

# Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2024



## MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box Y  
Akron, CO 80720



## STREET ADDRESS

26862 U.S. Hwy 34  
Akron, CO 80720



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**fax** 970-345-2154  
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### Y-W Electric Association, Inc.

is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.

## OFFICE HOURS

7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Monday – Thursday

# Clearing the Path to Reliability

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK GENERAL MANAGER



TRENT LOUTENSOCK

Trees are majestic, beautiful and good for the soul. But we also know that our members depend on us to deliver reliable power to their homes and businesses. That's why Y-W Electric Association strives to balance maintaining the beautiful surroundings we all cherish with ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree trimming

### RELIABILITY

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. After all, we've seen the whims of Mother Nature during severe weather events with fallen tree limbs taking down power lines and utility poles. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about one third of all outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you sometimes see Y-W crews or contractors out in the community trimming trees near power lines. Our trimming crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.

### SAFETY

Working near power lines can be dangerous, and we care about your safety and that of our lineworkers. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can reach those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls across a power line creates a potentially dangerous situation. A proactive approach lessens the chances of fallen trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power. *(Raymond E. Stotler Sr 20750xxxxx)*

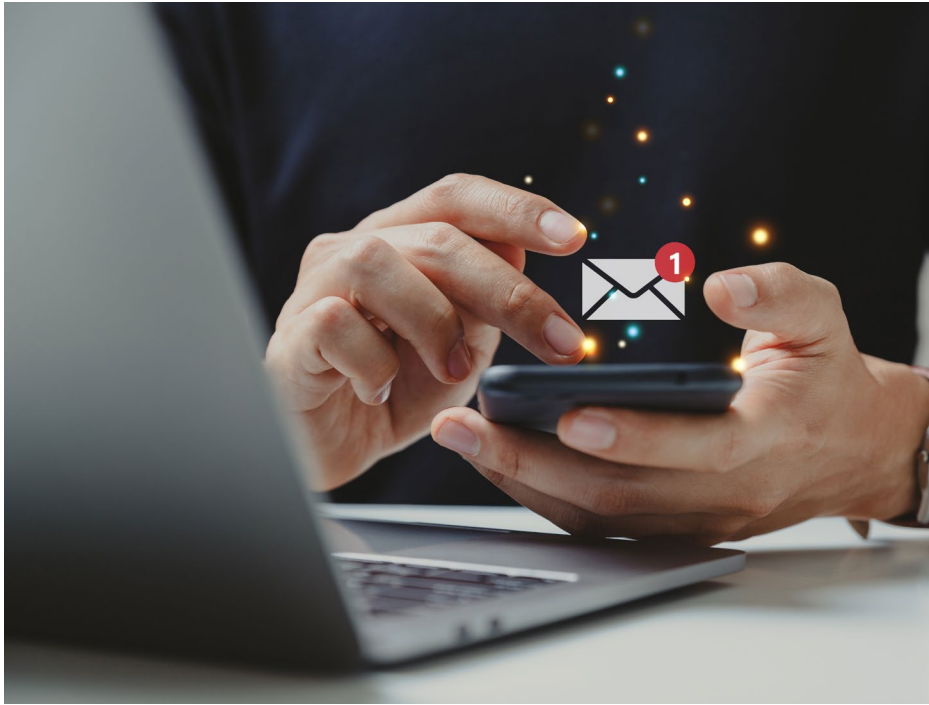
### AFFORDABILITY

As a co-op, Y-W Electric Association always strives to keep costs down for our members. If trees and other vegetation are left unchecked, they can become overgrown and expensive to correct. A strategic vegetation management program helps keep costs down for everyone.

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help too. When planting new trees, make sure they're planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. Medium-height trees (40 feet or smaller) should be planted at least 25 ft. from power lines. Taller trees (over 40 ft.) should be planted at least 50 ft. from power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. from the transformer door and 4 ft. from the sides. If your neighborhood has underground lines, remember to contact 811 before you begin any project that requires digging. *(Joshua W. Behrendsen 54610xxxxx)*

Additionally, if you spot an overgrown tree or branch that's dangerously close to overhead lines, please let us know by calling 970-345-2291.

We have deep roots in our community, and we love our beautiful surroundings. It takes a balanced approach, and our vegetation management program is a crucial tool in ensuring service reliability.



## Billing Notifications

Have you checked our website at [www.ywelectric.coop](http://www.ywelectric.coop) lately? Our website gives you the ability to check your monthly usage, payment history, and past billing invoices. Payments can also be made on our website using SmartHub. Once you have registered, you can make payments, view your history, or contact our office. You can also manage notifications here.

There are two ways to be notified: by email and/or text message. These notifications will need to be turned on in your SmartHub account. Go to Notifications and Manage Contacts. You can add both your email and phone number for text messages. You will need to make sure the box to Receive Text Messages is checked. This is found by going to the Edit button on the Verified Contacts page. The phone number should be the number where you want to receive text messages and the box should be checked for text messages. Once this is correct, select the green Continue box. At that point you'll be prompted to read the Terms and Conditions and either agree or cancel. If you agree, a Phone Verification Code will be texted to you. Once you enter this code in the box and save the contact, you are set up to get text messages.

Once you have your email and/or text message contact information set up, you can go to Manage Notifications. There are four types of notifications you can receive. Click through each one and chose the alerts you want to receive; you get to decide which is important to you. (*James Thorn 114033xxxxx*)

The SmartHub app can also be downloaded on a mobile device. It is compatible with both Android devices and iPhones.

Y-W Electric does not use a third-party for payments. If you are charged for making a payment, this is not being made on our website. For your security, please make sure you are logged into our website, [www.ywelectric.coop](http://www.ywelectric.coop) when making a payment or use our SmartHub app.

Please contact our office if you have any questions about our website.



## Win a Bill Credit

Each month, Y-W Electric Association offers its members a chance to earn a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. If you find your name and account number in this magazine, call

800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine, and pick up the phone. You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)



**Congratulations to the winners claiming \$20 from the January 2024 issue:**

- Howard Hettinger
- Megan Welp
- Mike Hall
- Raymond and Linda Eskew

## TIP OF THE MONTH

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety.

Check the lint trap opening to ensure it's clean.

Use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening.

If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.



## RECEIVE REBATE MONEY FOR BEING SAFE

Install all your double-throw generator transfer switches and collect a sizable rebate as a reward for safety. Y-W Electric Association reminds those members using standby generator sets how important it is to connect them into the electrical system correctly.

Since 2001, the Y-W Board of Directors has sponsored a rebate program to encourage all members with standby generators to install the proper double-throw transfer switches.

The program was initiated to provide safety for linemen working on downed power lines following storms. (*Charlotte Smith 10510xxxxx*)

For a number of years before that, Y-W Electric provided double-throw transfer switches at cost for members. However, even at cost, the purchase price discouraged members from installing the safety devices. The Y-W board reasoned that providing a rebate that covers approximately two-thirds of the cost of the panel would encourage members to install the switches for safety.

### THE PROVISIONS FOR RECEIVING THE REBATE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A member may purchase a double-throw transfer switch with Underwriters Laboratories approval rating for service entrance equipment from any source and present the purchase invoice within 180 days of purchase.

2. A member may install equipment or hire others to install the equipment.
3. Switch installation must be inspected and approved by a Y-W Electric employee.
4. Rebate is to be paid based on the schedule shown below.

Y-W Electric has contacted the electrical contractors in the area and discussed the program with them. All of them have expressed support for the program. Y-W Electric has no intention of competing with the contractors. Y-W Electric will gladly advise the consumer who wishes to do his or her own work, but Y-W will not install any of the equipment. (*Merya Lambert 20030xxxxx*)

If you have any questions, you may call your electrical contractor or Y-W Electric Association at 800-660-2291 or, in the Akron calling area, 970-345-2291.

### SAFETY REBATES FOR DOUBLE-THROW SWITCHES

- 100 ampere, single phase . . . \$250
- 200 ampere, single phase . . . \$325
- 400 ampere, single phase . . . \$600
- 100 ampere, three phase . . . \$425
- 200 ampere, three phase . . . \$500
- 400 ampere, three phase . . . \$1,300

## The Pros and Cons of a Permanent Standby Generator

Many big businesses and massive buildings rely on standby power when the power goes out — for the safety of their employees and customers as well as to power essential items.

More and more home versions are being installed so that families can have backup power when they need it: to power appliances and essential medical equipment, or simply for convenience.

There is more than one type of permanent generator. One has a transfer switch that must be manually “thrown” before turning on the alternate source of power, which is wired into a house. This type of generator is permanent but not considered “standby” because of the manual switch, and it should not be located near a home. (Consult a professional electrician when installing or maintaining a permanent generator.)

Not throwing the switch can result in backfeed, which sends electricity back into

power lines, and it can seriously injure or kill electric lineworkers or others.

Another type of fixed generator is permanently housed in a metal box and is usually located close to the house. It is the most expensive permanent generator — a standby version that is permanently and professionally installed to power most of the appliances in your home.

When needed, a standby generator automatically transfers the power source from the electric grid to the generator. The cost of this type of permanent generator varies depending on how much backup power you want.

Besides the cost of the system, there are also installation costs to consider since it will need to be installed by licensed and bonded contractors. This is definitely not a DIY project. Fixr estimates the national average install cost between \$4,500 and \$9,000, not including the price of the unit.

When considering a standby generator, a representative from the supplier you select will assess your home’s energy needs and should ask you what you would like to power in the event of an outage. Other required steps include preparing a site near your current electrical meter and pouring a concrete pad.

The contractor will install a new subpanel and automatic transfer switch. Your generator supplier should also create a detailed plan of which appliances and electronics should not be supplied with power during an outage, since the generator’s power supply can fluctuate and possibly damage sensitive items.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# Take Cover When Colorado Spring Storms Hit

In Colorado, a springtime storm can pop up or change direction without any warning. Other times it is forecast days in advance and follows its predicted course. In either case, knowing what to do right before, during and after a storm can help to keep you safe.

## When a Storm Hits

When stormy winds blow, follow these weather-related reminders from FEMA and the Red Cross:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower, or utility pole — lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas such as hills and mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!). (Approximately 5% of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the United States happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.)
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Pick a safe place in your home — away from windows and doors — for family members to gather during a thunderstorm.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning for extreme weather such as a tornado or severe thunderstorm. A watch means that the weather is possible in and near the area. A warning means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is more serious than a watch and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

## After The Storm

Once the storm is over, follow these safety tips:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other standing water. The water could be covering electrical outlets, appliances, or cords. Never touch (or use) electrical appliances, cords, wires, or switches while you are wet or standing in water.

## WATCH

A watch means there is a **great chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado.**

**“Watch” and wait for more information** while taking precautionary measures.

## WARNING

A warning means that a **severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen** on radar.

The moment you get a warning, **take shelter in the safest part of your home.**

SafeElectricity.org®

- After a storm, a downed power line could be covered by standing water or debris. Never go near a downed line and warn others to stay away. If you see a downed line, call 911, and a crew will be dispatched to de-energize the power and address the problem safely.
- The same safety know-how applies to a downed power line you might encounter while driving or after an auto accident. In either case, do not get out. Instead, call 911 to report the downed line (pull over first if you are driving). If you must exit your vehicle after an accident because of a fire or smoke, make a solid, clean jump out, landing with both feet together. Then make solid hops with your feet together, hopping as far away as you can.
- If your home has been damaged by a flood, turn off the power to your house if it is safe to do so. (Do not turn power off at the breaker box while standing in water or in damp conditions.)
- If the wiring, electrical system or appliances have been damaged by water, have your home inspected by an electrician; also, have appliances serviced by a qualified technician before using them.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).