April 2026

PLUGGED IN
MOUNTAIN PARKS ELECTRIC, INC.

Preparing for a Potentially Severe Wildfire Season

After one of the warmest and driest winters on record, conditions across our region are setting the stage for a potentially severe wildfire season. In preparation, Mountain Parks Electric has been working for months on proactive steps to reduce wildfire risk and strengthen system reliability. Effective April 1, MPE will place portions of our system into higher sensitivity protection settings to reduce the risk of anything contacting a power line would spark and possibly start a wildfire.

"I know how challenging and frustrating power outages can be. However, at MPE our obligation to ensure the safety of our community and the long-term reliability of our system outweighs convenience. This is why I ask that you all have patience with us this summer as we operate our system with wildfire prevention as our top priority," said MPE CEO Virginia Harman. "To keep your family, my family, and our communities safe as we face this season together."

Fire settings will also be adjusted whenever an area is under fire restrictions set by local county officials, or when the National Weather Service issues a Red Flag Warning. These settings are critical and used across the electric industry to lower the risk that an issue on the line could spark a fire. Contrary to the decades of experience by MPE's staff to design and operate a system that stays on despite the severity of the conditions, fire settings do the opposite—cut off power almost instantly at the first contact or fault on a powerline. MPE invests significant time and planning into these settings to help prevent the need for public safety power shutoffs (PSPS), which have created challenges for utility customers along the Front Range.

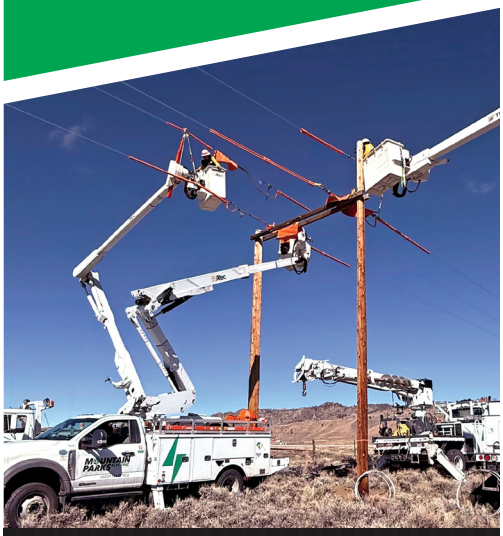
Strengthening the System for Faster, More Precise Response

MPE's Engineering and Operations teams have strengthened the equipment that helps detect and isolate problems on the system. Staff developed a more robust plan that reaches deeper into the distribution network. Additional protective devices were added, and they make a meaningful difference in how accurately we can pinpoint where an issue occurs.

In simple terms, more equipment can now "see" what's happening on the line and react quickly when something goes wrong. This allows the system to break into smaller sections during an outage. As a result, when a fault occurs (such as a tree limb being blown into a power line) it's more likely to be contained to that area, reducing how many members lose power and helping crews restore service faster. Note that if an outage occurs when the system is on fire settings, linemen must patrol the entire circuit or line affected before they can re-energize the lines which takes time. If they were to energize before the fault was found, it would negate the fire settings.

"We trust these system settings for the safety of our linemen when they are working on energized lines, and we trust these settings for the safety of our communities when the threat of wildfires is high."

Adam Paulson,
Vice President of Operations



The Role of MPE's Linemen

Implementing these improvements requires hands-on work from MPE's line crews. Linemen switch and verify many devices involved in the new configuration—a process that takes multiple crews several days. Their field experience is also essential: during and after challenging outages, linemen help engineers fine-tune coordination and ensure the system performs optimally during future events.

Technology + Line Crew Expertise = Reliability

Electricity isn't just a convenience; it's the lifeline behind almost every action in a modern home. To start each day, it powers our alarm clocks (or phones), hot showers, and most importantly, the coffee maker.

Daily comforts depend on the network of power lines and equipment that keeps our homes running, and on the linemen who maintain it. Beyond restoring power during outages, Mountain Parks Electric (MPE) line crews complete system upgrades, replace aging poles, install new services, perform inspections, and conduct safety checks and training. Thanks to new technology and continued diligence, their to-do lists have recently grown.

In summer 2025, MPE partnered with SAM, LLC to complete a drone-based aerial inspection of all overhead distribution lines across MPE's service territory. This first-of-its-kind effort for the co-op was made possible through nearly $380,000 in grant funding from the Colorado Energy Office and the U.S. Department of Energy. The high-definition imagery captured system concerns in remarkable detail—views only possible with professional drones and pilots.

After delivery of the data and images, engineering, IT, and operations worked together to verify and prioritize more than 3,000 anomalies and create a process for efficiently scheduling repairs. High-definition photos of poles and structures were integrated into MPE's mapping system, giving linemen the ability to review needed work before heading into the field.

> **"By repairing the thousands of issues identified in our aerial inspection—like cracked insulators, worn connectors, and vegetation threats—we're removing problems before our members ever feel them,"** said Adam Paulson, vice president of Operations. "This work is about delivering the safe, dependable service our communities rely on."

MPE also contracted with Osmose Utilities Services to perform annual pole inspections that identify decay and measure remaining pole strength. Given MPE's mountain climate—freeze/thaw cycles, moisture, and variable soils—these inspections help prevent unexpected pole failures. The 2025 inspections identified more than 200 poles in North Park that did not meet MPE's strength standards, many in irrigated hay fields. Some are first-generation MPE poles dating back around 75 years!

Crews from Granby and Kremmling have been assisting the Walden linemen and working overtime to replace poles before ranchers being to irrigate. In just a week and a half, they installed around 30 poles. The project strengthens skills across the team, with apprentices building overhead line experience and journeymen staying sharp. After several years focused on underground work, crews welcome the opportunity to work on above-ground infrastructure.

MPE's lineman mentorship program supports both workforce development and employee retention. Few careers offer the sense of purpose line workers feel in keeping power flowing, and the job's risks make training and safety standards essential for protecting workers and the community. MPE's apprentice linemen are enrolled in a structured Department of Labor program requiring a minimum of 8,500 on-the-job hours (about four years), along with training books, exams, and close supervision to become journeyman linemen.

"Our apprenticeship program isn't just about filling roles, it's about building a strong, skilled, safety-conscious workforce for the future. With many veteran linemen retiring industry-wide, investing in young line workers now helps ensure we maintain the high standards of service our members expect and deserve," said Paulson.

Free Heat Pump Installation Training on April 14

MPE supports Sustainable Grand's local workforce development initiative

As more homeowners look for energy-efficient heating options, local contractors play an important role in helping bring these solutions to the community. To support this growing demand, Sustainable Grand is hosting an **Introductory Heat Pump Installation Training for Contractors** in partnership with Mountain Parks Electric, Blue Sky Training, and Xcel Energy.

This hands-on training is scheduled for **April 14, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Snow Mountain Ranch YMCA of the Rockies.** The training is free for contractors, with a $100 deposit required to reserve a seat, fully refunded upon completion of the course.

The session includes two hours of classroom instruction and two hours of hands-on training inside a Mobile Heat Pump Lab, where contractors can work directly with equipment and learn installation fundamentals. No prior experience with heat pumps is required.

By expanding local knowledge of heat pump technology, more residents across our community can lower their energy costs, improve their home comfort, and reduce their energy use. Sustainable Grand regularly offers trainings, workshops, and educational resources to support energy efficiency in our region.

Heat pumps are quickly becoming one of the most effective ways to heat and cool homes in Colorado's mountain communities. Unlike traditional electric baseboard heating, heat pumps move heat rather than generate it, making them up to four times more efficient. This means lower energy use, improved comfort, and reduced utility bills for homeowners.

MPE members can unlock up to $2,000 of rebates towards eligible heat pumps. The Rebate Program also includes a $250 rebate for eligible heat pump water heaters and a $250 rebate for energy audits through Sustainable Grand.

Community members and contractors are encouraged to email helen@sustainablegrand.org for future learning opportunities and upcoming programs designed to help homes and businesses in Grand and Jackson counties save energy.

Sign up for the training at: www.sustainablegrand.org/get-involved/events

Starry nights over the cliffs in Kremmling can be spectacular, but add in Northern Lights and it's breathtaking. Congratulations to Deborah Hast for her photo being selected as the monthly winner for March in MPE's Outdoor Photo Contest.

Enter Our Outdoor Photo Contest, Win Prizes!

Send us your best seasonal outdoor shots for a chance to be featured in our next newsletter, on social media, and possibly in a future MPE photo calendar. Winners will be selected monthly. In addition to social media tags and promotion, winners will be entered to win a $500 gift certificate to B&H Photo.

Visit tinyurl.com/mpephotocontest or scan the QR code to submit your photos!

Photos must be received by the 20th of each month.

Incumbents in District 2 and 5 are uncontested, resulting in no contested elections.

District 2 Director, Cray Healy, and District 5 Director, Mike Sjobakken, were the only candidates to apply for election, meaning they will retain their board positions for another four-year term. Below are messages from Cray and Mike.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DIST. 2
CRAY HEALY

I am interested in serving another term on the Mountain Parks Electric, Inc. (MPEI) Board of Directors for District 2 for several reasons. I have tremendously enjoyed the honor to represent you, the member owners of your electric cooperative. I want to continue the challenging and rewarding efforts to provide safe, reliable and affordable electric power to every one of our members, while supporting MPEI's needs related to our employees, equipment, infrastructure and financial stability. MPEI's programs to fund our local non-profits, academic and trade scholarships and energy solutions are vitally important to me.

I have completed extensive training with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), completing the requirements as a Certified Credentialed Director (CCD) and attaining NRECA's Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). I also served as a Director on the Board of our statewide trade organization-Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA).

As an MPEI member since 1982, a retired geologist specializing in water supply and water rights and my past involvement with the Winter Park Volunteer Ski Patrol, Colorado Headwaters Land Trust, Habitat for Humanity and Grand Huts Association, I am fully embedded in our community and wish to continue to serve our community as an MPEI Director.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DIST. 5
MIKE SJOBAKKEN

Serving on the board for the past three years has been both an honor and a responsibility I take seriously. During my current term, I have worked diligently to represent the interests of my district and cooperative members, support affordable and reliable electric service, and contribute to the cooperative's long-term planning. I value the opportunity to collaborate with fellow board members and management and to help guide decisions that balance financial responsibility, system reliability, and future readiness.

My background includes 37 years of professional experience in the engineering and consulting industries, including roles with KPMG, HP, and currently as Vice President of a large government contractor. I maintain an active Professional Engineer (PE) license in the State of Colorado and hold both MS and BS degrees in Electrical Engineering.

In addition to my professional experience, I previously served as a director for a water and wastewater utility in the Denver metro area for 10 years, including a term as Board President.

I believe my professional and educational background is an asset to MPE and the MPE Board of Directors. My time on the board has been a great opportunity to give back to my community while bringing strong professional experience to MPE.

SAVE THE DATE
ANNUAL MEETING

May 2, 2026

8 a.m. Breakfast
9:15 a.m. Meeting
Middle Park High School