locate request. Line locators from all of the utilities will be notified of your request to have the underground cables, wires and utilities marked before you begin excavating so that you are safe and do not destroy important underground facilities. This service is free.
2. **PLAN AHEAD:** Submit your request on Monday or Tuesday for work planned for an upcoming weekend, providing ample time for the approximate location of lines to be marked.
3. **CONFIRM:** Make sure all lines are marked before starting a project. GCEA Line Locator Lisa Lucas marks electrical lines, cables and conduits with red paint. Other utilities are marked with different colors. If you provide your email address

to 811, you will be notified when the work is completed by each utility. When working with a contractor, confirm with them that lines are identified before they begin their work.

4. **ALTERNATE PLANS:** Consider moving the location of your project if it is near utility line markings.
5. **ALLOW FOR MARKING TOLERANCE:** Locators are given an 18-inch grace tolerance on each side of their paint. Allow for extra tolerance and opt for hand digging in those areas.

If you dig into a line, please do not touch it. Call GCEA to report the issue.

To report a cut line, please include:

- Your name and phone number
- Your service address
- When the incident occurred

Remember, you can be seriously hurt if you dig into an electrical line, so be sure to call 811 before you dig. Underground utilities are extremely dangerous, and having paint on the ground in many instances can prevent major harm or fatalities. It is always better to know before you dig.

March Employee Anniversaries

Erica Soerensen
GIS Administrator, 28 years

Sherry Shelton
Executive Assistant, 17 years

Alantha Garrison
Energy Use Specialist, 16 years

Tracy Wheeler
Crested Butte Member Support
Specialist, 13 years

Antoinette Wilson
Member Support Specialist, 7 years

Brent Boyce
Lake City Lead Lineman, 7 years



▲ GCEA Lineman Ty Percival uses special equipment to locate lines.

COMMUNITY ELECTRICAL SAFETY PROGRAMS

We at GCEA aim to educate our members and our communities about where their electricity comes from and how to use it responsibly. GCEA has developed electric safety and efficiency programs suitable for all residents in our community. Programs are available for schools, local civic groups, EMS, fire and law enforcement. These programs are free of charge, and all are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

Teaching about electricity in schools and at community events

Electricity 101 – A discussion on how electricity is generated and distributed and how to use it safely. A “show and tell” of lineman gear, a demonstration of a “human



▲ Alliy Sahagun does a fun activity about electricity at Gunnison Library story time.

atom,” a demonstration of a “human electric circuit,” and other fun, interactive activities are part of the presentation. This program (30-45 minutes) is tailored to each age group.

Future of Electricity – A discussion on the difference between renewable vs. non-renewable energy sources and how to conserve and be more efficient with electric usage. A demonstration of GCEA’s electric vehicles is included in the presentation (30-45 minutes).



▲ A GCEA lineman performs a high-voltage demonstration.

High-voltage demonstration trailer

GCEA has a high-voltage demonstration trailer that is used as an educational tool to illustrate how dangerous it is to make contact with high-voltage wires.

Call GCEA at 970-641-3520 to schedule your free electric education presentation or high-voltage demonstration. Both programs teach safety and make a lasting impression on your community group or school.



SPRING ELECTRICAL SAFETY WHEN WORKING OUTSIDE

As spring returns and ice and snow begin to melt, many homeowners return to outdoor chores. Before you work outside, Safe Electricity and GCEA want to remind you to keep electrical safety in mind.

Winter storms may have damaged trees. While you may want to trim and beautify these trees, if they are near power lines, leave the trimming to professionals. If you try and do the job yourself, you or your tools may come in contact with power lines.

If you plan to work with a ladder, remember to stay far away from power lines. If it is damp or windy, save outdoor chores for another day. Water conducts electricity, and strong winds could blow a ladder out of control and into a power line.

As you head outdoors, always look up and check to see how close your work may be to overhead power lines — and make sure you avoid contact with them. If you see a problem, alert GCEA.

Planning to use some power tools in your efforts? Do not stand in puddles or wet areas when you use them — wait for those areas to dry out before beginning work. Always check the condition of cords before plugging in electric tools and use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter if your outdoor outlets don’t have GFCI protection. GFCIs monitor the flow of electricity and can detect situations where an electric shock is likely. They shut off power to electronics before a shock happens.