



WISE

YOUR ELECTRIC CO-OP MEMBER NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2014 | ISSUE #0062

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Notables: Celebrate the Power of Your Membership



Kevin Ritter
SMPA General Manager

Ask yourself this - What does it mean to be a member of San Miguel Power Association, a Touchstone Energy electric cooperative?

As a member of SMPA, you literally have the power. You have a voice and control in how your electric co-op is run; in what's best for the community; in the decisions that allow us to provide affordable electricity for your home. This October, we're celebrating National Co-op Month, and we're recognizing the most important part of our co-op – you, our members.

You're invited to celebrate along with us during our 2014 Member Appreciation Days on October 7 – 9. Stop into our offices in Nucla or Ridgway between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and treat yourself to hot coffee and apple cider, one – okay, maybe two – sweet treats, and an SMPA collectible ceramic coffee mug.

Your membership in San Miguel Power means more than simply paying for electricity. Your membership means you not only have a right to participate in how the co-op operates, but a responsibility. You are tasked with voting for your director representative and expressing your needs and interests to that representative. Touchstone Energy co-ops, like SMPA, work to engage their members in all the issues surrounding the co-op, because when members are engaged and informed they become advocates for their co-ops, not just consumers.

Our members are the reason we exist. Embracing the idea that you have more than a passing interest in SMPA, and realizing that you are the owners with the ability to help guide us, that is the power of your co-op membership. The Board, management, and employees of SMPA understand this principle, and it influences the way we manage your co-op in our day-to-day operations and decisions. It drives us to provide excellent service for our members. Thank you for being part of our cooperative.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY 101

Small nicks in underground wires can be expensive, but necessary, to fix. If you nick an underground utility, notify your utility provider. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

Contact Us:

Nucla
170 W. 10th Ave.
P.O. Box 817
Nucla, CO 81424
(970) 864-7311
Monday - Thursday; 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-877-864-7311

Ridgway
720 N. Railroad St.
P.O. Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432
(970) 626-5549
Tuesday - Friday; 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-800-864-7256

www.smpa.com

In the case of a power outage, contact your local SMPA office. If it is after hours, you can automatically transfer to our 24-hour dispatch.

Questions or comments?

Contact:
Becky Mashburn
Communications Executive
(970) 626-5549 ext. 212
energywise@smpa.com



San Miguel Power is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Member Appreciation Days

Stop in for free baked goods, refreshments and a coffee mug*.

Oct. 7 - 9

8:00am - 4:00pm
SMPA offices in Ridgway & Nucla

*One mug per member, while supplies last.



Be Sure of Your Target

Our rights-of-ways provide attractive hunting grounds, but they also contain our power lines, substations, and workers day and night. Accidentally shooting and damaging our electric lines and equipment is dangerous to you and our workers and can result in costly outages.

San Miguel Power reminds you: For the safety of our workers, our power system, other hunters, and yourself, be sure of your target and what lies beyond it, before you take your shot.



reminder

If approved, members in the greater Telluride region will see a **4% reduction in the Nucla-Telluride Transmission Line surcharge** on their bills next month.

The decrease will be reflected on all bills received after October, 31, 2014.

Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Moe...

Washington D.C. or Steamboat Springs?

Washington, D.C., and Steamboat Springs, CO: One's a big city, the other sits on a big mountain. Who can think of two better places to spend an all-expense-paid week? If you get your electric power from San Miguel Power and are a high school sophomore or junior, you have the opportunity to apply for a trip you'll remember forever.

During the Washington D.C. Youth Tour you'll learn about co-ops and electricity, and see government up close when you visit Capitol Hill, as well as Colorado's members of congress and senators. You'll also experience history by visiting the many memorials and honoring the patriots who fought for our freedoms.

In Steamboat Springs at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp you will set up a cooperative and learn about power when you visit a mine and coal plant. You'll learn leadership skills and the importance of protecting the environment. You'll float the Colorado River, hike to Fish Creek Falls, and ride the gondola to the top of Mt. Werner.

In Washington and Steamboat you will make new friends and memories that last a lifetime. Are you ready to apply? The application process includes submitting an application and 500-word essay. The deadline for submitting your application is Friday, December 12, 2014. Application materials and more details can be found at www.smpa.com.



ABOVE: Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp participants enjoy a day-long raft trip down the Colorado River. It's one of the many fun team building activities campers complete during the week-long camp.



ABOVE: The Colorado contingency poses for a group photo at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. It is one of the many historical monuments students visit during the week-long Rural Electric Youth Tour.

? reader request

Q Why Does SMPA give rebates and try to convince me to use less electricity? Isn't that bad for business?

A It might seem counterintuitive that San Miguel Power works to educate our members about energy-saving practices and products, and gives cash rebates back to members who install these products in their homes and business. We're basically asking you to use less of our product, which reduces sales, and ultimately our profit, right?

Wrong! Yes, we are asking you to use less electricity, and yes that means we sell fewer kilowatt hours, but profit isn't our bottom line – you are. It's what we like to call the cooperative difference. We put our members' needs and best interests first. We are not governed by a distant set of shareholders looking to turn a profit. We are governed by a democratically elected board. Those board members are elected by the membership and from the membership. You – our members – govern the cooperative. You have a voice. You have a vote. See the pattern here?

Since our members are our main priority, it's our responsibility to provide information and establish programs that can help our members improve their quality of life. That's just how we do business. Check out all of our rebate programs at www.smpa.com.

Submit your reader request questions to energywise@smpa.com, and we'll answer it in an upcoming newsletter!

2014 Holiday Card Coloring Contest

What: San Miguel is asking all local students to draw a picture showing how their families use electricity during the holidays and submit it for our 2014 Holiday Card Coloring Contest. The contest is open to all 4th & 5th grade students who attend public, private, or home school within SMPA's service territory.

When: Artwork is due Mon., December 1, 2014. Contest entry forms are available online at www.smpa.com or at SMPA's offices in Ridgway & Nucla. All entries must be submitted on this form.

Prizes: **1st Place** - \$50 and artwork is featured on SMPA's 2014 Holiday Card!
2nd Place - \$35; **3rd Place** - \$20