

ENERGYWISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Both Offices Open:

M - TH • 7:00am – 5:30pm

www.smpa.com

www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower

In the event of a power outage, contact your local SMPA office to reach our 24-hour dispatch.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

energywise@smpa.com
(970) 626-5549 x2120

OCTOBER SAFETY TIPS

- ☒ Avoid unsafe extension cords
- ☒ Ensure that outdoor lights are rated for outdoor use
- ☒ Never plug a space heater into an extension cord.

San Miguel Power Association is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call

(866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

FEATURE STORY

Another Section of Red Mountain Line Successfully Rebuilt

September 2025 marked a major milestone in the Red Mountain Electrical Reliability & Broadband Improvement Project. Crews completed critical tasks, including pulling wire through newly installed fiberglass poles and replacing aging wooden poles near populated areas of Ouray. These efforts came just as daily rainstorms—welcome from a fire-mitigation standpoint—added uncertainty to helicopter flights, the only practical way to deliver equipment to worksites perched at cliff bases and along the rugged ridges of the famed “Million-Dollar Highway.”

The project demanded teamwork, precision, and patience. SMPA's contract crews and helicopter operators worked under pressure, while local residents and travelers shared in the effort by accommodating full closures of Highway 550, in-town street closures, and even requests for some individuals to vacate their homes temporarily. Ouray residents responded with remarkable cooperation and were rewarded with an unforgettable sight: helicopters lifting massive electrical structures up and over the mountains, time and again. Thanks to the skill of the pilot and crews, the work was completed both quickly and safely.

With this stage finished, SMPA is proud to announce the completion of Phase IIIa, which rebuilt the line from the Red Mountain

Substation to the Alpine Loop turnoff (south of Ruby Walls) and included upgrades in Ouray and at the Ouray Substation. While engineers and operations teams are pleased with the progress, the most challenging section—the Ruby Walls—still lies ahead.

Stay tuned for updates as SMPA prepares to tackle future construction phases, which will ultimately provide members with more reliable backup power and expanded broadband infrastructure.



What do the Sharing Success Grants Mean to Local Communities?

They could mean better accommodations for visitors, as was the case in the Rico Trails project. They could mean bringing international visitors as they do for the Ouray Ice Park. They can mean facade improvements for businesses on the West End, like Paradox Cycles.

Sharing Success Grants can mean anything else you might imagine that can bolster economic activity in your community! Thanks to CoBank and Basin Electric for matching funds to create this Economic Development tool.

Tell us about your proposed project. Apply at www.smpa.com/content/sharing-success-economic-development-grants. Deadline: November 13th, 2025

 **SHARING SUCCESS**
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

 **BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

 **COBANK**
COOPERATIVE. CONNECTED. COMMITTED.

Introducing Ridgway’s First Microgrid & Community Resilience Hub

Last month, the Town of Ridgway and San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) welcomed the public to a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of Ridgway’s first Microgrid for Community Resilience project. The new system provides backup solar and battery power to the Space to Create Decker Room, enabling the space to serve as a Resilience Hub—a community shelter where residents can gather during utility outages, stay warm, charge devices, and access the internet to stay informed.

“This project is an innovative step toward local energy resilience,” said Val Szwarc, SMPA Director, representing the Ridgway area. In addition to serving residents in times of need, the Decker Room Resilience Hub also offsets the facility’s annual energy use with solar generation, extending the benefits of clean, sustainable power.



EcoAction Partners’ Climate Action Development Director, Siobhan Montoya Lavender celebrates locally-generated power for community resilience.



Rate Increases Predicted for 2026

San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) is preparing its 2026 budget, and like most utilities, we expect to see higher costs next year. This means member rates will likely increase more than in recent years.

While costs are rising, your cooperative is working to soften the impact. Over the past several years, SMPA used federal assistance and careful planning to keep rate increases lower than many other utilities. Now, as wholesale power, insurance, and material costs continue to climb, we want members to know about the tools available to help manage bills.

As a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative, SMPA remains committed to reliability, cost-effectiveness, and helping you find ways to reduce the impact of rising energy costs. Together, we can make sure our community is prepared for the future.

Here are a few ways you can take action:

- **Rebates and savings:** All members can access rebates for energy-efficient appliances and technologies at www.smpa.com/energy#berebates
- **Time-of-Use (TOU) rates:** By shifting electricity use outside of peak hours (4 p.m. – 9 p.m.), you can save money and help reduce overall costs for the cooperative.
- **Electrify and Save program:** With our new On-Bill Repayment (OBR) option, you can upgrade to efficient equipment like heat pumps or water heaters and pay for it gradually on your SMPA bill, often with the savings it creates.
- **Income-qualified support:** SMPA offers programs to help income-qualified members lower their bills. Learn more at www.smpa.com/iq-programs

IT'S TIME TO CLEAN HOUSE.



Bring your un-needed documents to the SMPA Office in Nucla for **SHRED DAY**.

Thurs. October 16th
12 PM - 2 PM




SMPA FOOD DRIVE:
Also... Drop off your food donations. Throughout October, SMPA will match your food donation, can for can!

170 W. 10TH AVE., NUCLA

Why We Celebrate Cooperatives

Every October, cooperatives from all sectors across the country celebrate National Cooperative Month. The purpose of this annual celebration is to recognize the cooperative difference and remind you, the members of the co-op, about SMPA’s mission to provide our members with safe, reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible electrical service, while demonstrating both cooperative responsibility and support for the communities we serve. Thanks to those who visited us during our Member Appreciation Days events at our lobbies in Nucla and Ridgway. Members are what cooperatives are all about, and we’re grateful for the chance to serve you!



GIVE BLOOD |

vitalant.org

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15
11:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
170 W. 10TH AVE., NUCLA



ELECTRIFY AND SAVE[™]

ON-BILL REPAYMENT PROGRAM

MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE, LOW INTEREST FINANCING AVAILABLE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME UPGRADES

NO CREDIT CHECK • NO MONEY DOWN • NO LOANS

COMBINE WITH REBATES FROM www.smpa.com/energy#berebates

- Home Batteries
- Electric Thermal Storage (ETS)
- Electric Vehicle Charging
- Smart Thermostats



TIME-OF-USE FRIENDLY

SMPA

POWER PLAY

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLE:
MANN I LOVE IT COOP HEART A TON
Hint...Worth celebrating.

Last Month's Answer: ON-BILL REPAYMENT
Last Month's Winner: Katelyn Contillo, Rico

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWER
and be entered into a drawing for a fun prize to:

EnergyWise
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