

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

NOVEMBER 2019



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DECORATE SAFELY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

BY DERRILL HOLLY



According to the National Fire Protection Association, burning candles start two out of five home fires every year. Consider battery-operated LED candles as safer alternatives.

The holiday season offers great moments for building memories, but when it comes to decorating it's also the perfect time to think about safety.

"There are about 200 decorating-related injuries each day during the busy holiday season," said Ann Marie Buerkle, acting chairwoman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. "Make safety a part of your family's holiday decorating this year."

Between November 2016 and January 2017, holiday decorating injuries resulted in 18,400 emergency room visits nationwide. Local fire departments look to the holiday season as a time of increased vigilance, often tied to many of the activities that have become family traditions.

"It's important to use common sense when you're dealing with holiday decorating, particularly with lighting, candles and electrical wiring," said Bruce Bouch, a U.S. Fire Administration fire program specialist. "Holiday decorations are designed for temporary use, and that means they are essentially disposable."

According to the National Fire Protection

Association, the top three days of the year for candle fires in the United States are Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. NFPA statistics also indicate that one out of four Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.

The global safety certification company, Underwriters Laboratories, classifies holiday lighting as a seasonal product designed for no more than 90 days of use. While the actual holiday season runs about six weeks, weather and busy schedules mean outdoor holiday lighting displays are put up early and taken down late, exposed to the elements the entire time.

"It's always important to inspect holiday lights each year before you put them up," Bouch said. "You may find that there are pinches or torn areas on the insulation."

Open, exposed wiring or any signs of fraying or pinching are indications of weakened wiring. Those flaws are prone to breakage and may raise the potential for heat buildup, which can cause a fire.

Bouch recommends a thorough inspection of your holiday lights to identify

potential hot spots and damage to the strings.

“When you’re checking everything on the wiring and fixtures, make sure you check for chewing damage from wild animals or your own pets,” Bouch added. “Also look for signs that the insulation itself is wearing thin enough to expose wiring.”

The U.S. Fire Administration, the CPSC

and nongovernment safety organizations are also focused on reminding consumers that extension cords, whether labeled for indoors or outdoors, are also designed for temporary use.

“Household wiring is a solid metal wire,” Bouch said. “Extension cords are strands of thin wires that are twisted together. That

pliability can allow them to break over time, increasing the chance that they could fail within so many years.”

Experts also warn that candle use increases the risk of accidental fires and suggest that consumers consider battery-operated LED candles as safer alternatives. According to NFPA, candles start two out of every five home fires each year, and about 100 Christmas tree fires occur each holiday season, causing about \$12 million in damage annually.

You can reduce the risks by placing your Christmas tree away from heat sources, like vents or space heaters, and topping off the water reservoir daily.

Colorado’s electric cooperatives join our local firefighters, the NFPA and the CPSC in urging you to consider safety as you decorate and enjoy the holiday season with family and friends.

Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Photo Contest Winner for November



Autumn Ablaze
by David Lee Reineke

If you are a High School Junior YOU could Win a FREE Trip to Washington DC or a resort in Clark, CO

Fill out your application on-line at www.eea.coop by December 13th.

Washington DC Youth Tour • June 18-25, 2020
Youth Leadership Camp • July 11-16, 2020

Co-op Calendar

November 3

Daylight saving time ends: Set clocks back one hour.

November 5

Election Day

November 8

Empire’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.

November 11

Veterans Day

November 28-29

Thanksgiving holiday, EEA offices are closed.

Congratulations to our Winners!

2020 Empire Electric Photo Calendar

Calendars will be available in our office November 1.
801 N Broadway • Cortez, CO

Upload your photos for our 2021 calendar contest at WWW.eea.COOP.
2021 contest ends July 1, 2020



Golden Pond • 1st Place • Cover
John Mumaw



Lightfoot Trail • January
David Lee Reineke



Foggy Morning • February
Sandra Bryan



Sunset Over Ute Mountain • March
Carla Fox



Snow Covered Abajo Mountains • April
Anna Fredericks



McPhee Overlook in Spring • May
Carla Fox



American Bald Eagle • June
Rebecca Syndergaard



Colorado Columbine • July
Chalana Marie Wilson



A Summer Day • August
Melody Hurst



Misty Morning Marvel • September
David Lee Reineke



Great Blue Heron Fishing • October
Rebecca Syndergaard



Sunset • November
Tiffanie Vialpando



Chimney Rock Finish • December
John Mumaw

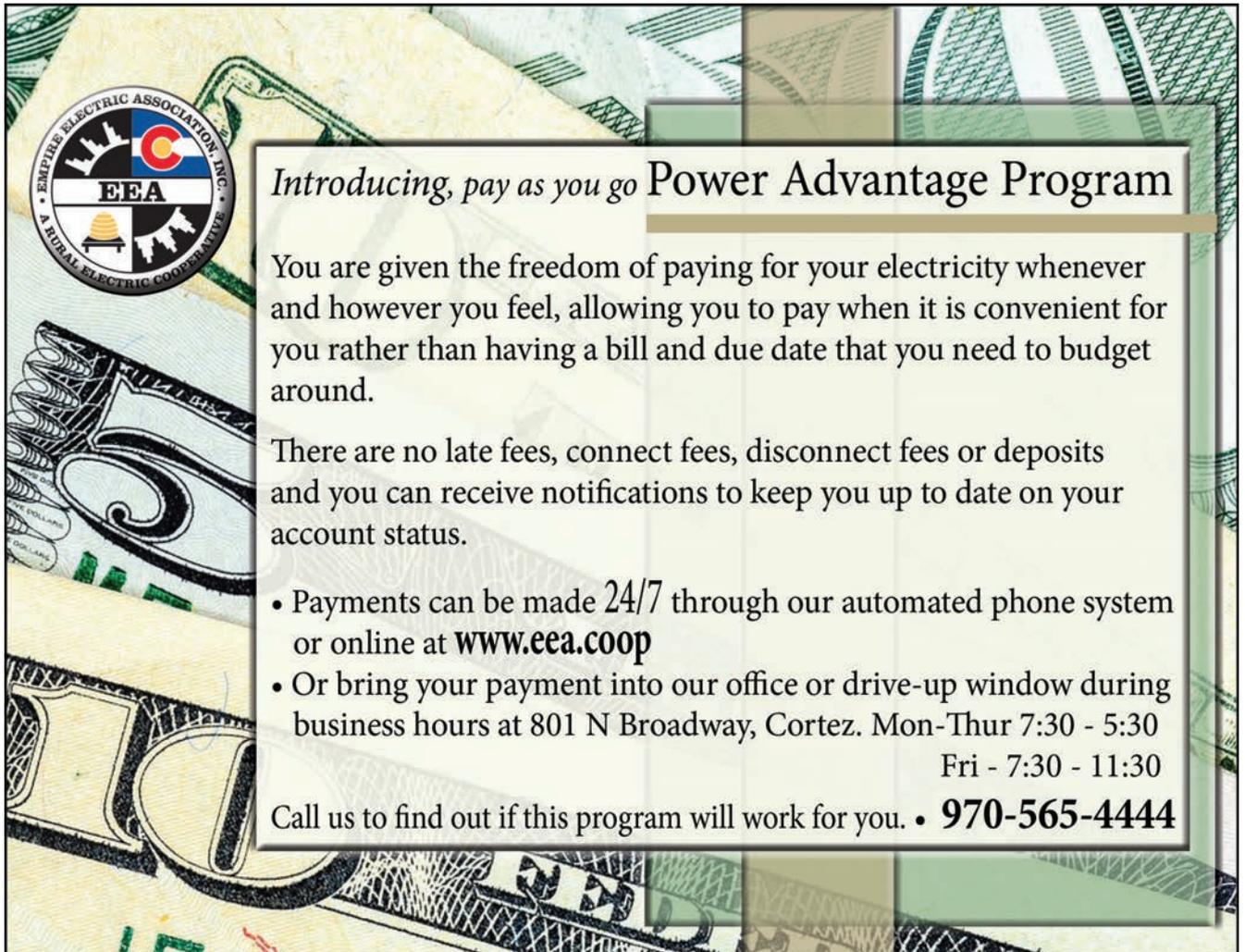
NOTICE OF A CHANGE IN THE RULES AND REGULATIONS AND FACILITIES EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION POLICY OF EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

At its October 11, 2019 meeting, the Board of Directors of Empire Electric Association, Inc. (EEA) voted to amend EEA's Rules and Regulations and Facilities Extension and Modification Policy. The Rules and Regulations were modernized to reflect current business practices and regulations. The major change in the Facilities Extension and Modification Policy involves EEA's contribution toward new services. New permanent services that will be served under a residential, general service, or irrigation rate tariff will be eligible for up to a \$2500 contribution from EEA.

Copies of the amended documents are available for inspection at EEA's main office located at 801 North Broadway, Cortez, CO, 81321 during regular business hours. The documents are also available on EEA's website at www.eea.coop/governing-documents.

These changes are scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2020. Anyone who desires to complain about the proposed changes shall file a written complaint with EEA at least 10 days before the proposed effective date. EEA may hold a hearing to determine what changes will be authorized. The changes ultimately authorized may or may not be the same as those proposed and may include changes different than those proposed or currently in effect. Anyone who desires to receive notice of hearing, if any, shall make a written request therefore to EEA at least 10 days before the proposed effective date.

For any questions about this notice and/or the proposed changes, please contact EEA at (970) 565-4444 or toll free at 1-800-709-3726.



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You are given the freedom of paying for your electricity whenever and however you feel, allowing you to pay when it is convenient for you rather than having a bill and due date that you need to budget around.

There are no late fees, connect fees, disconnect fees or deposits and you can receive notifications to keep you up to date on your account status.

- Payments can be made 24/7 through our automated phone system or online at www.eea.coop
- Or bring your payment into our office or drive-up window during business hours at 801 N Broadway, Cortez. Mon-Thur 7:30 - 5:30
Fri - 7:30 - 11:30

Call us to find out if this program will work for you. • **970-565-4444**