

# ENERGY WISE

YOUR SAN MIGUEL POWER MEMBER NEWSLETTER



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**AUGUST  
2015**



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Nucla**  
 170 W. 10th Ave.  
 P.O. Box 817  
 Nucla, CO 81424  
 (970) 864-7311  
 M - TH, 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  
 T - F, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
 Toll Free: 1-800-864-7256

**www.smpa.com**  
**www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower**

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

**Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.**

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## NOTABLES: The Road to More Reliable Power



**Kevin Ritter**  
 SMPA General Manager

### *A message from your General Manager, Kevin Ritter*

When you flip the switch, the light should come on. It's a simple idea, and it's one we often take for granted. However, the challenge of making that dream into a reality is anything but simple. This is especially true when the work of keeping the lights on is impacted by extreme weather, natural disasters or other natural factors. Yet, in the face of these obstacles, San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) is using modern technology and hard work to improve the power grid and increase the reliability of your electric service. SMPA is continually working on this mission. Three projects, in particular, come to mind:

### **The West End Reliability Project:**

In the summer of 2013, lightning struck the transformer at the Nucla substation, cutting power to the West End for nearly 17 hours. In order to get power flowing to the region again, SMPA crews installed an older transformer that had recently been taken out of service due to its age. Members of the West End are still being served by that old transformer. The power is on, but the solution is not permanent. To improve the situation, SMPA has obtained a new transformer. Crews will be installing it later this Summer. While they're at it, they'll upgrade two circuit breakers and associated protective devices that are also outdated. This will give SMPA the ability to keep power flowing during maintenance activities and it will minimize the impact of outages by enabling better communication with the Nucla Power Plant. These activities will require multiple scheduled outages in the outlying areas. Of course, members to be affected will be given advance notice by phone and announcements may be heard on the radio or seen on SMPA's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower](http://www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower)). A schedule will be finalized soon.

### **The Telluride Reliability Project:**

SMPA serves more than 20 communities, but the greatest loads are in Telluride & the Town of Mountain Village. Surprisingly, these two communities are being served through a single transmission line that has no back up. Because many feel that a new backup transmission line would not be well-suited for the area, SMPA has developed an alternative solution: to back up existing service with additional heavy distribution lines. These lines will strengthen the connection between the Telluride & Sunshine substations allowing their transformers to serve as back-ups for each other. With this system in place, power outages that used to last hours could be over in minutes. Also, the new lines will be primarily buried underground, thereby causing almost no impact to local scenery, but best of all, according to the policies of Tri-State Generation and Transmission, (Tri-State) SMPA's wholesale power provider, a project like this qualifies for assistance. That means that Tri-State will cover half the cost.

SMPA is also planning to install fiber optic lines along with this project that would nearly complete a secondary fiber highway into the Telluride region. While SMPA is not looking to be an internet service provider we understand there is a need for a more robust fiber service to this area. By laying fiber optics cable we can work with local providers to help our members in their quest for improved internet service. Once in place, internet service providers will need to perfect the rights of way for commercial cable use. They would then be able to use this fiber highway for better internet speeds and service.

### **The Red Mountain Pass Rockslide Repair:**

In mid-January of 2014, in the area of the ruby walls on highway 550 near mile marker 99, a



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# Let's Talk.

SAN MIGUEL POWER ASSOCIATION



## Coffee with your Co-op:

- Find out what we're doing.
- Say what's on your mind.
- Enjoy coffee and pastries.
- Get to know us.

Find out where and when at:  
[www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower](http://www.facebook.com/SanMiguelPower)

SMPA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Got a question about SMPA, the industry, new technologies? Let us know! Submit your "reader request" questions to [energywise@smpa.com](mailto:energywise@smpa.com). We may answer it in an upcoming issue.

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massive rockslide struck the backup transmission line for the Ouray/Ridgway areas. Due to the many complexities involved at the time, the repair of this vital infrastructure was postponed, but now, a window of opportunity is open. SMPA crews will take on the arduous task of re-building nearly a mile of transmission line into the solid rock of the mountain side. The project is scheduled to run from August 31 to October 7. The construction will require road closures from mid-September until the end of the month. Check the SMPA facebook page for road closure times and dates. Although the road closures will be inconvenient, the end result will be a redundant power distribution grid that can withstand the treacherous conditions of the Red Mountain Pass allowing power restoration in a fraction of the time required during an outage today. Access to reliable power can sometimes seem like a basic right. But every so often, nature reminds us how fragile our systems are. Fortunately, with the resolve of people like our SMPA line crews, we can overcome.

*Please note:*  
In observance of Labor Day,  
San Miguel Power's Nucla office  
will be closed Monday, September 7th  
& the Ridgway office will be closed  
Tuesday, September 8th.

# HOME



# WEATHERIZATION

PROGRAMS PROUDLY PROVIDED BY SAN MIGUEL POWER ASSOCIATION

## LOW INCOME WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE:

**What is it?** Eligible low-income San Miguel Power members can receive FREE weatherization improvements for their home. Renters and homeowners in need are encouraged to apply. If you already qualify for the following programs you also qualify for this program: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Aid to Needy and Disabled (AND), Old Age Pension (OAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP).

**Who do I contact?** The local weatherization agencies are listed by county below.  
San Miguel, Ouray, Montrose, Hinsdale - Debra Lueck, MADA, (970) 417-3436.  
San Juan, Dolores - 4Core, (970) 259-1913  
Mesa - Housing Resources (970) 241-2871

## HOME WEATHERIZATION REBATES:

**What is it?** San Miguel Power Members have the opportunity to save money on projects that will help them save even more money! Home weatherization projects, like air sealing of windows and doors; insulation of attics, perimeter, walls and pipes; heat recovery ventilation; duct sealing; vapor barriers and more could qualify for rebates of up to \$1000!

**Who do I contact?** Start by downloading the application at [www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com) -> Energy Efficiency -> Rebate Programs. Call 1-877-864-7311 for more information.



[www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com)  
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FREE WEATHERIZATION  
FOR MEMBERS IN NEED

WEATHERIZATION  
SERVICES FOR ALL  
MEMBERS