



PLUGGED IN

— MOUNTAIN PARKS ELECTRIC, INC. —

Growth & Capacity Q&A

MPE has been getting questions about how we plan for growth and how much capacity our electric system has. Some of these questions have arisen from the fact that portions of our service territory are experiencing or are planning for growth. There are also members switching to electric vehicles and installing heat pumps. This article answers some of the most common questions.

Before we begin, let's explain what we mean by capacity. There is power generation capacity and distribution system capacity.

Power Generation Capacity is the most electricity a power plant can produce. MPE's power supplier, Guzman Energy, is required to provide the electricity we need currently and the amount we expect to need in the future under our 20-year power agreement.

Distribution System Capacity is how much electricity our local grid — MPE's poles, lines, substations, transformers, and other equipment — can handle safely. If demand grows beyond that level, we may need to upgrade equipment to keep service safe and reliable.

How does MPE plan for growth?

We plan our system based on how our service area has grown over time. We use a standard utility planning method to help us prepare for steady growth.

Sometimes growth happens faster than expected or in unexpected ways. When that happens, extra studies, planning, or system upgrades may be needed.

MPE is working with an outside consultant on a Long-Range Work Plan. This plan will look ahead 5-10 years. It will recommend system upgrades, replacement of older equipment, and how changes like electric vehicle use, new technology, and local energy resources may affect our system.

This plan will help guide MPE's Construction Work Plan, which outlines the highest priority projects for the next 3-5 years.

MPE updates these plans based on growth and needs over time. The board reviews and approves them for funding.

I'm already a member of MPE. Do I pay for new development?

In short, growth pays its own way. When a new project connects to our system, or when an existing member needs significantly more electricity, our engineering team reviews what is needed to serve that load. The applicant pays the cost to connect or upgrade. That could include a new transformer, new poles or lines, or even a new substation. However, the cooperative as a whole pays for upgrades tied to steady, expected growth over time. All members also share the ongoing cost of operating and maintaining the grid. These upgrades keep our electric grid reliable and safe.

I live in Jackson County. Do I pay for Grand County's growth?

Being part of a larger system actually helps keep costs more stable for everyone.

Rural areas cost more to serve because there are fewer homes per mile of power lines. That means fewer members share the cost of building and maintaining those lines.

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If you have a question that is not covered here, please call Member Services at 970-887-3378. They will connect you with the right department.



Growth & Capacity cont.

Because MPE serves both rural and more developed areas, the costs are spread across the whole system. This goes back to the beginning of rural electric cooperatives dating to the 1930s. Growth in Grand County adds more members and electric use, which can help keep costs more stable for everyone, including members in rural areas.

What will happen to the grid if most homes and businesses switch from gas to electric heat?

If most homes and businesses switched from gas to electric heat, it would be a major change in electricity use. MPE would need to study the impact and may need to make system upgrades. Because this kind of change would happen across the system, the cost would be more complex than assigning it to one member.

This is not just theoretical—recent state legislation focused on converting natural gas use to electricity in homes (commonly called electrification) makes this topic relevant to our membership.

If a data center comes to our area, will I be subsidizing that new load?

Like any other large new load, a data center would have to pay the full cost to get service to its location. If MPE receives a request to serve a data center, we would carefully study the impact and take steps to protect the system and our members from added risk.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, August 13

MPE Board of Directors Meeting
In Kremmling at the Kremmling Area Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, September 2

MPE Member Appreciation Event
At Polhamus Park in Granby

Thursday, September 10

MPE Board of Directors Meeting
In Walden at the River Rock Café

September-November

Coffee with MPE
Events throughout the service territory

More details to come!

Check in at www.MPEI.com/Events for updates.

A Message from Grand County Wildfire Council

SAM BAILEY, MITIGATION SPECIALIST

Are you prepared for wildfire? The Grand County Wildfire Council has programs available to assist you in your wildfire mitigation and preparation efforts. From grant funding opportunities to help offset the cost of mitigation work to free wildfire risk assessments designed to provide you with a manageable mitigation plan tailored to your property, details can be found at: [BeWildfireReady.org](https://www.BeWildfireReady.org).

Wildfire Mitigation Quick Tips

- 1** Store firewood and other combustibles at least 30 feet from structures, not underneath decks or against siding!
 - 2** Ensure your roof, gutters, and Defensible Space Zone 1 (the first 5 feet around your structures) are clear of combustible materials such as pine needles, grass, or shrubs.
 - 3** Vents on your structure should be covered with 1/8-inch metal screening to prevent embers from entering the attic or void spaces.
 - 4** Remove ground juniper from your property and limb up trees 10 feet to prevent a fire from moving into the tree canopy.
 - 5** Remove trees — other than scattered aspen — from within 30 feet (through Zone 3) of your structure to prevent flame contact with the roof, siding, or deck.
- BONUS** Ensure you are signed up for Grand County Alerts to receive evacuation notices & updates, have a go-bag packed with essentials, and update or familiarize yourself with your home insurance policy.

MPE Wildfire Mitigation Updates



In early June, line crews installed more than 150 fault indicators across the system. These devices will greatly improve fault location, helping our linemen locate the cause of outages more quickly, particularly when the system is operating under Fire Protection Settings during high wildfire risk conditions. There have also been system reliability upgrades at two substations.

Also, as of early June, linemen have corrected more than 600 anomalies across the system that were identified by last year's aerial system inspection. More than 100 power poles have also been replaced in North Park. Some of these poles lasted our cooperative from 50-70 years.

More information is available at www.MPEI.com/Wildfire-Mitigation.

NEW ERA UPDATES

MPE continues to make steady progress on its New ERA grant award. Over the past several months, MPE has completed additional federal reviews and requirements and is now in line to receive our grant contract.

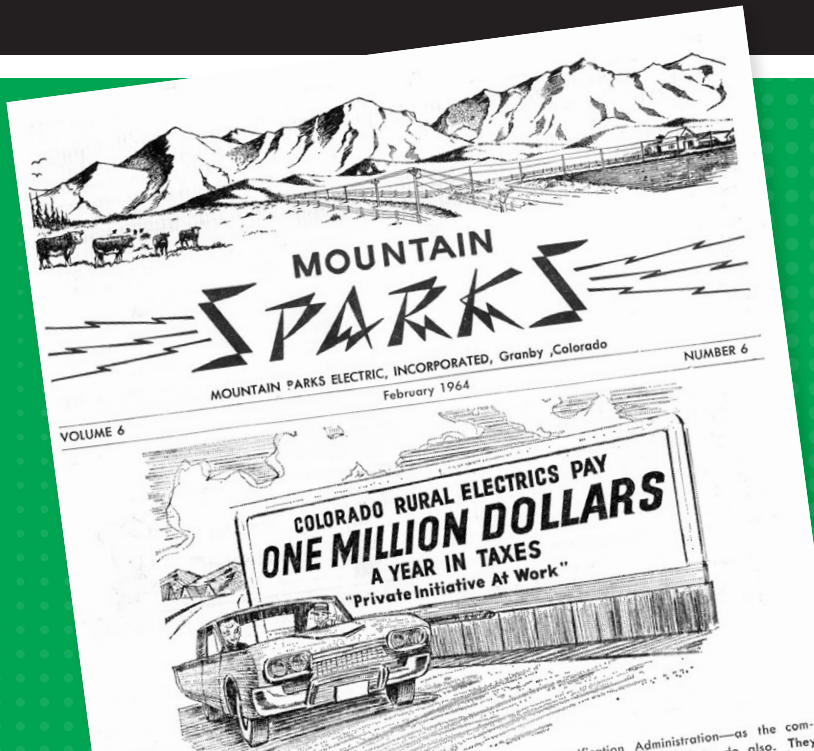
As a positive sign, contracts are starting to go out to the awardees. MPE has also reached an important milestone by receiving full approval of its Community Benefits Plan Implementation Report. This step is required before any grant funding can be requested or released.

With these key steps complete, MPE remains optimistic that we will receive our contract to potentially begin receiving New ERA funding.



Time Machine: See What MPE Was up to in 1955

Our electric cooperative was established on October 16, 1946. As we celebrate our 80th anniversary, we will share some historical snapshots from preserved *Mountain Sparks* newsletters from the 1950s and 60s, thanks to the collection of DM Johnson Sr. of Granby.



YOU CAN BE PROUD OF YOUR CO-OP LINEMAN

When the boom of thunder and the flash of lightning awakens you in the dark of the night before you roll over and drift into slumber again, there's a thought to remember: Instead of going to sleep again, your co-op lineman is hurriedly getting dressed. In a few minutes he will be riding down a wet country road in a co-op truck.

A little while later he will be climbing a 30-foot pole as the storm rages. Working speedily and with the expert assurance of a man who knows his job thoroughly, he will swiftly repair the damage caused by lightning, wind or ice.

As the sun begins to light up the countryside chasing the last of the storm clouds over the horizon, the lineman returns home to shake off the fatigue of the night's work with the breakfast his wife has waiting for him.

In your home, your wife is also making the morning meal. A flip of the switch and the bacon starts to sizzle on the electric range, and the fragrance of freshly brewed coffee brings your appetite to life again.

Had the lineman gone back to sleep, your breakfast might have been cold cereal and you might have had to pump or milk by hand that morning.

But your co-op lineman has a deep pride in his job. On call 24 hours a day, he is ready and willing to brave all kinds of weather to keep electricity coming to you.

His job is not the safest in the world. He works with high voltage every day and one slip could be his last. Fortunately, he has been well trained and knows how to do his work efficiently.

You can be proud of your co-op's linemen and the job they are doing for you.

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.



June's winner in our Outdoor Photo Contest Alex Kessock who submitted this sharp portrait of a young moose in a sun-drenched summer meadow.

Congratulations, Alex, for your second monthly win! Rules stipulate contestants can only win two times in a calendar year, but feel free to continue submitting.