

Concern for Community

Twelve scholarships available, application online

San Luis Valley REC makes secondary education a priority when giving back to the Valley. With just over \$210,000 given in the past five years, REC annually awards up to 12 scholarships to local students.

The awards are primarily reserved for REC members, although one of the scholarships is available to other Valley students as well.

The **SLV REC Adams State University Four-Year Scholarship** is renewable for up to a maximum of four years. The value of the scholarship equals the total of in-state tuition, some fees and a book allowance for the award year.

In addition to the four-year scholarship, REC awards the **Martin Christensen Electric Lineworker Scholarship**, which may be used at any accredited lineworker school. The value of the scholarship is currently \$5,500 and may be used to cover tuition costs, required textbooks or minimal basic tools for the program. Although first consideration will be given to graduating high school seniors, this scholarship is open to all individuals.

Other scholarships include the following:

The \$4,000 **Robert Wolfe Scholarship** was established for students furthering their education in an agricultural or engineering field and may be used at any trade school,

college or university.

The \$4,000 **Mike Rierison Scholarship**, new in 2023, can be used toward further education at any trade school, college or university.

REC also offers the **SLV REC Past Director Scholarship** and the **SLVREC Past Retired GM Ray Villyard & CEO John Villyard Scholarship**, both of which are valued at \$1,000/each.

In addition, six **Tri-State G&T Scholarships** are offered at \$500 each.

Dependents of employees and directors of SLVREC are eligible

for one of **See SCHOLARSHIPS continued on Page 2**



Courtesy Photo

Anthony Lewis, May 2022 Adams State graduate, was awarded the 2018 SLV REC ASU Four-Year Scholarship.

Valley students looking toward future



Creede High School students stopped by the SLV REC booth at the 2022 SLV Career Fair held Nov. 16 at the National Guard Armory in Alamosa.

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Loren Howard

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DECEMBER 2022 | VOLUME 50 | ISSUE 11

Empowering youth



Leadership tour/camp opportunities for high school students

If your parents get their electric power from San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative and you're a high school junior or senior, then you can apply for a trip you'll remember forever.



SLV REC invites high school students to represent the co-op at the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. from June 12-18, 2023.

Spend a week in Washington D.C. with other local student leaders learning the history of cooperatives, meeting with state representatives and developing leadership skills.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to Washington, D.C. every June since the late 1950s. Be part of nearly 1,500 high school students nationwide for a fun-filled, all-expenses-paid week in the nation's capital!

Colorado Youth Tour participants begin the tour in Denver, where they learn about Colorado's state government and electric cooperatives. From Denver, students fly to Washington, D.C., to attend educational seminars and visit with Colorado state representatives in the House and the Senate. Students will also visit historical sites, including the Lincoln Memorial, Mount Vernon, Arlington Cemetery, and the See YOUTH continued on Page 4

SCHOLARSHIPS

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these scholarships, as are members.

For full requirements and details, see the scholarship application online at <https://slvrec.com/scholarships>

Anthony Lewis, 2018 four-year ASU scholarship winner, graduated in May 2022 with his BS degree in Kinesiology: Exercise Science. He commented, "thank you for giving me this generous scholarship; it definitely helped tremendously."

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form.

Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



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"I can't emphasize enough how much we appreciate Cielo providing this awesome service [of free public WiFi at Crestone Town Park] to members of the public!"

—Andrew D'Ambruoso,
Deputy Clerk, Town of Crestone

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Rates — Nobody's favorite topic

No beating around the bush, no hemming and hawing – unfortunately after almost seven years of no general rate increase, the electric side of the business will have a small overall rate increase in 2023, likely implemented on April 1. That is never what electric consumers like to hear, but certainly looking at inflation in the past year, hopefully REC members can understand why an increase is needed.

Electric materials have not only substantially increased in cost, but delivery is also a challenge. Transformers that were \$6,000 18 months ago, now push the \$20,000 mark, and if you order today, you might get one in 12 months. Conduit for underground installations has gone up at least 50 percent with delivery in months, not weeks.

Just like you, REC must pay the doubled price of fuel which in itself represents increased monthly expenses in the 10s of thousands of dollars. REC crews are doing what they can to reduce fuel consumption but given the size of REC's territory and the equipment needed to set poles and string wire, it is hard to make substantial reductions in the gallons of fuel used every month.

In addition to all this increased cost, budgeting for 2023 is challenging because suppliers will give a quoted price when an order is placed, but inform the price will be adjusted at shipping, which as noted above, is in most cases at least 12 months

from the time of order.

While all the above seems like a bunch of whining and complaining (which I truly despise), these are the causes of having an increase in electric rates.

So, how much and when? To avoid



increasing rates during the winter, the 2023 budget plans for the increase to begin April 1. The increase is planned only on the energy (kilowatt-hour) charges and will likely be between two and three percent. Recognizing that each member's actual usage

varies both from member to member and month to month, a typical house uses about 700 kilowatt-hours monthly. The current residential energy charge is \$0.111 per kilowatt-hour and, picking the higher projected increase of three percent, that means the energy would be \$0.114 per kilowatt-hour. For a typical household that is an increase of \$2.10 per month.

The 2023 budget was finalized and approved in late November with the starting date as noted. The final percentage increase will be reviewed again in March but be assured that every effort to make increases in your monthly electric bill as small as possible will be made. These are challenging times with the current inflation rates and material supply issues, and your electric cooperative is making every effort to successfully minimize these impacts on members.

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Your email will be forwarded based on the direction you provide in your subject line.

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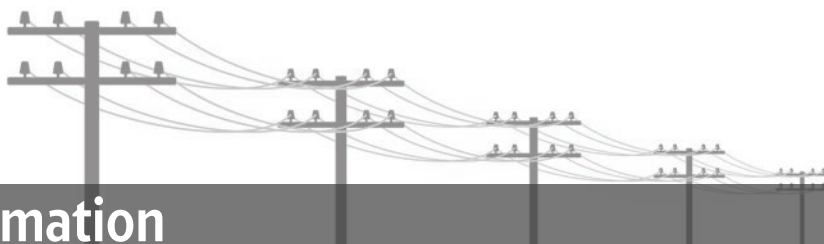


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Member Information



Five ways to fight the winter chill and save energy

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. SLV REC is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. Mind the thermostat. This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.

2. Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24 to 40 percent of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3. Use window coverings wisely. Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air

around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

4. Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

5. Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at 719-852-3538.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at www.slvrec.com for additional energy-saving tips.



YOUTH

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Smithsonian.

The Youth Tour is a great way to learn more about our nation's history, develop leadership skills, understand electric cooperatives better and make lasting friendships.

Or if Washington, D.C. doesn't interest you? REC will also send one student to the Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs from July 15-20, 2023. The camp brings young people from Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming together to learn about how electric cooperatives operate and build their leadership skills—all while having tons of fun! The campers have the opportunity to serve on committees that plan

activities throughout the week such as a banquet, dance, games, and the daily operations. They tour a mine and a power plant, see a variety of awesome speakers and presentations, go rafting and make memories of a lifetime.

To be the lucky winner of the Youth Tour or the Youth Leadership Camp, the application process includes submitting a 500-word essay or a three-minute video. The deadline for submitting applications is Jan. 10, 2023. More details can be found online at slvrec.com (Community tab). Call Jennifer Alonzo at 719-852-6660 or email: jalonzo@slvrec.com with questions.



Recipe of the month

INGREDIENTS

5-6 doz. small pretzels

10 oz. bag dark chocolate melting wafers

3/4 c. white chocolate melting wafers

1/3 c. well-crushed candy canes (about 12 small candy canes, crushed)



PEPPERMINT BARK PRETZELS

1. Prepare a large cookie sheet by lining with wax paper. Cover your prep surface with wax paper as well to catch any spills and for easy clean-up.

2. Melt dark chocolate melting wafers in a medium-sized bowl according to package instructions.

3. Likewise, prepare white chocolate melting wafers.

4. Drop a handful of pretzels into melted dark chocolate.

5. Lift pretzels out of the chocolate one at a time, using a fork and tap against the side of the bowl to shake off excess chocolate.

6. Slide onto prepared baking sheet & drizzle pretzels with white chocolate.

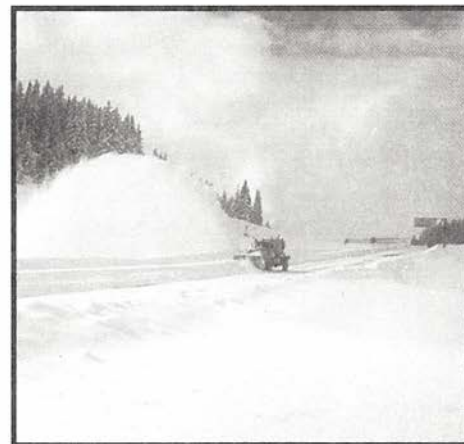
7. Immediately sprinkle with crushed candy canes (don't wait too long, or the chocolate will harden and the candy cane pieces won't stick!).

8. Repeat until all pretzels have been dipped, drizzled and sprinkled.

9. Allow to harden before serving (about 10 minutes).

SpendWithPennies.com

Historical happenings



Photos taken from 2000 Newsboy

March 1979: Trekking up to Wolf Creek

In March 1979, SLVREC crews made several trips to an AT&T tower at the top of Wolf Creek. Lee Stehwien (above left) and the crew (center) bundled up for a trip to the top. That year was an exceptional year for snowfall. The rotary plow (above right) stayed busy keeping Highway 160 clear.



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December 2022



POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

REC's office is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday. We will be closed on Dec. 21, 22 and 26 in observance of Christmas, as well as Jan. 2 for New Year's Day.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE

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www.energyoutreach.org

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SCHEDULED MEETINGS

No board meeting will be held in December.
The REC Board of Directors meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome; advance notice required.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.

