

## SOLAR SCAMS: What you need to know before investing



Interest in solar photovoltaic installations is booming in our area with a record number of new systems installed last year. But with this interest comes some dubious business practices from untrustworthy businesses and installers.

We support renewables in our area and want to make sure our members are protected. Remember, before you consider a solar installation on your home or business, ALWAYS:

1. Call LPEA. Each installation is different, and there are often challenges or obstacles that must be overcome before you can install a system that connects to LPEA's grid.
2. Check the list of qualified solar installers on our website at [lpea.coop/qualified-solar-installers](http://lpea.coop/qualified-solar-installers)
3. Get at least three quotes from different installers before selecting one.

Here are some of the false claims out there:

**Claim #1: Colorado offers incentives for solar installations.** There are

currently no state-wide incentives for solar. There is, however, a 26% Federal Tax Credit for individuals that qualify. Speak with your tax accountant for more details.

**Claim #2: Solar installation will eliminate your power bill.** Solar can reduce or eliminate the energy charge on a bill through net metering (if sized correctly) but there will still be a base charge, peak power charges, and taxes and fees levied by LPEA. Also, it's important to remember that power from the sun is not guaranteed so back-up power is still a necessity. If your usage changes, or if your generation changes for any reason, your bill from LPEA may increase.

**Claim #3: LPEA's rates will continue to increase an average of 6% annually.** This is false. LPEA's 2020 rate increase was the first such increase in four years and there will be no rate increase in 2021. LPEA's efforts to diversify our power supply is expected to stabilize rates into the future.

**Claim #4: Free solar!** If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. When a company promises free solar

## DRONES AHOY!

LPEA has nearly 2,000 miles of overhead lines in our service territory. In August we will launch a pilot project using drones to inspect utility lines. If successful, this effort will help improve the safety and reliability of LPEA's operations while also cutting surveying costs.

More details at  
[lpea.coop/construction-updates](http://lpea.coop/construction-updates)



installations, be cautious and ask a lot of questions. It usually means no money down and you pay either a loan or a lease payment. In these instances, you usually pay more over the lifetime of the system than if you just purchase it outright upfront. It can also mean sometimes it means that you don't actually own your system.

**When in doubt, remember to call us before you invest. For more information on LPEA's Net Metering Program visit [lpea.coop/member-solar](http://lpea.coop/member-solar)**

## LPEA 2021 DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS



**Kirsten Skeehan**  
District 1 Director



**Kohler McInnis**  
District 2 Director



**Ted Compton**  
District 3 Director



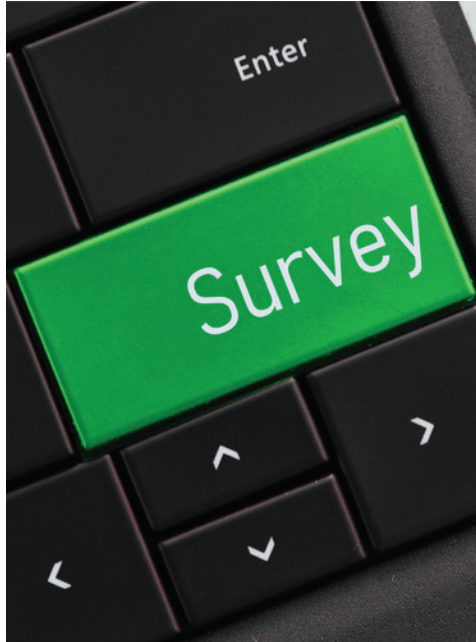
**Tim Wheeler**  
District 4 Director

More details on LPEA's Board of Directors at:  
[lpea.coop/board-directors](http://lpea.coop/board-directors)

## LPEA 2021 MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS IN AUGUST

To gauge member satisfaction and better serve our members in the future, LPEA's biennial membership survey will kick off in August. LPEA is again partnering with the market research arm of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to survey a sampling of households in La Plata and Archuleta Counties. More than 400 households will be selected at random to participate in either an online or telephone survey. All information is strictly confidential.

If you are contacted to take part in this survey, we would greatly appreciate your participation. The entire process will take less than 10 minutes and is essential for us to better understand the diverse needs of our membership and assess how we are doing as an organization.



If you are not selected but want to provide feedback on LPEA's service, email [comments@lpea.coop](mailto:comments@lpea.coop).



## ETS HEATING: Notice to our members with Electric Thermal Storage heating

More than 3,000 LPEA members have invested in Electric Thermal Storage (ETS), an electric home heating device that can help lower your heating costs by storing heat when electricity costs less, and then releasing the heat throughout the day.

To better serve LPEA's existing and future ETS members, LPEA is now partnering with Durango Electrical

Services to provide advisory, installation, and maintenance services related to ETS units. Members with ETS questions or issues are welcome to call either LPEA (970-247-5786) OR Durango Electric (970-247-9144) for support.

More details at [lpea.coop/ets](http://lpea.coop/ets)

The latest news, services, programs, and resources from LPEA. Have a question or comment? Email us at [comments@lpea.coop](mailto:comments@lpea.coop).



### BOARD MEETINGS

August 25th and September 15th  
9:00 a.m.\*

The agenda, board packet, access, and location details will be posted online in advance of the meeting. Public comments are heard at the beginning of the meeting shortly after 9 a.m.

More at: [lpea.coop/lpea-board-directors-resources](http://lpea.coop/lpea-board-directors-resources)



### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

#### Finance + Audit

August and September TBA+  
2-4:00 p.m.\*

#### Broadband

August 12th, September TBA+  
1-3:00 p.m.\*

#### Committee on Polices

August and September TBA+

More at: [lpea.coop/board-directors-committees](http://lpea.coop/board-directors-committees)

*\*All meetings are open to the public.*

*+Future board committee meeting dates are TBA until the new board can meet to elect new committee members and decide on dates. For the latest updates visit: [lpea.coop/board-directors-committees](http://lpea.coop/board-directors-committees)*



### LPEA GRANTS

The Round Up Board of Directors approved **3 grants totaling \$10,669** in June for the Boys & Girls Club of La Plata County and the Community Treehouse.