

ENERGY WISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



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MAY 2015



CONTACT INFORMATION

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P.O. Box 817
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(970) 864-7311
M - TH, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-877-864-7311

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P.O. Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432
(970) 626-5549
T - F, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Toll Free: 1-800-864-7256

www.smpa.com
www.facebook.com/SanMiguel Power

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:
energywise@smpa.com
(970) 626-5549 x212

SAFETY TIP

Safety Tip. . . Always look up for power lines before you do any work with long tools or ladders. Be especially aware when pruning trees.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program_intake@usda.gov.

NOTABLES: Answering Questions about our Disconnect Procedure for Late Bills.



Kevin Ritter
SMPA General Manager

A message from your General Manager, Kevin Ritter

Lately we have had some recurring concerns and questions from our members about our disconnect procedure for non-payment of accounts. I would like to address some of those issues in this column.

Disconnecting accounts is the worst case scenario for all involved. Unfortunately, disconnect procedures are a necessary evil in our business. They are intended to protect the co-op membership against the costs and loss of revenue from uncollectible accounts and provide a consistent method to deal with those accounts. The SMPA Board considers this procedure very carefully and how it may impact our members.

The first basic premise to understand is that, like most other bills, it is ultimately the member's responsibility to make sure the bill is paid on time. If your bill is paid on time our procedure for non-pay will never be an issue for you. If you plan on being on vacation or being gone for an extended period of time don't forget to make arrangements to pay your bill while you are gone. Please do not rely on forwarded mail alone to remind you when your bill is due. You have the following options to consider: 1) set up auto pay by calling our offices at 970-626-5549, between

7AM and 5:30PM Monday thru Friday. If you do not like to auto pay your accounts, 2) you can pay your bill on-line at www.smpa.com, 3) you can pre-pay your bills for the time that you will be gone, or 4) you can now pay your bill by phone using our new automated system, any time, day or night with a credit card.

The whole process starts when bills are prepared and mailed right at the first of the month. They are due on the 21st of the month. If the bill is not paid when the next billing process is ran (end of the next month), it is assessed a \$10 or 1.5% late fee, whichever is greater. The billing statement will then show a Past Due amount. Delinquent Letters are mailed the first Monday, 14 days after the bill Due Date. The delinquent amount must be paid within 14 days after the date of the letter. Service disconnects are done the day after the Delinquent due date. The week prior to the scheduled disconnect date we initiate automated courtesy calls to those who are on the disconnect list. It is important to note these calls are a courtesy only and do not change the disconnect time line if the member does not receive them for some reason. If SMPA personnel are sent to the property to process a disconnect, the account is charged a \$100 Disconnect fee, regardless if the disconnect is actually

ANSWERING QUESTIONS cont. on page 2

SAVE THE DATE
SAN MIGUEL POWER ANNUAL MEETING

LIFE ON THE LINE

ALL SMPA MEMBERS WELCOME!

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2015
SMPA RIDGWAY OFFICE
720 N. RAILROAD STREET
5:30 PM

D2 BOARD ELECTIONS | YEAR IN REVIEW | REFRESHMENTS



POWER RESPONSIBLY

Visit www.smpa.com today to find out how we can help you make it easier, cheaper, and environmentally-friendly to power your life.

If you're looking to take advantage of new technologies, Energy Star appliances, conservation measures, or renewable energy, we have options for you.



SMPA Economic Development Grant Proposal Form

San Miguel Power in conjunction with Co-Bank is offering \$10,000 in matching grant funds for economic stimulus and development activities in our service territory.

As a not-for-profit rural electric utility our programs and services are designed to benefit you, our members.

San Miguel Power Association, Inc. is again seeking proposals for funding opportunities that stimulate and enhance our local economies. We are interested in financially supporting projects, programs and organizations that are actively working to improve the financial stability of local businesses, expand entrepreneurial opportunities and bring revenue to our towns and counties.

The following definition of Economic Development will be used by SMPA board of directors for analysis of all proposals.

Economic development is the development of economic wealth of regions or communities for the well-being of their inhabitants. From a policy perspective, economic development can be defined as efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and the tax base.

Applicant's Action Plan Should:

- Stimulate job creation in our area
- Promote economic growth
- Create/improve local commerce
- Maintain/strengthen existing businesses
- Enhance regional prosperity
- Offer sustainable progress; set the stage for economic development in the long run
- Build collaboration
- Show off our community's attributes
- Demonstrate ability to leverage funds

The Proposals Shall Include the Following:

1. Proposal or Project Title.
2. A description of the project and location.
3. How the proposal supports local economic development and businesses.
4. Other sources of funding.
5. Other partners for the project.
6. A schedule of completion for the project
7. Who will be the responsible parties for project completion?

Deadline for Applications will be June 15, 2015. Please mail or drop off your applications to San Miguel Power offices in either Nucla or Ridgway or mail to San Miguel Power C/O Toni Bertorello PO Box 1150 Ridgway, CO 81432.

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We want to hear from you! Send your questions to energywise@smpa.com. We'll answer them in upcoming newsletters!

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

NOTABLES cont. from page 1

performed. If the disconnect is performed remotely, a \$50 fee is charged to the account. Should a member request the service to be reconnected after hours there will be an additional \$75 After Hours reconnect fee. That will have to be paid, along with the delinquent amount and Disconnect fee before the service can be reconnected. Some of the steps and fees were recently changed through the revision of our Rules and Regulations policy, which was noticed to the members per our Bylaws. As a further safeguard to the Co-operative we will also require a deposit from any account that has had 3 delinquents in one year.

If you have good pay history and have always paid your bill on time but are having some type of hardship that is making it difficult for you to pay your entire bill on time, please give us a call. Our Billing staff are trained and authorized to work with members to the extent we can, to help you through a rough time. It is certainly best to be proactive and work with us before the situation affects your account status.

May Is National Electrical Safety Month

From flipping a light switch to plugging in a phone charger, we use electricity every day, and we oftentimes take it for granted. May is National Electrical Safety Month, so take the time learn more about electricity and steps that can be taken to help ensure its safe use.

In 2011, the National Fire Protection Association reported an estimated 47,700 home structure fires in the U.S. due to some form of electrical failure or malfunction resulting in 418 civilian deaths, 1,570 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in damage.

Below are steps you can take to protect yourself and loved ones—indoors and out:

- Check outlets for loose-fitting plugs. Replace missing or broken wall plates so wiring and components are not exposed. If you have young children at home, install Tamper Resistant Outlets (TROs) or cover unused outlets with plastic safety caps.
- Never force plugs into outlets.
- Do not remove the grounding pin (third prong) to make a plug fit a two-prong outlet.
- Avoid overloading outlets with adapters and too many appliance plugs.
- Make sure cords are not frayed or cracked, placed under carpets or rugs, or located in high traffic areas.
- Do not nail or staple electrical cords to walls, floors, or other objects.
- Use extension cords only on a temporary basis, not as permanent household wiring.

For more information on how to prevent electrical hazards, visit SafeElectricity.org.