

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

NOVEMBER 2020

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RUSH HOUR ON THE GRID

BY ANDY CARTER
MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



ANDY CARTER

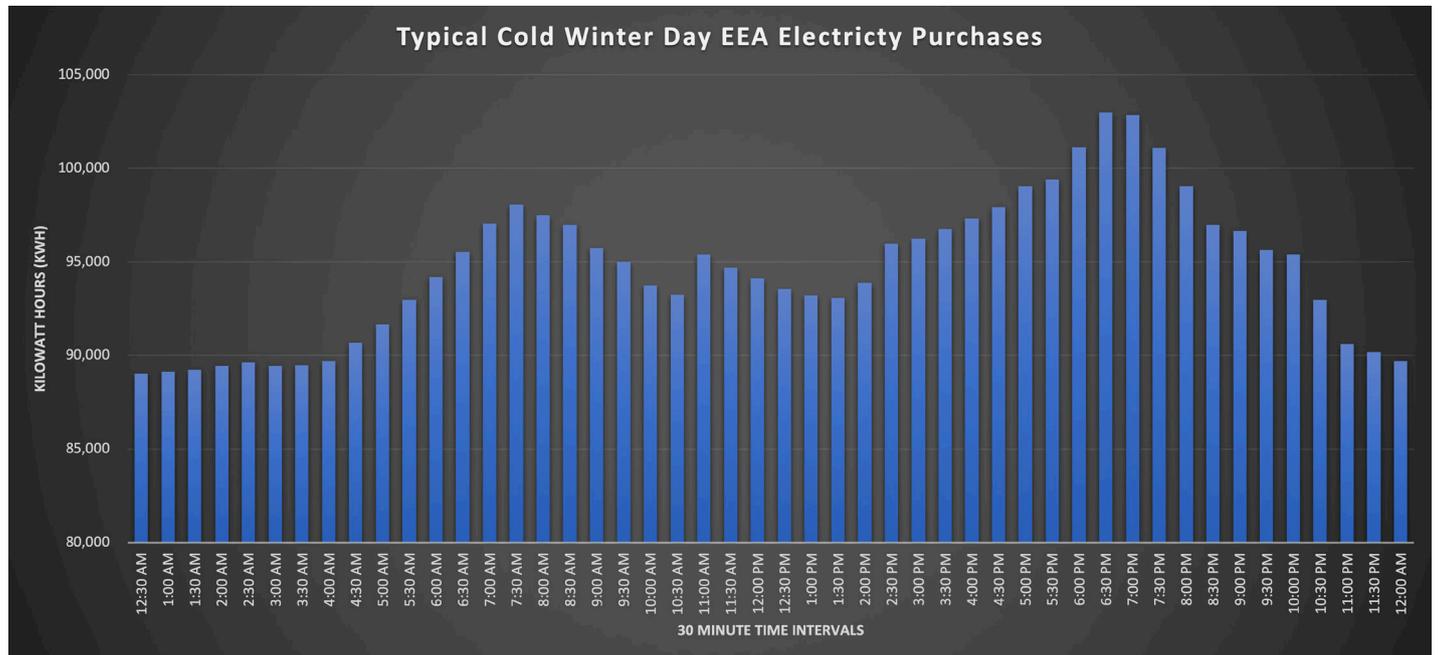
I was fortunate to grow up in rural areas and count myself blessed to live in the Four Corners during this time in history. I drive 15 miles to work at Empire Electric Association's headquarters building in Cortez, and it takes me 15 minutes. There are the occasional days where weather or a wide load on the highway slows me down, but in my opinion it's still reasonable.

I have also lived in a crowded urban area where I commuted 39 miles one way. I always left home early to avoid the rush and could be at my desk in about one hour using a combination of driving, public transportation and walking. The trip home was never that easy. Following the exact same route, my return time would hopefully be no more than one hour and 30 minutes, but on a bad day it could be two hours or more. I remember one afternoon where a bridge accident snarled traffic so badly that I called my wife and told her I was going to stay at work late because there was no point in leaving to just sit in traffic. I left at 7:30 p.m. and, to my surprise, it only took me an hour to get home.

The electricity grid also experiences a rush hour of sorts. In EEA's service area, we experience higher system demand during the morning when our consumer-members are waking up to start their day, and then again in the evening when they return home. Depending on the season and the weather, EEA's daily highest demand shifts between mid-morning and late evening. If we look beyond EEA's service area, each electric service provider has its own unique consumers that drive their individual system demand.

The combination of regional electric distribution system demands add together to drive the timing of the demand in the wholesale generation and transmission markets. As demand for power increases, it becomes more expensive because the lowest cost power generation available is consumed first. This period of high prices driven by the high demand for power is called a "peak period." Tri-State Generation





and Transmission, Inc., is EEA’s wholesale power provider and its peak period is from noon to 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday, with the exception of certain holidays.

The demand EEA generates during Tri-State’s peak period is a large component of the costs EEA incurs. All of EEA’s current rates charge for energy by the kilowatt-hour, but only the large power and transmission rates have separate demand charges by the kilowatt. Rates without separate demand charges recover the peak period demand charges EEA incurs by charging higher energy rates. This can result in EEA having a mismatch between the costs it incurs and the revenue it receives. Also, because most

EEA rates only have a flat kWh charge, the only way for a consumer-member to reduce their electric bill is to use less. These two reasons are why EEA is proposing to change its rate structure to offer consumer-members a way to reduce their bills other than simply using less electricity.

EEA is in the process of adding a new rate for consumer-members that will include different energy prices for kWh used at different times of day. The rate will have the same peak period as EEA’s power supplier, and kWh used during that time will be more expensive than kWh used during the off-peak time. Just like my example of choosing to shift when I

commuted to work saved me time, choosing to shift kWh usage from peak period to the off-peak period will result in direct savings for you. The new rate structure will also help EEA better assign costs to the consumer-members who are creating them and result in more equitable rates. EEA is planning on finalizing the rate structure pricing in the spring and plans to implement the new rate option by the end of 2021.

Over the next several months we will be letting you know more as details are finalized on our effort to provide you more control over your electricity cost.

Winter Storm Outage Preparedness

It’s the time of year when snow, ice and wind can disrupt power. Assemble an emergency supply kit to keep you safe and warm during an outage with items such as flashlights, a first aid kit, nonperishable foods and drinking water. If you already have an emergency kit from last winter, review the items to ensure nothing is expired and replace needed supplies.

For more ideas for your emergency supply kit, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).



My Co-op Calendar

NOVEMBER 1

Daylight-saving time ends. Set clocks back one hour.

NOVEMBER 11

Veterans Day

NOVEMBER 13

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.

NOVEMBER 26 – 27

Thanksgiving Holiday. EEA offices are closed.

November 2020 Co-op Photo Contest Winner



 **Sunset**
Photo by Tiffanie Vialpando

Congratulations!

Kennedy Brewer, 2020 Washington DC Youth Tour

Aimee Crowley, 2020 Youth Leadership Camp

The 2020 Washington DC Youth Tour and Youth Leadership Camp were canceled due to the pandemic and the six EEA students that had been chosen to attend were instead given the chance to compete for scholarships from the Colorado Electric Educational Institute. Kennedy and Aimee were each awarded a \$500 scholarship!



Spencer Singer
Monticello HS Principal

Kennedy Brewer

Aimee Crowley

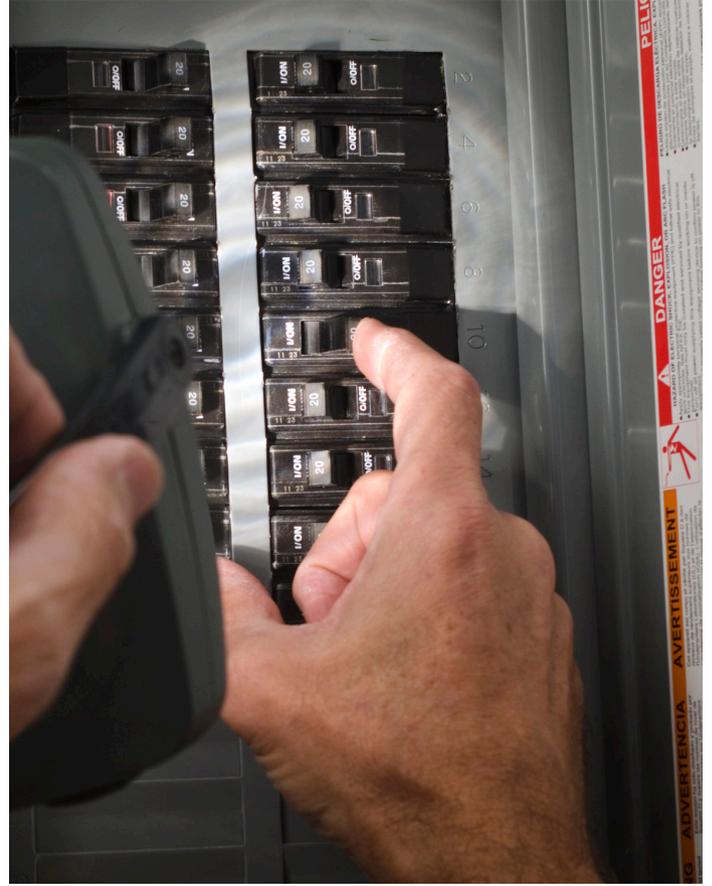
Andy Carter
EEA Member Engagement Mgr.



November 2020 Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Source: energy.gov



Three Electrical Safety Features to Be Thankful For

Most days, we go about our lives without thinking too much about the many electronic gadgets and electrical safety features that allow us to perform simple tasks at work and home without a second thought. This Thanksgiving let's take a moment to be thankful for some of the devices that help make our daily tasks safer and more convenient.

Built-in devices that keep you safe:

1. **GFCIs:** Ground fault circuit interrupters are inexpensive electrical devices that can either be installed in your electrical system or built into a power cord to protect you from severe electrical shocks. GFCIs are generally installed where electrical circuits may accidentally come into contact with water, such as kitchens, bath and laundry rooms, outdoors or in the garage. Be sure to test GFCIs monthly to make sure they are working properly.
2. **AFCIs:** Arc fault circuit interrupters could potentially prevent more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

These safety devices are typically found within your electrical panel or receptacles in the wall. An arc fault is a dangerous electrical problem caused by damaged, overheated or stressed electrical wiring or devices.

3. **Circuit breakers:** Usually found in a garage, basement or laundry room, circuit breaker panels are an essential safety feature in your home, preventing electrical injuries and fires. Each panel is filled with individual circuit breakers designed to “trip,” or shut off, when an unsafe condition exists to stop the flow of electricity. Circuit breakers trip for several reasons, including overloaded circuits (too much draw on one circuit), ground faults (abnormal flow in a circuit) and short circuits (when current travels along an unintended path).

These are just a few items be thankful for this year. For more information about safety around electricity, go to SafeElectricity.org.