

ENERGY WISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



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**JULY
2015**



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

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Send your questions or suggestions for the editors of EnergyWise to:
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SAFETY TIP

Help us save the tree's. Do not plant trees directly under power lines. As these trees grow they can become a safety concern and/or lead to outages. Many times the tree's that are planted too close to power lines must be removed or drastically trimmed away. Please reference the infographic on back for details on how to plant trees near a power line.

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NOTABLES: 2014 was Another Great Year for Your Local Electric Cooperative



Kevin Ritter
 SMPA General Manager

A message from your General Manager, Kevin Ritter

As discussed at our annual meeting last month, 2014 was another incredible year for SMPA and we ended the year in excellent financial shape. As your local not-for profit cooperative, our members are the direct benefactors of our financial stability. Because of our financial position, for the first time in SMPA history, the Board of Directors approved a \$1 million dollar Christmas Credit to all current members of SMPA. The credit was put on everyone's December bill and showcases the Cooperative model at work. In addition, in May of 2014, we were able to give back \$900,000 in regular member dividends, also known as capital credits. This retirement goes to the oldest members on our patronage capital records. If that isn't enough, we also just paid another member dividend last month to the tune of \$1.7 million dollars. We are very proud to say that this is our third consecutive year paying back our membership without raising rates.

Also in 2014 we continued to pursue a strategic goal of developing new technologies that will help us better serve our members. Our Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is now fully implemented and we have some experience with it under our belts. This technology gives us the ability to explore new member interfaces to give you, our members, the best available information about how you use energy. We are looking at a member portal available through the internet, remote connects/disconnects, pre-pay options, etc. Hopefully this will enable you to make informed decisions on how to conserve and use electricity most efficiently.

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Amber Padgett (right), of Norwood High School, represented SMPA at the National Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, DC. She met lawmakers, experienced the legislative process, toured historical monuments and learned about the cooperative industry on a national level. SMPA sponsors a student like Amber every year. Learn more at <http://www.smpa.com/content/rural-electric-youth-tour>.



The LED Storm

LED Lamps to Light the 21st Century

In 2014, the Nobel Prize in physics was awarded to three researchers who, in the early 1990s, discovered a process for making blue light from Light Emitting Diode technology or LED. Because of this achievement, which took scientists over three decades to accomplish, the ability to produce white light from an LED bulb is now possible and LED lighting technology is taking the lighting world by storm.

One of the remarkable qualities of LED lighting technology is the ability to produce light with incredible efficiency. When compared with incandescent lighting LEDs use one half to one tenth the amount of energy to produce the same amount of light. Yet, as with most new technologies the upfront costs can be pretty steep. That is why San Miguel Power started one of the state's first LED light bulb rebates. We were an industry leader in incentivizing LED light bulbs with up to a \$350 rebate for LED tube lights to replace fluorescent tube lights most often seen in businesses and schools. Partially due to the success of our program Tri-State Generation and Transmission decided to introduce a LED rebate incentive program for many types of LED lights. This program would be available to all of Tri-States member systems in a four state area, including SMPA. It is through the Tri-State LED program that SMPA is currently able to offer up to 50% rebates on the purchase of LED bulbs by SMPA members.

Many SMPA members are now quite familiar with the LED rebate program, though it took a couple of years for the LED storm to start brewing. In 2012, SMPA processed nearly \$2500 in LED rebates. In 2013 this nearly doubled to \$4500, and by 2014, the storm really hit with over \$100,000 in LED rebates handed out. It doesn't look like 2015 will see any break in the amount of these rebates.

Thanks to efforts of the Town of Mountain Village, many residents have been able to purchase LED lights for their homes with a combined SMPA/Tri-State and Mountain Village "prebate" discount. This is the first time we have been able to give out these incentives on the front end as a "prebate". This was first accomplished through the Relight Mountain Village program, which took place in the fall of 2014 and again in April of this year. A similar program called Greenlights was offered in May thanks to a partnership between EcoAction Partners, SMPA, San Miguel County, the Town of Telluride and Ace Hardware. Under this program, SMC residents could order discount LEDs through a special website developed by Ace Hardware. If you missed either of these programs, you can still apply for the standard SMPA LED rebate; the application form can be found on the SMPA website at www.smpa.com under the energy efficiency tab.



Rebate	Amount
LED Lamps & Fixtures	50% of bulb cost up to \$10/bulb; max 50 bulbs
LED Yard Lights	50% of fixture cost up to \$100; max 3 fixtures
LED Tube Light	50% of bulb cost up to \$8/ft; max \$360
LED Strip, Short Tube & Bar Light	50% of bulb up to \$8/ft.; max \$150
LED Small Bulb & Pin Light	50% of bulb cost up to \$5/bulb; max \$150

ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

NOTABLES cont. from page 1

While 2014 was another great year for your cooperative we are certainly not getting complacent. We face several challenges ahead. One challenge in particular is that we are expecting some considerable increases from our power supplier, in the coming years, for the cost of energy that we purchase and deliver to you. This "cost of power" accounts for over 50% of our total expenses in the year, and is mostly beyond our control. However, we are already taking a look at these projections and working with Tri-State on ways to minimize the impact on our members. After all, serving electricity to you in the safest, most reliable, cost effective, and environmentally responsible manner is our job, every day of every year.

Finally, I would like to recognize our outside crews and the job they do for all of us throughout the year. The theme of our annual meeting was "Life on the Line" to prompt us to think about the job these people do. My presentation at the meeting focused on what they do, the terrain they work in, the skills they possess, and the hazards they face. The photos we displayed gave a great perspective of their work. This is a highly skilled group of men and women who work in adverse and dangerous environments to ensure the lights come on when we flip the switch. I hope you will join me in giving them a big Thank You for the job they do for us.

Give **T R E E S** a Chance

Trees planted too close to power lines grow into a BIG problem. To prevent power outages and safety hazards, these trees need to be trimmed and sometimes removed. Do your part to keep trees healthy and prevent power outages.

Plant trees a safe distance from power distribution lines.

WHAT IS THE RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND?

SMPA's renewable energy fund is supported through the co-op's Green Cents and Green Blocks programs in which members voluntarily participate by rounding up their bill or purchasing renewable energy offsets. The dollars collected through these programs are deposited directly into the renewable energy fund and are used for SMPA's renewable rebate program and other local energy projects. All this is done without impacting SMPA's electricity rates, because renewable energy program costs are kept separate from the co-op's general operating expenses.

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