

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

MARCH 2023

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Monthly Calendar

March 10 – 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 may attend in person or remotely. Instructions to attend remotely are included on the agenda.

March 12 – Daylight saving time begins

March 17 – St. Patrick's Day

March 20 – First day of spring

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

BY ANDY CARTER
MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

We have likely all been there; the circumstances differ but the outcome is the same.

What we thought we could squeeze in just will not fit. Perhaps you've been forced into an impromptu neighborhood barbecue because your freezer wouldn't quite close after that too good to be true sale at the local market. Or maybe it's that ripping sound as the luggage zipper lets go when you try zipping it closed after your vacation shopping spree. Electrical systems, freezers and suitcases all have one thing in common: limited capacity. However, the consequences of overloading an electrical system are much more dire.

Empire Electric Association's mission is to safely, responsibly and reliably meet the electrical energy needs of our consumer-members. We work hard to make sure the distribution system we have in place is always available to provide the power that you need. We perform periodic inspections of our facilities to make sure they are serviceable, and constantly monitor power deliveries to catch problems before they become serious. We also budget every year for replacement of equipment that is reaching the end of its useful life.

EEA's existing distribution system has grown to accommodate new services requested and paid for by consumer-members. It is typically not a problem for EEA to know what capacity is needed when it is a new service. If there is no meter, the only way to get power is to talk to our engineering department and have a new service designed and installed that will have ample capacity. Where EEA runs into capacity issues is with existing services that have new loads connected that exceed the safe capacity of the existing EEA equipment.



ANDY CARTER

EEA's rules and regulations require consumer-members to give prior written notice to EEA and obtain its consent before making any material changes or increases in their connected load or generation. This is driven by the safety concerns we have and our desire to make sure we can reliably deliver power to you. The EEA equipment at your home or business was designed to deliver a limited amount of power. Exceeding those limitations will, at a minimum, reduce the service life of that equipment, causing early replacement. This drives up rates. The consequences can be far worse if the capacity is greatly exceeded and can result in damage to your property as well as EEA equipment.

What constitutes a material change? If you are adding any major electric appliance or equipment, you need to contact EEA and

Thinking of adding or upgrading an electric appliance or piece of equipment? Call the EEA Engineering Department first to make sure your electric service has enough capacity to safely power your new load.

EEA Engineering Department

970-564-4406

engineering@eea.coop

Below is a list of electric appliances and equipment that would constitute a material change in your load and require a call to EEA to review your service capacity:

- Air source heat pump (mini-split)
- Water heater
- All electric clothes dryer
- Electric boiler / furnace / heater
- Electric vehicle charger
- Welder
- 220-volt air compressor
- Hot tub

Not a complete list. If in doubt, call!

YOUR CO-OP NEWS

discuss your plans. For example, if you are changing out a gas water heater for an electric water heater, or an electric storage tank water heater for an on-demand electric water heater, you need to contact EEA. See page 7 for a list of common major appliances as well as EEA engineering contact information. This is not an exhaustive list. It is always best practice to contact EEA first to make sure your new load will not adversely impact you or your neighbor's power.

Electricity has many benefits. And as more people take advantage of the great things electricity can do, we all need to do our part in the cooperative partnership to make sure we can safely use the power we need.

USE CHAINSAWS SAFELY

36,000

people are treated each year in a hospital emergency room for a chainsaw injury.

36% of chainsaw injuries affect the knee or leg.



The average chainsaw injury requires 110 stitches.



The two most common places for injuries are the front of the left thigh and the back of the left hand.



One in five chainsaw injuries is from kickback.

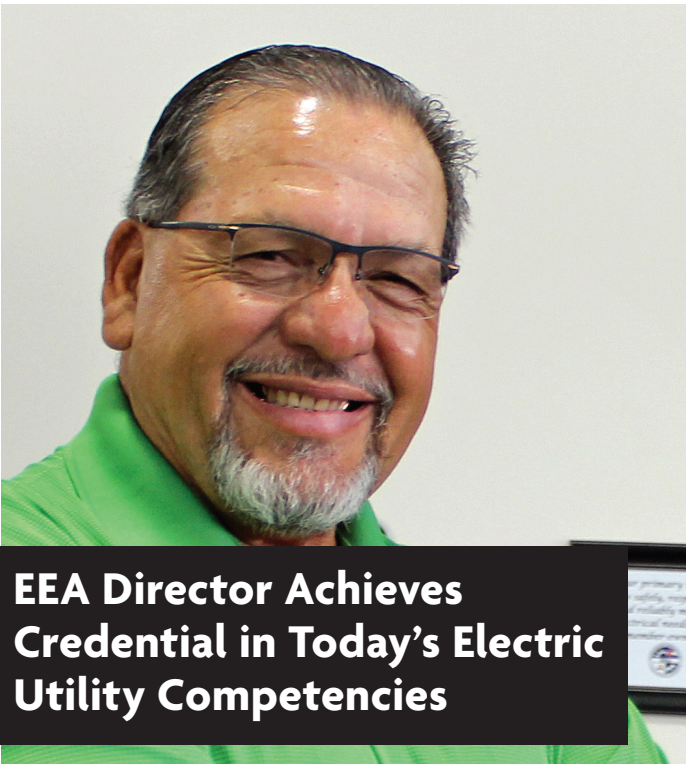


Kickback is the single greatest cause of injury to chainsaw users.



Co-op Photo Contest Winner March 2023 – “Sunset and Ute” by Brian Balfour





EEA Director Achieves Credential in Today's Electric Utility Competencies

 EEA Director Larry Archibeque.

Empire Electric Association District 7 Director Larry Archibeque recently completed the requirements for the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Today's electric utility business environment is evolving at a fast pace and requires cooperative board directors to grow with it. The NRECA CCD program provides directors with the knowledge and skills required to serve consumer-members and covers the electric utility business, governance skills, and the cooperative principles and business model. Earning the CCD certificate requires attending courses on and demonstrating knowledge of the following five core areas:

1. Director Duties and Liabilities
2. Understanding the Electric Business
3. Board Operations and Processes
4. Strategic Planning
5. Financial Decision Making

Larry also serves as EEA's representative on CREA's board. As a long-time resident of our area, Larry's knowledge of our community and the perspective he brings to the EEA board are invaluable. Larry stated, "As a career educator, I understand the importance of learning and understanding the environment you are working in. The CCD courses provided an excellent foundation for me in the electric cooperative industry and will help me as I work to serve the consumer-members of EEA." Please join us in congratulating Larry for completing the CCD certificate program and thank him for his dedicated service to our consumer-members.

WELCOME NEW EEA EMPLOYEE, CALLIE KOP!

Callie Kop accepted the part-time Engineering and Operations Secretary position at EEA and started in January. Callie is responsible for coordinating the Distributed Energy Resource application process and providing administrative support to the Engineering and Operations groups.

Callie is from Cortez and is married with three children. When she isn't at work, she is busy with her children's sports activities or relaxing outdoors with her family and friends. Renewable energy interconnections continue to grow in our service area, and we look forward to Callie helping us make the process more efficient. Please join us in welcoming Callie to the EEA team!



Cooperative Principle #2

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

**EEA's Annual Meeting Will Be Held On
Thursday June 15, 2023
at the Engineering & Operations Center
23999 Road L.4, Cortez, CO
Registration/Voting 4:30-5:30PM
Meeting starts at 6:00 PM**

Elections will be held for District 5 and District 6
Nomination Packets can be picked up starting
March 17 at 801 N Broadway, Cortez
More details can be found at
eea.coop/your-annual-meeting



Allocations are saved and retirements are paid.

EEA has paid consumer-members over \$37 million in capital credit retirements since 1939.

Capital Credit Retirement Scheduled for March

The Empire Electric Association Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement of \$1.599 million to cooperative members at its January 2023 meeting. Capital credits are unique to cooperatives and represent your investment in EEA.

Your capital credits are built up over time as you purchase power from EEA. EEA is a member-owned rural electric cooperative that provides electric service at our cost. EEA also collects margins or a small percentage of additional revenue from energy sales to provide working capital. By collecting margins, EEA can reduce the amount of money it must borrow to operate the cooperative. This helps EEA reduce costs and keep rates lower for consumer-members.

At the end of each year, any margin collected by EEA is divided proportionally among cooperative members in a process known as “allocation.” Allocations are saved for consumer-members in their capital credit account and are available for EEA to use to reduce borrowing as mentioned above. EEA usually provides annual allocations in May with a notice on consumer-members’ billing

statements. Inactive members will receive an allocation letter.

EEA is currently on an approximate 20-year capital credit retirement cycle, so EEA capital credit allocations made to members in 2002 are being retired in 2023. Capital credits are retired by paying the allocated money back to consumer-members, which happens every year if the cooperative is in good financial condition. The 2023 retirement payments will be mailed on March 8 to consumer-members who request payment by check. Consumer-members who request a bill credit will see their retirement payment on their March 2023 statements.

Economic participation is a cooperative principle and is an important part of EEA’s partnership with its members. EEA has retired approximately \$37.6 million in capital credits since 1939. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to many more years of safely, reliably and responsibly providing your electrical energy needs.

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



Empire Electric’s 2024 Annual Photo Contest

View **CONTEST RULES** & **ENTER** two favorite photos at **eea.coop**

1st Prize	\$75
2nd Prize	\$50
3rd Prize	\$25

Prizes are paid as EEA bill credit.

