

WATT'S UP

AT LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

LPEA

La Plata Electric Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Shaping the future by building trustworthy community partnerships as an innovative, forward-thinking industry leader, delivering excellence in our member-owned cooperative.

OCTOBER 2018

Beneficial Electrification...

Energy Efficiency Rebates
Electric Agricultural Pumps
EV Charging Stations
Electric Vehicles
Electric Thermal Storage
Induction Cooktops
LED Light Bulbs
Ground Source Heat Pumps
Marathon Water Heaters
Air Source Heat Pumps
Refrigeration
Battery Storage
Time-of-Use

Beneficial Electrification – the wise use of electricity – it’s a trending term for the vernacular.

“Beneficial Electrification is something LPEA has been implementing for decades,” says Ron Meier, manager of engineering and member relations. “But the electric industry has embraced this all-encompassing term to help co-op members grasp the concept of the wise use of electricity. We’re beginning our effort to help inform our consumer-members.”

While no official definition of Beneficial Electrification has been formally established, in basic language it is the (increased) consumption of electricity in end-uses that would more traditionally be powered by fossil fuels, with a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“LPEA is looking forward to the opportunities that Beneficial Electrification can present our membership,” says Dan Harms, manager of rates, technology and energy policy. “There are opportunities to do things in a more efficient way with a resource that is becoming increasingly more renewable.”

Indeed, the electric grid is moving steadily toward more renewable sources of power generation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, upwards of 17 percent of energy generated nationally comes from non-emitting sources.

“Doesn’t it make sense to use electricity when it is generated from a renewable resource?” says Meier. “Add to that, technology has made electric devices more efficient, plus advancements in power plant technology and renewable development will continue to reduce the environmental impact of the electric system. These two converging trends are clarifying that electricity is a smart choice.”

A very visible indication of this trend is the growth in Electric Vehicles (EV). Instead of driving a car on

gas, consumers can opt to do it with electricity. And taking it a step further, they can be cognizant of when they charge their electric vehicles to coincide more with when renewable energy generation occurs – solar power during the day, perhaps wind at night, as well as consuming electricity in off-peak periods through programs like LPEA’s Time-of-Use.

“LPEA optimizes the use of its grid,” says Harms. “The more we can do that, the more it saves our members money in the long run. With EVs, for example, it’s a very shapeable load [for us] because you can choose to fill that EV battery to minimize the impact to the grid. Plus, an electric loader in a car is much more efficient than an internal combustion engine – Beneficial Electrification.”

Space heating offers great opportunities for the future with ground source and air source heat pumps. LPEA has been selected as one of five test co-ops to fully explore the opportunities of the air source heat pumps, technology that essentially pulls either warm or cold air from the outside to warm or cool a home’s interior.

“Air source heat pump water heating technology is also advancing dramatically and shows great promise for energy efficiency and minimizing the effects on the environment,” says Harms. “And we’ve already got induction cooktop heating. That’s Beneficial Electrification. These stoves are more efficient because you’re not heating a coil to heat the pot – you just heat the pot. With an induction cooktop, I can boil water faster in a pot than I can in a microwave.”

“There are some exciting possibilities out there that can help us reduce members’ costs while at the same time giving our members a cleaner, greener, more efficient way of doing something that they already do every day,” says Meier. “Stay tuned as we move into this new world of Beneficial Electrification.”

Hunters: Sight-in Days scheduled

In an effort to both assist hunters and protect valuable electrical equipment, LPEA will resume its underwriting support of "Sight-in Days" at the Durango Gun Club Outdoor Range in advance of the three big game seasons, Thursdays and Fridays, Oct. 11-12, 18-19, and Nov. 1-2, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

During Sight-in Days, the Durango Gun Club on La Posta Road is open to the general public/hunters for rifle scope sighting, and hunters are encouraged to take advantage of the controlled environment to prepare their firearms for the season. LPEA has contributed \$500 to cover costs incurred by the club for the Sight-in Days. In past years, some 500-600 hunters have taken advantage of the complimentary service.

Durango Gun Club staff, plus volunteer club members, will be on hand during Sight-in Days to answer questions, provide assistance and do minor firearms repair. Donations to the club are welcomed, but no payment is required.

"We really want to help discourage sighting scopes in uncontrolled environments," says Operations Manager Justin Talbot. "Taking aim at LPEA equipment is vandalism. Beyond the expense and inconvenience to our customers if an outage occurs, repair requires dangerous work by our LPEA crews to get everyone back in power."

For further information, contact Joseph Perino, Durango Gun Club secretary/treasurer, 970.749.3453.

Keeping members informed

ALL EMPLOYEES DON'T BE SCAMMED (Here or at Your Home)

Phone scammers continue to masquerade as employees of La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) and place phone calls, threatening to cut off the electricity unless payment is immediately made.

THIS IS A SCAM – LPEA DOES NOT CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THIS MANNER.

Steps in the event of a phone scam:

- **Never** panic and give a credit or debit card over the phone (or follow any direction dictated by the phone scammer).
- **Secure** a call back number – and hang up.
- **Call** LPEA immediately to clarify any account discrepancies – 970.247.5786 – and report the scam.
- **If** the caller is threatening or aggressive, contact the police.

LPEA goes to great lengths to protect its consumer-members. We are here to serve you.

LPEA The heart of your power.
La Plata Electric Association, Inc. 970.247.5786
www.lpea.coop

It's a distressing occurrence (sometimes reoccurrence) that LPEA learns about often too late: businesses (as well as homeowners) falling prey to a phone scam. The scammers continue to be creative in their endeavors, but the consistent message is that they demand immediate payment for what they claim is a delinquent electricity bill.

Simply put – LPEA does not conduct business in this manner.

To assist business owners in keeping their employees informed of steps during an attempted scam, LPEA has created a downloadable, as well as hard copy, simple step flyer. (A version is reproduced here.)

"We will be mailing hard copy cards to all of our known business owners, as well as sending email notifications, with a downloadable version attached, so we can truly get as many people as we can informed," says Ron Meier, manager of engineering and member relations. "We have also placed a PDF version on our web site, so anyone can print it out and keep it on a bulletin board, by the phone, wherever it's visible, to remember what to do when a scammer calls."

All LPEA members can immediately check the status of their accounts through SmartHub at www.lpea.coop, or call 970.247.5786.

Oh no! The Holiday Season!

LPEA's inaugural LED Holiday Lighting Contest in 2017 proved to be a great deal of fun, and it "sparked" the holiday spirit across LPEA's service territory. (The 2nd Prize award-winner from Ignacio is pictured here).

"I know, we're publicizing this early, but we wanted to give everyone enough time so they can plan their lighting designs and don't hear about the contest at the last minute," says Nancy Andrews, energy management advisor coordinating the competition. "We haven't announced the prizes yet, but there WILL be prizes for the most creative home LED lighting displays."

To be entered in the contest, registration is required by Dec. 3, via email: 2018lightcontest@lpea.coop, or call 970.247.5786. Consumer-members are requested to give their permission for LPEA to use names and images for promotional purposes. Lighting displays will be judged the week of Dec. 17.

"Holiday lights, especially when we have a winter wonderland of snow, add a special glow to our communities around the holidays," says CEO Mike Dreyspring. "With the ever-evolving LED decorative lighting available, we're excited to encourage our members' creativity."

For further information, contact Andrews at 970.382.7775.



Quintana joins LPEA

Veteran Journeyman Lineman Eddie Quintana has joined the LPEA Operations Team, bringing his years of experience to the co-op.

Raised in the Albuquerque, N.M. area, Quintana attended technical school in Las Cruces, focusing on welding, and pursued his initial career in the construction field. He took his skills to the U.S. Navy, where he served for five years – deployed twice in Iraq, as well as stationed the Gulf of Mexico following Hurricane Katrina. It was there his interest in electrical line construction was piqued, as the Navy helped restore power to those affected by the hurricane.

Following the Navy, where he rose to E-5, Petty Officer Second Class, he earned his Journeyman Lineman with Southwest Line Constructors, Local 611. He worked throughout the southwest region, including garnering expertise in high voltage line construction. Quintana comes to LPEA most recently from JayCo Electric.



LPEA youth shine at State Fair

Nearly a half million dollars was raised for Colorado's agricultural youth at the 2018 Colorado State Fair, thanks to Colorado's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, of which LPEA is a part.

The state's electric cooperatives come together annually to sponsor the fair's Junior Livestock Sale in support of the future of Colorado's agribusiness as it demonstrates the importance of raising quality livestock and the work required of those who pursue careers in agriculture.

From LPEA's service territory, Kori Jenkins (pictured here), of Bayfield celebrated her Champion Hampshire, a 275 lb. Market Hog, which earned her \$2,800.

Other local winners included two in Market Lambs – Brock Fassett (Champion Dorset) and Maryann Fassett (3rd Place Dorset) of Durango. Plus Krystalyn Anderson of Hesperus, earned 3rd Place in the Market Steers division.

In the last 38 years, the sale has raised more than \$10.3 million for the youth involved in Colorado's 4-H and FFA programs.



CO-OP MEMBERS

Ask...

A: Good for you! Recycling CFLs prevents the release of mercury into the environment, plus recycling CFLs and other fluorescents allows for the reuse of the glass, metals and other materials. Virtually all components of a fluorescent bulb can be recycled.

Both Ace Hardware and Home Depot have nationwide programs to collect CFL bulbs, so in LPEA's service territory there are three options: Durango Home Depot, Kroeger's Ace Hardware in Town Plaza, Durango, and in Pagosa Springs, Terry's Ace Hardware. The service is free, and all turn the bulbs over to an environmental management company that safely transports and recycles them.

Q: I'm replacing my Compact Fluorescents (CFLs) with new LEDs, but I don't know where to recycle the old bulbs. I hear they are environmentally hazardous, so I don't want to just throw them in the trash.

LIVE WIRES

Board meeting Oct. 17, 9a.m.

The next LPEA Board meeting is Wednesday, Oct. 17, 9 a.m., at LPEA headquarters in Durango. The agenda will be posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at www.lpea.coop. All members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the Board meeting.

Time for "Fall Back"

Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, Nov. 4. Enjoy an extra hour of sleep! Be sure to set your clocks back, and Time-of-Use customers, make sure your ETS and water heater timers are reflecting the accurate time. Questions? Call 970.382.3506.

Round Up Grants

The following organizations received grants from the Round Up Foundation in September:

- LASSO – Humane Society for Horses
- Pagosa Bible Church – Halloween Program
- Animas High School – Sending students to College Fair
- Blueprints of Hope – Yoga and nutrition education for cancer patients





National Co-op Month And why geese fly farther than eagles

BY MIKE DREYSPRING | CEO | MDREYSPRING@LPEA.COOP

Spoiler alert – if you’ve read the book, *Why Geese Fly Farther than Eagles*, you know how this will end.

Have you ever wondered how difficult it was to settle this area? Can you imagine setting foot into the Animas Valley and be the first human here? We can assume the Native Americans were here already. When the rest of us arrived, however, it was an adjustment, to say the least.

Our ancestors persisted and plodded on, doing whatever they could to live in a beautiful, at times harsh, world. This same scenario has played out millions of times throughout the United States and population expanded into what we now know as rural areas. One might assume that rural areas would improve through innovation, invention, increased productivity of farm automation, and I am sure they did, to some degree. But in spite of the appeal of rural areas, scarcity of people becomes the challenge for emerging businesses.

We learned about the economic dichotomy of Americans during the Great Depression. It was then FDR decided rural electrification was the cure for rural America. History’s verdict is in – Rural Electric Cooperatives electrified rural America, and economic opportunity and vitality soon followed. The story could end there, but it’s not supposed to.

Co-ops were built on a foundation of people sharing things. In our case, our founding members shared membership fees to form the cooperative. They shared rates, equity, easements for utility lines and much more.

Today, cooperatives are getting involved in broadband, such as fiber to the home. Why? Because we’re witnessing that economic dichotomy again. It’s called the “digital divide,” where the more urban areas experience better broadband

services, on average, than rural folks. Co-ops are also getting involved in other activities and businesses to meet their local membership’s needs.

Truth is, if one enterprising person could, in a capitalistic venture, strike out and provide these services, they would. We certainly have the freedom to do it; but not the requirement. What I’m referencing is “need.” And co-ops have a rich history of meeting needs.

So, that’s it? Co-ops meet needs? Co-ops have to decide to do that. We’re self-governing, locally controlled by electing members to serve as directors who set policy and strategic direction for the organization.

In my lifetime, I’ve seen us [as rugged individuals] become more self-sufficient. Almost everyone I know wants to be self-sufficient, but that isn’t always conducive to cooperation.

The author of *Why Geese Fly Farther than Eagles*, Bob Stromberg, explains it well. It’s about working together. He explains how geese do it, which explains why they can travel great distances. It’s also applicable to our work today. It doesn’t really matter the challenge before us. If we get together, we can accomplish together what needs to be done. We’ve done it before.

If you’re inclined to believe what I’ve said, it’s probably because you see the truth of cooperatives and their success. We just have to see the need, then realize we can do it together.

It can be done.

After all, this is National Cooperative Month.

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Mission Statement:
La Plata Electric Association provides its members safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost while being environmentally responsible.