

# EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

*Echoes of the Empire*

OCTOBER 2021

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## A COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

BY JULES BITSILLY SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE ADMINISTRATOR

Empire Electric Association, Inc., earned two safety awards at the Colorado Rural Electric Association's 2021 Annual Safety and Loss Control Seminar held in Longmont, Colorado. EEA Operations Manager Ken Tarr and I accepted the awards on EEA's behalf. The first safety award was in recognition of no lost-time accidents during 2020, and the second was the "Achievement of Excellence 2020 Performance in Safety." EEA and Fort Collins-based Poudre Valley REA both received this top safety award.

Ken and I attended the seminar with representatives from the other Colorado rural electric co-ops to receive up-to-date information on current safety regulations and practices affecting co-ops. It was extremely nice to receive these two awards, but really it goes to show you that our effort in building a safety culture works. Every EEA employee plays a crucial role in building a safety culture, and they are to be commended.

EEA linemen realize their work is dangerous and requires them to be safety conscious every day. EEA has safety training for all employees, whether they're in the front office or out in the field. "Complacency is the biggest hurdle to clear regarding safety," Ken said. "The CREA statewide awards are great, but our goal is to make



Ken Tarr (left) and Jules Bitsilly (right) accept EEA's safety awards from CREA's Dan Whitesides.

sure every employee goes home safely every night. We cannot let our guard down now as safety needs to be practiced every day, at work and at home. Our employees are our most important asset."

EEA has two safety committees that meet monthly to discuss safety concerns and review accident reports, safety suggestions and potential hazard reports. An important part of building the safety culture is EEA's safety improvement plan. Every employee is responsible for reviewing the SIP and it helps guide the co-op throughout the year ensuring everyone keeps safety first. Safety has always been paramount at EEA, and the safety culture has been supported by the board of directors down through management. It works because of the solid commitment from EEA employees.

The entire Empire Electric staff is committed to keeping all aspects of the co-op safe.





## **PASSWORD DOS AND DON'TS**

A strong password can make all the difference in protecting your personal information. Follow these tips for stronger passwords.

### **DO:**

- Change the manufacturer's Wi-Fi password on your router.
- Use two-factor authentication.
- Use unique phrases (like lyrics to your favorite song) to remember passwords.

### **DON'T:**

- Don't use common words or numbers like "password" or "1234."
- Don't use personal details like your date of birth in a password.
- Don't use the same password for multiple accounts.

## **October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month.**

Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart



## **October is National Co-op Month.**

Electric co-ops are proud to power more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools in 48 states.







October 2021

## Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Old, uninsulated and improperly installed exterior doors can waste energy and money. Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Source: energy.gov

## LEGISLATION REQUIRES BYLAW UPDATES

During this past Colorado legislative session, HB21-1131 was passed by both chambers and signed into law by the governor. This bill made changes to C.R.S. 40-9.5, which is the state statute that establishes rules for how cooperatives are to be governed. The changes to the state statute required two minor updates to EEA's bylaws. These updates are noted below. Strikethrough type indicates language that was removed and **bold and underline** type indicates language that was added.

Article II, Section 5, Paragraph f: "If a joint membership is held, such membership

shall be entitled to one (1) vote and no more upon each matter submitted to a vote at a meeting of the members. Only one (1) signature of a joint member shall be required to cast the vote of the joint membership, but a vote shall not be invalidated if the signatures of multiple joint members appear on any ballot presented to cast a vote. **A ballot envelope mailed to a joint member shall include the name of each eligible voter in the joint membership.**"

Article III, Section 4, 5th paragraph: "All nominating petitions shall be filed at the office of the cooperative with the

secretary at least ~~forty-five~~ **sixty** (45 **60**) days but not more than ninety (90) days before the meeting at which board members are to be elected."

No vote of the membership was required since these updates were required by law. The EEA board of directors approved these updates at its August 2021 board meeting. EEA's full bylaws are available online at eea.coop or at the office located in Cortez at 801 N. Broadway.



Co-op Photo Contest Winner October 2021 – A Magical View from up the Westfork by Cindy Lindvall

### Monthly Calendar

#### October 15

**Please note this is the third Friday in October.** EEA's board meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at its headquarters in Cortez. The agenda is posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at eea.coop. Members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting restrictions due to health concerns may require the meeting to be held remotely.

#### October 27

**Member Appreciation Day.** Drop by our office at 801 N. Broadway in Cortez for a treat.

#### October 31

**Halloween**

# 2021 EEA Continuing Education Scholarship Winners

CONGRATULATIONS!



Marcus Amrine  
Cortez, CO



Britton Brewer  
Monticello, UT



Lauren Butler  
Dolores, CO



Marguerite Copeland  
Dolores, CO



Gabriel Fizzell  
Cortez, CO



Cassie Gatlin  
Dove Creek, CO



Trystan Henderson  
Cortez, CO



Kiara Lingenfelter  
Dove Creek, CO



Brent MaKade Maloy  
Monticello, UT



Morgan Maloy  
Monticello, UT



Maya Powell  
Mancos, CO



Cameron Schafer  
Dolores, CO



Elise Thayn  
Monticello, UT



Brayson Wilcox  
Monticello, UT



Zane Wilson  
Mancos, CO



Dolores County Development Corp.

**SOLARIZE** combines pricing incentives with resources that help community members like you through each step of working with a solar installer to get solar for your home or business.

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COUNTIES**

Contact Solarize  
(970) 677-2283

[solarizedoloresmontezuma.com](http://solarizedoloresmontezuma.com)



Don't overload your **extension cords** when decorating.



Safe  
Electricity.org

**smart hub**

# SMART PAYMENT

1:11  
Empire Electric Association  
Report an Outage

News Facebook Twitter YouTube

ACCOUNT OVERVIEW  
\$81.30  
Bill due on 5/10/20 (42 days)  
Updated: Mar 20, 2020 03:56:04 PM

USAGE OVERVIEW  
Your usage is 12.9% higher than last year.

4/2020	325 kWh
4/2019	465 kWh

Service: Electric

Home Bill & Pay Usage Notifications More

**Save time. Eliminate late fees.  
Avoid service interruptions.**

With SmartHub, you'll be notified when your bill is due and you can pay securely online or in the app, anytime, anywhere.

Sign up for auto payments, set up your secure preferred payment method and let account management go into autopilot.

...all in the palm of your hand and online.

Sign up at [eea.smarthub.coop](http://eea.smarthub.coop)

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