



GCEA

POWERING POSSIBILITIES

APRIL 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.



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GCEA OFFICE HOURS:

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

**NEW LOOK FOR YOUR BILL
CHECK OUT OUR NEW LOOK!**

We are excited to reveal a sleek new look for your GCEA bill. The new bill design is easier to read with the total amount due, current charges and important messages front and center at the top of the bill. You can view and compare your monthly energy use over the past 12 months with our easy-to-read usage chart.


On the back of the bill, you will find payment options, monthly marketing and communications news and a place to update

your contact information. The new design will also allow us to provide specific information related to your energy rate. We hope you like our new look.

To view our new bill, please scan the QR code. Here you will find “How to Read Your New Billing Statement.”

You can also view your bill information anytime and sign up to receive notifications from SmartHub when your bill is ready. To sign up for SmartHub, scan the QR code below.



 Your GCEA bill has a new look. Scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone to get information on how to read the new bill.



HELP GCEA CELEBRATE LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY APRIL 18



▲ Gunnison Linemen Dustin Cadwell, Ty Percival, and Robert Summer discuss a job.

Not all heroes wear capes. Ours wear hardhats. A lineworker's top priority is ensuring we have reliable electricity for everyday life. GCEA has 10 linemen who are responsible for keeping the power on by maintaining 1,097 miles of distribution line across a widespread service territory.

No matter what Mother Nature has in store, GCEA linemen are always ready to answer the call, ensuring that you have safe and reliable power. Even when the power is on, they are continually maintaining our power lines to prevent outages. GCEA linemen also take the time to ensure electrical safety in our communities by providing safety presentations in our local schools.

GCEA linemen also help other co-ops in need. Over the last couple of years, they have helped with power restoration in neighboring communities.

Our local communities are brighter, safer and stronger because of the selfless sacrifices of these unsung heroes. We asked our linemen what they love about their job and their responses below provide a great perspective of what they do every day.

LAKE CITY LINEMEN **Logan Rhodes, journeyman lineman**

In my career of over 12 years as a lineman, I have been involved with many challenging, rewarding projects, but the one that stands out above them all was going to work on storm damage in Alamosa in 2021. We were called to help San Luis Valley REC restore power to the rural communities around Alamosa after a storm ripped down tons of distribution and transmission structures. I believe we worked on this project for around five 16-hour days to get the poles replaced and the lines back up. The gratitude from the community was incredible, especially since this happened in December — it was really cold, which kept people from having necessities like heat and running water in their homes. When it was all said and done and we looked back on our work, it brought a lot of satisfaction knowing that more than just rebuilding a bunch of power line, we helped people in a time of need.



▲ Gunnison Lineman Justin Hulick removes a meter.



▲ Crested Butte Linemen Andy Holsteen and Jeff Hanggi talk about a job.



▲ Lake City Lineman Logan Rhodes performs a safety demonstration.

Brent Boyce, lead lineman

I feel very fortunate to have a job working outside in the mountains with a crew that I trust, and the feeling is mutual. I also find satisfaction in building new lines or rebuilding old lines to help ensure reliability.

CRESTED BUTTE LINEMEN

Jeff Hanggi, working foreman

There have been a lot of challenging projects and they are all rewarding when they are done; I can't narrow it down to just one!

Andy Holsteen, journeyman lineman

My favorite part of being a lineman is outage restoration. When the power is out, there is a real sense of purpose and importance to what we do. The crews come together to get the job done no matter the difficulties involved. When we throw in the final fuse or close the last switch after work has been completed and see lights come on in homes and businesses, there is a great feeling of pride in what we do.

Mike Penty, journeyman lineman

My favorite part of being a lineman is the problem-solving aspect of the job. It is nice to be able to tackle an issue and see the results of our work.

GUNNISON LINEMEN

Dustin Cadwell, working foreman

One of the most memorable jobs I helped with was when we traveled to San Luis

Valley to help with power restoration after a big storm in December 2021. Seeing the impact of our work for the people in that community was very rewarding and helped me feel a sense of accomplishment in my job as a lineman.

Robert Summer, journeyman lineman

My favorite part of the job is the guys I get to work with.

Justin Hulick, journeyman lineman

The most challenging, yet rewarding, project I have worked on personally was mutual aid projects in other locations — working wild-fire restoration in Granby or ice storms in the San Luis Valley. They were such a learning experience, and it was an honor getting to help people in a tough situation.


Ty Percival, apprentice lineman

Outage work provides me with challenges to find the problem and solution. But when I do find it and get the power on, it's always rewarding.


Kevin Purkat, apprentice lineman

My favorite part of being a lineman is working with experienced linemen who teach me a lot and getting to troubleshoot the problem so we know how to fix it.



 A GCEA lineworker looks over a workplan before heading out to the field.



 GCEA linemen are dedicated to keeping the lights on for members.

Dan Oberosler Hangs Up Hard Hat

Crested Butte Lineman Dan Oberosler retired from line work in January. GCEA is lucky to still have him around — just in a new role.



After 30 years on the line, Dan traded linework for the metering department. He is now the AMI Technician/Meter Reader working alongside Lead Meter Technician Jeff Stanley. He brings a lot of lineman knowledge to the Metering Department.

Welcome to the office crew, Dan.



LINeworker SCHOOL

Are you interested in becoming a lineworker? The electric co-op industry is rapidly growing and in need of more people to join the lineworker trade. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING THE TRADE?

This line of work has been around for decades and is not going anywhere. Lineworkers are some of the top-paid employees in the electric industry. If you are looking for a stable job and great income, this career is for you. GCEA offers scholarship opportunities for men and women interested in joining the electrical lineworker field. For more information, please scan this QR code with your smartphone.



Power Outage Safely Restored by GCEA and Tri-State G&T



▲ GCEA linemen and Tri-State employees work together on the Lake City outage in February.

An unplanned power outage in the Lake City area on Monday, February 6, affected approximately 1,900 GCEA members and knocked out power to homes and businesses for almost 28 hours. The outage started at 1:06 a.m. due to a T1 circuit switcher opening at the substation. Power was restored to all affected GCEA members by 4:55 a.m. on Tuesday, February 7, 2023.



▲ GCEA linemen work with the Tri-State crew to assemble a mobile substation to help with the outage in Lake City.

Tri-State G&T, which jointly owns and maintains the substation with GCEA, contacted GCEA immediately when the Tri-State circuit switcher failed, and GCEA crews were dispatched shortly after. Efforts to energize the circuit switcher failed, and Tri-State got to work organizing a plan to move a mobile substation from Montrose to Lake City while simultaneously looking

for parts to repair the damaged equipment.

By mid-morning on February 6, 2023, GCEA was able to restore power to the three-phase line through Lake City to Henson Creek, providing power to critical infrastructure including the medical center, Lake City Community School and the Armory. Meanwhile, Tri-State worked with Colorado Department of Transportation to expedite the clearance to move the mobile substation along Highway 50 in difficult snow conditions. This involved providing a CDOT plow escort for the large semi-truck trailer to pull the equipment through Little Blue Canyon. The mobile substation arrived in Lake City just after 4 p.m.

The GCEA linecrew met the Tri-State crew around 4:30 p.m. to begin the process of setting the mobile substation into position and hooking up the equipment to the Lake City infrastructure. Because the mobile substation contains sensitive equipment and had traveled a significant distance, necessary check-out and testing processes were required to ensure the equipment was safe and ready for reliable use.

Once the equipment was verified, the crews began transferring load onto the mobile substation. Crews were in different locations throughout the Lake City area to switch load from the SKITO Substation in Gunnison and transfer that load onto the mobile substation in Lake City. This configuration required taking some outages for a short period of time and then restoring them to a new source of feed. Crews continued to rotate through the morning until service was restored to all GCEA members affected. After it was determined that power would be restored at 4:55 a.m., crews continued to check on all members to ensure power was on.

GCEA CEO Mike McBride was pleased with the teamwork and unified approach of the Tri-State team to safely restore power. “Our ability to restore power to remote parts of our service territory such as Lake City in such an unusual circumstance is a great example of the dedication of GCEA’s linemen and support staff, as well as the value of our relationship with Tri-State and its crews,” McBride said.



▲ GCEA linemen discuss an outage issue in Lake City in early February.

“As electric cooperatives, GCEA and Tri-State share a mission to serve those at the end of the line, and working together, our crews and staff worked to marshal the equipment and resources needed to safely restore power,” said Duane Highley, Tri-State CEO.

GCEA expresses deep appreciation to its crews and the support of their families and to Tri-State G&T for its help and support during this outage. We also appreciate the patience of the members in the Lake City area. Safety and reliability are top priorities for GCEA and together with Tri-State, power was restored as quickly and safely as possible.