

Concern for community

Local events benefit, enrich San Luis Valley

As some might know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that help guide decisions— from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for community is the seventh principle and one that SLV REC values immensely.

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, revenues stay right here in our Valley. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, sponsorships and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

Following the pandemic that cancelled many 2020 community events, we found it extremely important to be supportive in 2021. These events bring many economic benefits to our Valley and enrich the communities we live in.



2021 San Luis Valley Fair



Alamosa Round-Up & Logger Day t-shirts



2021 Beat the Heat BBQ

Meet your co-op

Sanford native joins line crew

Following about a year working as a traveling apprentice for Probst Electric, Sanford native Dakota Barr has settled back home in the San Luis Valley. Dakota recently joined SLVREC as an apprentice lineman and will work on his training to become a journeyman.

After working in the oil fields and ranching for nearly 10 years, Dakota decided he was ready for a lifelong career and began school at Northwest Lineman School in Meridian, ID. Graduating in June 2020, he went on to join Probst doing power line and transmission construction, working in Wyoming, Kansas and Florida. "I had four days to move from Kansas to Florida; they informed me on Thursday, and I had to be at work on Monday. That was a tough part of the job. Although, it was fun traveling around and experiencing



Dakota Barr

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Member info

Fluorescent lights not accepted at REC

We've recently had some inquiries about recycling fluorescent light tubes— unfortunately, we DO NOT ACCEPT these for recycling.

Take fluorescent lamps and tubes to a household hazardous waste collection center or event:

•Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 719-543-0702, 2313 S Prairie Ave, Pueblo

•Southern Colorado Recyclers, 719-542-6910, 1731 N Erie Ave, Pueblo

•Batteries Plus Bulbs, 719-583-8766, 1408 U.S. Hwy 50W, Pueblo

In addition, Region 8 Enviro, LLC in Denver can help you dispose of these properly (r8enviro.com)

Find more information online at: earth911.com



Conservation corner

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up the largest portion of your monthly energy bills.

By combining regular equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bills while helping our environment.

Source: energy.gov



CREW

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Florida, I was happy to move back home. It was hot there—kind of rough working conditions,” he said.

“I’m ready to spend more time with my family and kickstart my career here, back at home,” Dakota commented.

Dakota enjoys team roping, fly-fishing and traveling with his wife, five-year-old daughter and nearly three-year-old son in his spare time. They recently visited North Clear Creek Falls by Creede and hope to be able to travel more throughout Colorado in the coming months. “That’s a great part of working at REC, the three-day weekend is enough time to travel around the state. We’d like to see all the national parks,” he said.

So far Dakota is enjoying his time at REC; “I’ve had a warm welcome and everyone’s been great.”

ciello
This is our why...

“Before COVID hit, I was working in Littleton, Colo. for Lockheed Martin Corporation. We work on defense satellites, aircrafts, spacecrafts, and the only reason I can do that from Monte Vista is because of Ciello Internet. I wasn’t expecting to move back to the Valley until I retired, but when COVID hit, things changed. They started sending people home to telecommute. There was no reason for me to stay in Littleton if I was telecommuting; I can do that here. As far as I know, I’m the only Lockheed Martin employee working in the Valley, and that’s because of Ciello.”

—John Velasquez, Monte Vista

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Ciello, Powered by REC, is proud to feature testimonials from our satisfied customers in upcoming issues of the Newsboy. Send your testimonials to jalonzo@slvrec.com to be featured.



Loren Howard

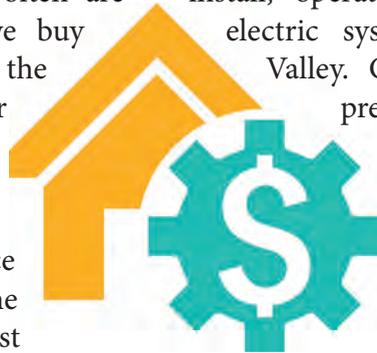
What is a Cost of Service Study

Continuing on with the efforts to provide better understanding of electric rates, this month's topic is cost of service studies— how they are prepared, who does the study and how often are they done? Everything we buy has a basic cost to provide the service or item, whether it is gasoline, groceries, houses or cars. In some cases, availability of the service or item can influence the price we pay, driving the price above cost. In fact, most purchases have a margin above cost, i.e. profit, the sellers want in order to make the effort of selling worth it.

In the case of electric cooperatives, which are not-for-profit organizations, the electric rates of cooperatives are only designed to cover the cost of providing electricity to members. In order to figure out the appropriate rate, virtually every electric utility performs a cost of service study (COSS).

One of the first tasks of a COSS is to group users based on similar usage patterns. These groups are typically called rate classes. REC has residential, commercial, irrigation and large power rate classes plus a few smaller classes like yard lights.

The next step in a COSS is to divide costs into three groups which are purchased power costs, distribution costs and customer costs. This process is called "functional assignment."



Power costs include purchasing electric power, which for REC comes from Tri-State Generation & Transmission. Distribution costs include costs to install, operate and maintain REC's electric system in the San Luis Valley. Customer costs include preparing, sending and collecting monthly bills, meter expenses and customer service costs.

Once the functional assignment is complete, costs in each of those groups are separated into fixed costs and variable costs, a process called "classification." Fixed costs are those that are needed to transmit and deliver electricity from generation sources to the end user— REC members— which include transmission lines, distribution lines, transformers and wires. Variable costs are the costs involved with the actual production of electricity, but also include things like wire losses. As electricity is transmitted through wires, some of the electricity is lost which happens as current flows through wires. Some fixed costs are divided between distribution costs and customer costs.

The final and third step is referred to "allocation" where costs from the classification process are allocated to each rate class. Once the costs are allocated, the design of electric rates in each class are once again separated into fixed costs, variable costs and customer costs.

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Annual meeting follow-up

Member questions answered, part 2

One group of questions from the annual meeting this year centered around the cost of electricity. This month's article *by Loren Howard* reviews how a cost of service study is conducted and why they are done. Please read that article (on Page 3) to better understand rates and how they are evaluated and implemented.

The questions posed by members regarding the cost of electricity virtually all talked about the cost per kilowatt-hour (KWh). As has been done by consumers of electricity for years, it is easy to take the bottom-line dollars on the monthly bill and divide it by the kilowatt-hours and come up with an average cost per kilowatt-hour.

When REC implemented a residential rate with a customer charge, a demand charge and an energy charge, the cost per kWh for the average homeowner stayed virtually the same. The average home has a demand (kW) of about 7 kilowatts and uses about 700 kilowatt-hours during a month. On the residential rate in place prior to April 1, 2019, the customer

charge was \$29.75 and the kWh charge was \$0.114, so the monthly bill for the average home owner was \$127.75. That same monthly bill on the current residential rate of a customer charge of \$35.40, a demand charge of \$1.03 and an energy charge of \$0.117 is \$124.51. Those monthly bills average \$0.183 per kilowatt-hour and \$0.178 per kWh, respectively.

Residential members of REC often compare average kWh costs on REC's system to those in larger communities such as Denver, Colorado Springs and others on the Front Range. There are two main reasons REC's costs are higher than investor-owned utilities (IOU) and municipal utilities – REC's service territory is much less dense, and REC's wholesale supplier has significantly more transmission infrastructure than IOUs and municipal systems.

A final thought— REC's wholesale electric supplier had a 2% rate reduction this year which REC is passing on directly to members. The REC Board of Directors are committed to keeping member electric rates as low as possible.

National Farm Health & Safety Week

Tips for a safe harvest

Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

The hard work and exhaustive labor are tough but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous—even deadly—when farming near electrical equipment.

Every year, there are collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles and power lines, causing injuries and power outages. These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around at surroundings when operating large farm machinery.

As harvest season is quickly approaching, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.
- Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.
- If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact 9-1-1 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In



March's accident in SLV REC's area serves as a reminder for all Valley farmers to be cautious when near power lines. When practicing farm safety, consider all equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.

case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety.

- Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Sept. 19-25 is National Farm Health and Safety Week, but practicing safety on the farm year-round yields positive results. We hope you never find yourself in a situation where farming equipment contacts power lines or poles, but if you do, we hope you'll remember these safety tips.



Recipe of the month

INGREDIENTS

- 4 c. mixed zucchini & yellow squash, thinly sliced
- 1/2 c. yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 c. basil pesto
- 1/2 c. marinara sauce
- 1/3 c. panko bread crumbs
- 1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- Extra virgin olive oil, for brushing and drizzling

CRISPY ZUCCHINI CASSEROLE

1. Preheat oven to 375°F and brush the bottom of a 9x12-baking dish with olive oil.
2. Set the sliced squash on a kitchen towel to drain some of the excess moisture while you prep everything else.
3. In a large bowl, toss the zucchini & onions with the pesto.
4. Layer the baking dish with the marinara sauce, followed by the zucchini mixture. Spread the zucchini into one even layer.
5. Sprinkle the top with the panko, Parmesan, a drizzle of olive oil & pinches of red pepper flakes. Bake until the zucchini is tender (but not mushy) and the top is crispy and lightly browned - about 25 minutes. (You can turn the broiler on for the last few minutes to help the topping become browned and crisp.)
6. Remove from oven and let cool 20 minutes before slicing.

Recipe by www.loveandlemons.com

Historical happenings

‘C,’ ‘D’ and ‘E’ sections added

The REC system continued to grow; the “C” section was built, and power was obtained from Public Service lines at a point west of Blanca extending south to the New Mexico state line in 1939.

“D” section was to extend to the farthest outlying areas—Saguache, Moffat, Villa Grove and taps off existing lines. It was delayed by World War II— put on hold until supplies (poles, wires, transformers, hardware, motors, etc.) were stockpiled after the war.

“E” section was instigated around 1943-44 to add extra wires for large irrigation pumps (three phase) for the central agricultural areas. This was a war production measure. The Zinzer substation was enlarged, voltage regulation and oil circuit breakers installed and many miles of single phase were changed to three phase for irrigation. When the contractor was finished, there were approximately 200 irrigation pumps.

One summer during this time (1944 or 1945) Public Service Company couldn’t supply the power needed to drive the many irrigation pumps. The overload tripped the breakers in the Alamosa plant, stopping all pumps, and the farmers had to return to the fields to restart their wells. A plan of rationing was worked out, and pumps were only run five



Irrigation well pump house with wooden headgates days per week. This was a bit frustrating and dangerous for the farmers who were trying to water their crops during the height of the growing season. Continued expansion of REC lines eventually corrected this. (*San Luis Valley Historian, Volume XXVI #3, 1994*)

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POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

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SCHEDULED MEETINGS
Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 28, 6:30 p.m.
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.

