

## [GCEA News]

# WHAT IS PEAK DEMAND AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOUR BILL?

MIKE MCBRIDE | CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Unless you are analytical by nature, you probably never gave much thought to the different factors affecting your bill. For the average residential member who uses about 700 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month, the kWh charge makes up about 76 percent of their bill. The indication seems to be that, aside from some fixed costs that are reflected on your bill in the monthly service availability charge, Gunnison County Electric Association's costs are driven entirely by how much you use. In truth, it's a bit more complex and therein lies an opportunity.

GCEA's largest single expense is our wholesale power cost which represents 56 percent of our total annual expenses. The costs of operating and maintaining the local distribution system, along with member support, billing, accounting, regulatory compliance, etc., make up the other 44 percent.

There are essentially three types of expenses. Fixed costs, like preparing your monthly bill, are the same for every member and don't vary based on the size of the member's load or the kWh used. There are two different kinds of variable costs. The first varies with your kWh consumption. The prime example is the kilowatt-hours themselves. For each kWh you use, GCEA has to purchase a kWh from our power supplier. Other costs vary depending on your peak usage or peak demand. One example of



this would be the need for a larger transformer to supply a higher peak demand.

GCEA's wholesale power bill has two components. The first, an energy charge, varies by how many kWh we use. The second, a demand charge, is driven by our peak usage.

In 2016, 46 percent of our total wholesale power bill came from the demand charge. What this means is that in addition to managing our total usage, there are opportunities to save money by reducing our peak usage.

GCEA's monthly billed peak occurs most of the time within the two hours immediately following sunset. If we work together to shift some of our usage away from these two hours, it can reduce GCEA's wholesale power bill and help us keep rates down. A few simple steps like using the delay feature on your dishwasher can make a difference.

You may be able to recognize even more savings by switching to our new, optional time-of-use rate. Under the time-of-use rate you'll pay a higher rate per kWh between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday. But 19 hours a day and all day Sunday you'll pay a lower rate.

To learn more, visit our website or watch for one of our community discussions.

## NEW BOARD MEMBER BUT A FAMILIAR FACE



There is a familiar face joining the board of directors. Tom Carl is the new director for District 5. T.C. worked for GCEA for more than 37 years as a lineman before he retired. Many of the longtime residents of the Lake City area consider T.C. to be Mr. GCEA. After a year of retirement from GCEA, T.C. is gaining a different perspective of the company as a member of the board.

## CO-OP CALENDAR

**Come learn how to save money by reducing on-peak usage.**

Crested Butte Library  
August 15, 7 p.m.

## CO-OP ANNIVERSARIES

**Greg Katheiser**

Vehicle Maintenance and  
Equipment Operator  
**22 years**

## ANNUAL MEETING RECAP



Power visits with two attendees at the GCEA annual meeting.

Another annual meeting is in the books. GCEA celebrated its 78th annual meeting Tuesday, June 27, at the headquarters in Gunnison. There was a lot for members to do and see. The linemen were giving bucket truck rides and safety demonstrations, while inside there were informational displays regarding energy efficiency, lighting and safety. Guest speaker and local cowboy poet John Nelson did an outstanding job entertaining everyone. Power the robot was in attendance, too. He was a big hit with the children and adults.

Thank you to F-BAR Catering for the delicious food that is always a big hit with members. Thank you to everyone who came to celebrate 78 years with GCEA.



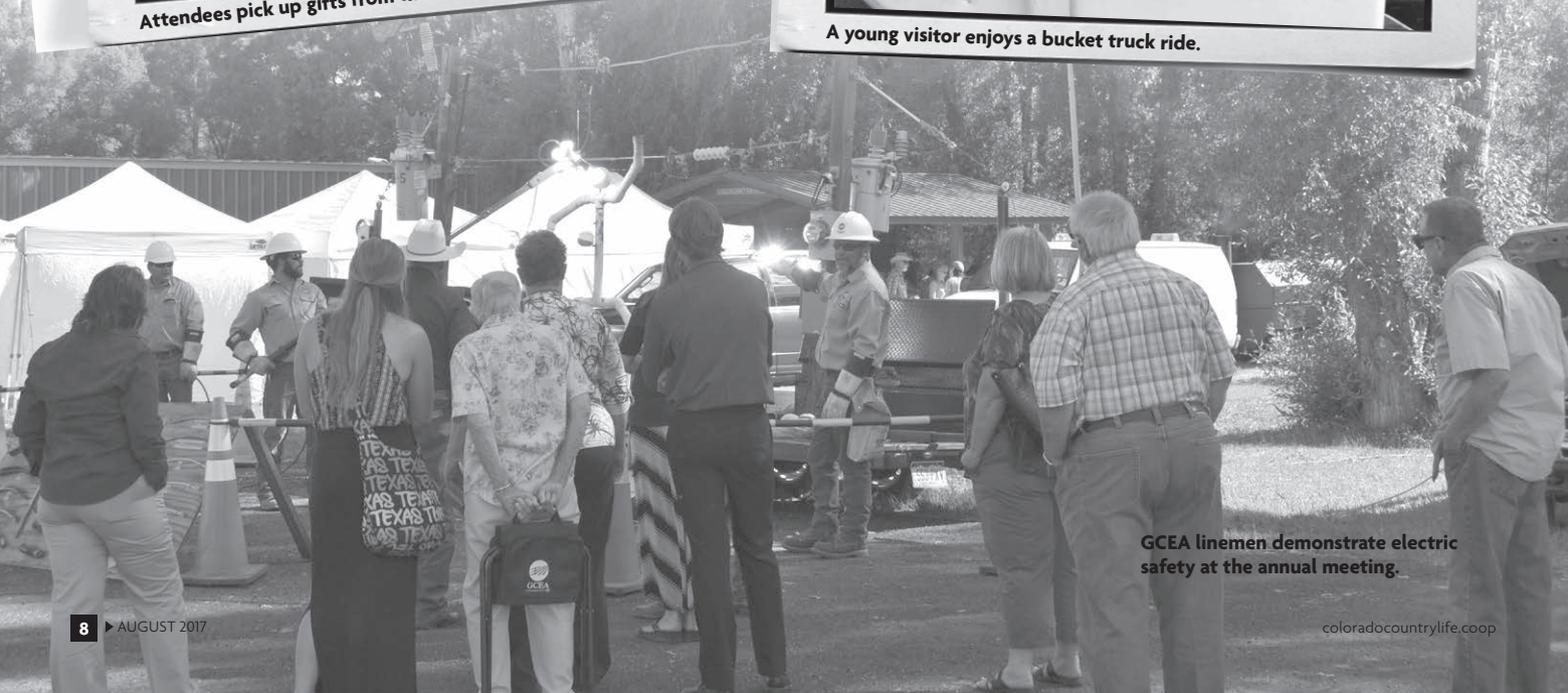
Cowboy poet John Nelson entertains.



Attendees pick up gifts from the co-op.



A young visitor enjoys a bucket truck ride.



GCEA linemen demonstrate electric safety at the annual meeting.

# YOUTH TOUR STUDENTS TAKE ON WASHINGTON, D.C.

GCEA sponsored two young adults from the service territory on an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Sydney Petersen of Crested Butte and Madeline Johnson of Gunnison were selected to represent GCEA on the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour. They visited the nation's capital with 1,800 other students from across the country.

## Sydney Petersen, Crested Butte Community School



**Madeline Johnson (left) and Sydney Petersen.**

“The Washington, D.C., Youth Tour was a humbling, eye-opening and all around wonderful experience. For the entire week, I was surrounded by incredibly authentic and driven people, many of which I will continue to stay in touch with. Each day, my group (32 other students from Colorado) and I traveled to a series of monuments, museums and historical sites such as Mount Vernon, Capitol Hill, the Holocaust museum and the Arlington cemetery. My favorite places that we visited were either the museum of African American History or the Lincoln Memorial. I am grateful for the opportunity to see all of these amazing sites in person, especially after learning so much about them in school. On our final day in Washington, D.C., my group and I had the opportunity to meet with some of our congressmen, where we got to ask them questions about current events and their plans for future legislation.

“My eyes were also opened to many new careers surrounding co-ops and politics. Going into the trip, I had little knowledge in either of these areas, but came away with a new respect for both of them.”

## Madeline Johnson, Gunnison High School

“Hi, my name is Madi Johnson and I am a student at Gunnison High School. This year I was selected to go on the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour to represent Gunnison County Electric Association, and let me just say, I am very thankful for this wonderful experience. On the first day of our trip, the Colorado students met at Tri-State, where we played a few icebreaker games and refreshed our memories on electricity and how it is generated. We also were fortunate enough to tour Colorado's state Capitol building and the Tri-State control room, which was just a glimpse



into the week to come!

“On this trip we were constantly busy touring monuments, museums, memorials, the capitol, meeting with congressmen, you name it; not one minute was wasted! In Washington, D.C., I enjoyed touring the various memorials most because I recently took U.S. history, which helped me understand the meaning of the memorial and the details that make it so powerful. In my opinion, the most astonishing memorial was the Abraham Lincoln memorial. The enormity of the Lincoln statue and building that housed it was greater than I could have ever imagined. I also felt very moved by Arlington National Cemetery and the changing of the guards ceremony. The cemetery brought me to the realization of how many brave soldiers die to keep our country safe. I sure am proud to be an American.

“Throughout the trip, students were encouraged to talk to everybody and get to know more about them than just their name. Not only did I get some cool state pins, but I also met some amazing individuals. In just one week, complete strangers turned into lifelong friends and we made memories we will never forget! A memory that I will never forget is holding my first firefly, and watching friends catch them from the air!

“I will never forget the things I saw or the people I met on this trip, and I would like to thank Gunnison County Electric Association again for giving me the opportunity to explore the nation's capital while making unforgettable memories!”



**Madeline Johnson (left) and Sydney Petersen.**

## HAPPY TRAILS, PAUL HUDGEONS



Gunnison County Electric Association and its members, particularly those in the Lake City territory, say thank you and farewell to Director Paul Hudgeons. In June, he retired from the GCEA board after 15 years of hard work and dedication to the cooperative. Paul was a well-established board member. He completed the Credentialed Cooperative Directors courses and the Board Leadership Training courses and is an NRECA Director Gold Program recipient. Paul's last board meeting was June 27. Former Lake City Lineman Tom Carl, known as T.C., took over District 5. The board will miss Paul's wisdom and dedication.

## EARN AN "A" IN COLLEGE ELECTRICAL SAFETY

The start of each semester comes with a fresh start for college students, along with the potential for new friends and opportunities. Alongside the excitement of college also comes great responsibility. One of these responsibilities is electrical safety in one's dorm room or apartment. To help with keeping the semester on track and staying safe, Safe Electricity shares electrical safety tips for college students.

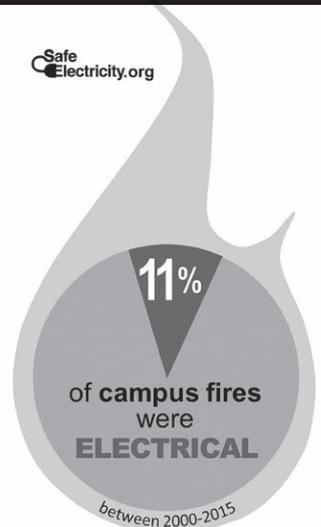
According to the U.S. Fire Administration, there is an average of 3,870 campus fires each year. Between 2000 and 2015, 11 percent of these campus fires were electrical in nature.

As you move in your books and clothes and rearrange your furniture, also make sure to conduct a visual inspection of switches, outlets and light fixtures. Report any damaged or discolored equipment to the resident assistant or apartment manager for repair or replacement. Also, make sure outlets around sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters before use. If they are not, contact the housing staff.

Safe Electricity provides these additional tips for college students:

- Check with campus housing regulations on what electronics are acceptable to bring. Do not bring prohibited items that could create safety hazards.
- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. Some common approved safety labels include Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., Canadian Standards Association and MET Laboratories.
- Never block an exit or impact fire sprinklers. It is important that windows and doors are accessible so that escape routes are clear in case of an emergency.

- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface or run cords across traffic paths or underneath rugs where they can be trampled or damaged.
- Be sure to use the correct wattage lightbulbs for lamps and fixtures.
- If space heaters are permitted, always turn them off when leaving the room or before going to bed.
- Do not overload your electrical outlets, power strips or extension cords.
- Use power strips with a protector that will shut off power automatically if there is too much current being drawn.
- Potentially older wiring in student housing and apartments may not be able to handle the increased electrical demand of today's college student. If use of an appliance frequently causes power to trip off or if its power cord or the outlet feels hot, the appliance should be disconnected immediately and the condition reported to the housing manager.
- Smoke detectors should never be disabled, and always take all fire alarms and drills seriously.



Information collected from U.S. Fire Administration.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## WELCOME JUSTIN



GCEA wants to introduce Justin Hulick, the newest apprentice lineman to join the team. Justin will report to the Gunnison headquarters. He recently graduated from Western Colorado Community College in the line program. Justin is a Colorado native and spent his entire life on the Western Slope except for a short stint in the Marine Corps where he was stationed in Camp Pendleton, California. He is married to wife Nicole and they have two little girls. They enjoy spending their free time outdoors, enjoying everything Colorado has to offer. If you see Justin around, please welcome him to our community.