

GUNNISON COUNTY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Powering Possibilities

AUGUST 2021



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 180
Gunnison, CO 81230-0180



STREET ADDRESS

37250 West Highway 50
Gunnison, CO 81230



ph 970-641-3520
tf 800-726-3523
fax 970-641-7333
web www.gcea.coop
email gcea@gcea.coop



facebook.com/
GunnisonCountyElectricAssociation



@GCEA_news

COST-SAVING STRATEGIES

BY ALANTHA GARRISON
ENERGY USE ADVISOR

Fall is right around the corner and it's time to start thinking about how you can keep your energy costs as low as possible before heading into the winter heating season. Both big and small projects can help control your energy use while improving comfort in your home or business. Here are a few cost-saving strategies that can make a big difference.



#1

Is your home or business air-sealed and insulated well? If not, use a sealing material like caulk to seal areas that allow air infiltration, such as around windows, doors and baseboard trim. Take care to not seal too tightly. Increasing insulation where it's insufficient helps your home retain more heat, which reduces heating costs. The attic and crawl space are usually the most effective places to insulate to increase comfort and reduce heating costs.

#2

Close curtains at night to retain heat and open them during the day to allow solar gain to heat your home or business. Insulated curtains, such as honeycomb blinds, retain heat well, and can help your home or business feel less drafty and can reduce the heating portion of your bill by reducing your energy use.

#3

Change your furnace filters regularly. Dirty filters can restrict airflow and cause your furnace to run for longer periods.



ALANTHA GARRISON

#4

Keep baseboard heaters clean and consider replacing mechanical thermostats with digital and programmable thermostats. Make sure there is at least 6 inches of space in front of baseboard heaters to allow the hot air to circulate properly, and keep combustible materials at least 18 inches away.

#5

When you leave your home for the day and extended periods, consider turning down the temperature of your heating system by 7 to 10 degrees. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, you can save up to 10% on your heating costs by turning your thermostat down from your usual "at home" setting for 8 hours per day. It takes energy to heat your home back up, but studies show that this energy use is less than keeping your heat at the same temperature. (This cost-saving strategy does not work as well with in-floor heat in slab foundations, because it's best to keep a constant temperature with this particular heating system.)

#6

Consider replacing your heating system with a heat pump system. Heat pumps do not generate heat and on average use 50% less energy than heating with traditional electric heaters and propane. The cost to operate a heat pump is comparable to current natural gas costs, but because they are all electric, they can be powered by renewable energy sources. Even in extremely cold temperatures down to minus 25 degrees Fahrenheit, a heat pump can still extract heat from the air and ground. In reverse, they act like an air conditioner and can cool your home.

SMARTHUB ▶▶▶



Overwhelmed by life's responsibilities? Make life easier by downloading SmartHub on your phone and tablet

SmartHub allows you to manage all aspects of your electric account from your computer, tablet or phone. Members can navigate all of these features by simply accessing the account login at www.gcea.coop.

Advantages of accessing your bill online:

- Convenience
- Make a payment
- Check usage
- Apply for rebates
- Sign up for programs like Operation Round Up, paperless billing, and Green Power



PAPERLESS BILLING CONTEST

Each fiscal quarter, GCEA holds a drawing for members signing up for paperless billing for the first time during that quarter. Two lucky winners will each receive a \$50 bill credit. Visit gcea.smarthub.coop/login.html. If you do not already have a login, you will need to create one. Once you are logged in, click on "my profile," then "update my paperless settings" and select "turn on paperless bill settings."

GUNNISON CAR SHOW

AUGUST 13 & 14

Join us during the 33rd annual Gunnison Car Show, August 13 and 14 when we show off our Chevy Bolt EV and Tesla Model 3.



AUGUST WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Greg Katheiser – Vehicle Maintenance and Equipment Operator, 26 years

Mike Pandy – Crested Butte Apprentice Lineman, 6 years



Remember to always call 811 before you start any digging project! You will avoid injury, expense, embarrassment – and a very inconvenient day in the dark.

82nd Annual Meeting Recap


The 82nd Annual Meeting was a little different from previous years, but we still had a great time. The meeting was held in person with limited in-person attendance as well as virtual attendance.

Board President Tom Carl and CEO Mike McBride gave great speeches and even had time to do some Q&A with the in-person and virtual attendees. Most member questions were regarding Tri-State Generation and Transmission and local renewable projects. A recording of the meeting is on our website at www.gcea.coop.


There was an uncontested election this year. Mark Daily in district seven and Polly Oberosler in district six will both keep their seats for the next three years.

Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting this year. We enjoyed seeing so many familiar faces. We hope to see everyone in person in 2022.




 GCEA CEO Mike McBride addresses members at the Annual Meeting.



 GCEA's board of directors: (Back row, left to right) Morgan Weinberg, Mark Daily, Tom Carl, Bart Laemmel. (Front row, left to right) Michelle Lehmann, Greg Wiggins, Polly Oberosler.



 Some GCEA members attend the 82nd Annual Meeting in person.

EMPOWER YOURSELF

GCEA MEMBER BENEFITS

WHAT IS AN ENERGY EVALUATION?

Looking for ways to cut down your electricity bill? Schedule a **FREE** energy evaluation with GCEA today!

- Electric usage review
- Discuss concerns and goals
- Infrared camera images of heat loss areas
- Receive tips and suggestions to make your home or business more energy efficient.

REBATES

Gunnison County Electric Association offers rebates for home appliances, outdoor electric power equipment and electric bikes.

Purchasing an ENERGY STAR rated appliance can reduce your energy bills, and members can receive our rebate as an additional bonus.

For more information on energy evaluations and rebates, please visit www.gcea.coop or call 970-641-3520.



ATTENTION CONTRACTORS

Join us for a heat pump workshop to learn about how this energy-efficient technology works in cold climates like ours. On August 13, GCEA will be at the Crested Butte Town Hall Building in the council room at 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.; then in Gunnison at 12 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Watch for more information on GCEA's social media channels.

GCEA and Tri-State Generation and Transmission's rebate program will pay you up to \$250 per air source heat pump installation in GCEA service territory upon completion of free training through GCEA and Tri-State. This free workshop will cover how the rebate program works and how you can sign up.



August 2021

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

When shopping for new lightbulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: energy.gov



Teach Students about Electrical Safety Before They Head to College

Today's college student uses many electronics for school, work and play. When used improperly, these helpful gadgets can become electrical hazards. If you or a loved one is heading off to college, Safe Electricity has the following tips to prevent electric accidents and fires.

- Extension cords are only for temporary use. Dorm rooms may not have enough outlets to plug in all your gadgets at once. If you must use extension cords, use them temporarily and unplug them when not in use.

- Consider purchasing power strips with an overcurrent protector, which will shut off power automatically if there is too much current being drawn.
- Use lightbulbs with the correct wattage for lamps; if no indication is on the fixture, do not use a bulb with more than 60 watts.
- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface or run cords across traffic paths or under rugs or furniture.
- Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains and other flammable material.
- Discard or repair damaged electronics. It may be tempting to use an electronic with a frayed cord or damaged plug to save money. However, damaged electronics should not be used since they can shock or electrocute you.
- If your lights flicker, electronics shut off or circuits trip, notify campus staff.
- Use only laboratory certified appliances and electronics.
- Watch out for overheated outlets. If an electrical outlet becomes so hot you cannot leave your hand on it, there is potential for a fire. Unplug everything from the outlet and notify landlord or dorm officials immediately.

College students should also know what to do if there is a fire, including escape and meeting plans.

There are more than 3,500 fires on college campuses every year. Help prevent fires by understanding electrical safety and sharing what you know with loved ones.

More safety tips can be found at SafeElectricity.org.