



THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR FEEDBACK!

Weatherization and Affordability Top of Mind for Members

BY VIRGINIA HARMAN GENERAL MANAGER

In my short time at Mountain Parks Electric, one of the most impressive and member-focused practices I've seen is the cooperative's quarterly survey process. Most cooperatives collect member satisfaction survey data from a small sampling of members annually or biannually. Here at MPE, we conduct quarterly surveys that are open to all members. This constant member feedback circle keeps us informed and helps ensure that we are delivering the best possible experience to you and your neighbors.

Each quarter, we provide the survey results to our board and do our best to address the issues that you bring to our attention. The most recent survey (December 2022–March 2023) includes data collected from 266 respondents. Below are a few highlights that I want to share.

First and foremost, our overall satisfaction ranking on a 1 to 10 scale was 9.4 in customer service and 9.5 in reliability. These are excellent scores and are in line with survey trends that we have seen since 2017. I want to thank our amazing employees for providing this level of continued excellence.

Next, we saw a theme of interest in information, programs and funding to support basic weatherization efforts. Caulking, heat tape, smart thermostats and other

energy-saving measures appear to be of high interest to our membership. We will use this feedback to plan energy programs and member outreach efforts going forward.

Finally, I was so pleased to see that in the open-ended comments section, the number one response was essentially, "Keep up the good work; everything is great!" Again, this level of member satisfaction is a credit to our dedicated employees.

While most comments were positive, there were also a few questions, suggestions and complaints. Of those, the most common theme was about keeping rates affordable and offering as many payment options as possible.

Cost pressures are top of mind across the United States, but especially in mountain communities like ours. While costs have risen in every aspect of life, MPE has not raised rates in seven years. But, as we have mentioned in previous messages to our membership, we are experiencing extreme cost pressures that are likely to result in a rate increase. With power supply costs accounting for more than 60% of our total expenses on an annual basis, this is the area where we are focusing most of our efforts. MPE is dedicated to ensuring that our power supply costs are as affordable and stable as possible to minimize any necessary



VIRGINIA HARMAN

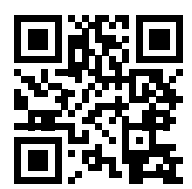
rate increases to you. I also encourage you to do what you can by reaching out to our team to learn more about energy assistance programs, weatherization programs and tips on how to reduce your energy use that results in savings on your electric bill.

While I can't tell you that we will never raise rates, I can promise we are doing what we can to control costs while still providing the safe and reliable power that you need. To those of you who participated in the survey, thank you for your feedback. If you didn't take the survey, please participate in June. Survey participants are automatically entered into a drawing for a \$100 credit on their MPE electric bill.

For more information about energy-saving opportunities and rebates, scan the QR codes below:



**ELECTRIFY
EVERYTHING**



**MPE
REBATES**

WHY ARE MY LIGHTS BLINKING THIS SPRING?

On April 13, at Mountain Parks Electric’s regular monthly board meeting at the Wattenberg Event Center, a few attendees reported an increased frequency in blinking lights and sensitive computer equipment resetting in Walden. Understandably, they requested an explanation.

The answer: Believe it or not, this spring in Walden, the birds are to blame.

The most common causes of power outages in North Park are wet, heavy snow on power lines; power line wind turbulence; and animal activity, which can include squirrels, birds and other creatures. “It’s not



uncommon for birds to try to nest on our power lines,” said Adam Paulson, MPE’s Manager of Operations & Engineering. “It’s just happening more now since the East Troublesome Fire. There are fewer trees to nest in than there were a couple of years ago, so our distribution grid is attracting their attention.”

In response, the MPE crew is regularly patrolling lines and rerouting the delivery of power to Jackson County using lines that

are less frequented by birds. Additionally, MPE adjusted grid protective device settings and is installing more bird guards to prevent nesting.

For homes and businesses with sensitive electronic equipment, installing backup generators or surge protectors can help prevent equipment resetting caused by power blinks.

“Despite this current challenge, our system reliability has improved in recent years,” Paulson added. “This is largely due to our aggressive vegetation mitigation efforts near power lines in response to the pine beetle epidemic.” Heidi Halus, ACCT 1017323

EV CURIOUS? Try renting one on your next trip

BY CHRIS MICHALOWSKI POWER USE ADVISOR

Some middle-aged guys like to golf or play pickleball. Not me. I spend my free time a bit further out in the wild, rock climbing. One of the cool things about being a climber is visiting new areas. Recently, I took a solo trip to the world-famous Red River Gorge in eastern Kentucky. My plan was to fly into Cincinnati, rent a car and drive to the “Red.”

My wife and kids stayed at home in Granby, so I figured, “Why not save some money by sleeping in the rental car?” Some of you are probably raising at least one eyebrow by now, but just hear me out. After some online browsing, the car camping idea got a bit more intriguing when I learned that the Hertz rental car company was offering a special on a Tesla Model Y. Its all-wheel drive would certainly get me in and out of the steep Kentucky Hollows. By folding down the rear seats, armed with a sleeping pad and a sleeping bag, I knew I’d be camping in luxury compared to crashing in a tent. I know what you’re thinking.

Renting an EV (let alone sleeping in one) requires more thought than renting a gasoline-powered vehicle. That’s true. It’s

important to consider how you intend to use the vehicle. Are you staying in a hotel for a few days and visiting nearby sites? Are you planning to drive to the other end of the state? Answering those kinds of questions will tell you what kind of range your EV will need.

The Model Y I rented has a range of 279 miles, and with Tesla’s robust and easy-to-use supercharging network, I was able to plan charging stops along my route by using the onboard navigation. If you intend to rent an EV from a different manufacturer, PlugShare.com allows you to access a similar map of charging stations.

After charting my trip, I left the rental lot and drove for about an hour and 20 minutes to a stop at a supercharging station located at a grocery store. I charged the Tesla for about 30 minutes while I used the restroom and stocked up on food and water for the weekend.

I spent the next three days exploring a part of Kentucky where its climbing routes and natural beauty lived up to all the hype. For me, an EV was more fun to drive than a gasoline car. The instant acceleration and quiet ride



Chris Michalowski climbed and camped Red River Gorge in eastern Kentucky in a rented Tesla Model Y electric vehicle.

were preferable for me. On the return trip to the airport, I stopped at the same supercharger and topped off the battery while I ate lunch at a nearby restaurant. In total, I charged twice and drove over 300 miles.

Renting an EV is a perfect way to get familiar with driving electric without having to fully commit to purchasing an electric car. My trip took me into rural Appalachia without any fuss. With a little bit of planning, you can set yourself up for having a great experience the next time you hit the “reserve” button for a rental car. Joseph Bushroe, ACCT 1021687

MPE AWARDS \$70,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

At its April 13 board meeting, the Mountain Parks Electric Board of Directors approved \$70,000 in scholarships to local high school seniors. MPE's 28 \$1,000-\$4,000 scholarships are funded through MPE's unclaimed patronage capital, not through the electric rate base. Additional funding was provided by MPE's power suppliers: Tri-State G&T and Basin Electric. Since 2004, MPE has awarded more than \$400,000 in scholarships to local students with post-secondary educational aspirations.

"Supporting our communities in meaningful ways like this distinguishes us as a power supplier," said Virginia Harman, MPE's General Manager. "We are owned by those we serve. In addition to providing reliable, affordable and increasingly renewable power, giving back to our youth and our community is a top priority for our cooperative." Evan Brennan, ACCT 947009691



Mountain Parks Electric 2023 scholarship recipients include:

MIDDLE PARK HIGH SCHOOL

- Padraic Aither
- Brooke Bailey
- Emry Burns
- Micah Byrum
- Josie Childers
- Aida Hester
- MaKena Ledin
- Erik Matoush

- Madison Mullinex
- Sarah Periolat
- Bode Rehm
- Forest Schofield
- Annika Stuart
- TJ Tibbetts
- Andy Troccoli
- Kimberly Vogelbacher
- Adam Zelnikar

NORTH PARK HIGH SCHOOL

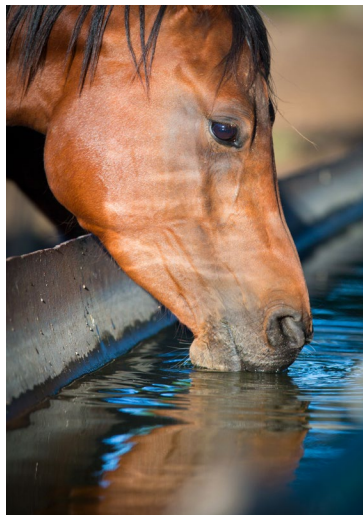
- Wilson Florell
- Jonathan Gonzales
- Nicole Myers
- Montgomery Ramsey
- Talynn Schmidt
- Hunter Sessions
- Bryan Martinez Vazquez

WEST GRAND HIGH SCHOOL

- Laura Dominguez
- Carly Kellen

ONLINE SCHOOL

- Madeline Taylor
- Avery Walker



WAYS TO \$AVE

BY LINDSAY MCCANN
MEMBER SERVICE SPECIALIST

Spring is here! Remember to turn off:

- Any electric space heaters in use
- The heat tape on your roof, gutters or pipes
- Livestock tank heaters

Don't forget to check mpei.com for information on smart thermostat rebates.



Find Your Name Win \$5

If you find your name in this magazine, contact Mountain Parks Electric to receive a **\$5 credit** on your power bill. Winners must contact MPE within one month of the date of issue.

HOW DO WE MEASURE UP? TELL US!

Take our online survey for your chance to win a \$100 credit on your MPE electric bill.

mpei.com/online-survey.



MPE'S POWER RESTORATION PROTOCOL

During widespread power outages:

- We restore critical/essential services first (such as water systems, hospitals, public safety departments, etc.)
- Next, we focus on restoring the largest number of people in the least amount of time.
- Then, we focus our efforts to homes and businesses that may take longer to restore power.



JOIN US FOR LUNCH AND TEST RIDE AN e-BIKE

Who said there is no free lunch? Grab a free bite to eat on MPE and test drive an electric bicycle. Then register to win a \$250 and \$500 store credit at Two Pines Supply in Granby. Pedaling is optional. Fun guaranteed!

e-BIKE DEMO EVENT

Tuesday, June 6
11a.m.-1p.m.
Mountain Parks Electric Warehouse
425 West Agate Avenue
Granby, CO 80446



MOUNTAIN PARKS ELECTRIC, INC.
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



GRANBY, COLORADO

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR e-BIKE REBATES @ WWW.MPEI.COM