

PLUGGED IN

MOUNTAIN PARKS ELECTRIC, INC.

What is the SPP RTO and How Does it Impact Members?

As you may have seen, on July 20, 2026, MPE sent a message to all its members asking you to consider conserving energy due to an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) issued by the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). Understandably, we have fielded many questions about this alert and the SPP. We want to take a minute to answer some of the most common questions we received.

First, thank you to our members who helped to conserve electricity during that EEA event. It was a region-wide effort that affected all Colorado electric utilities in the SPP, including those served by Tri-State, Platte River Power Authority, Guzman Energy, and numerous others.

Background:

In 2021, the Colorado State Legislature passed a bill requiring all organizations that own and operate high-voltage transmission facilities to join a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) by 2030. As a result, most Colorado transmission owners, including the transmission companies who serve Mountain Parks—Tri-State and WAPA—joined the SPP RTO on April 1, 2026. What does that mean for Mountain Parks members? Since MPE remains connected to Tri-State's and WAPA's transmission, we are also required to participate in the SPP.

What is an Energy Emergency Alert and why did we have one on July 20?

According to SPP, an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) is "a formal procedure declared when the regional power grid faces a risk that available generation and reserves cannot fully meet expected customer demand. These alerts help manage strain during extreme weather or supply shortages."

SPP said the EEA on July 20 was due to electricity demand in addition to an unexpected shortage of electricity supply. The cause was not related to MPE, but by influences outside of our service territory. However, since our utility is included in the SPP, we were required to send an energy conservation request to our members.

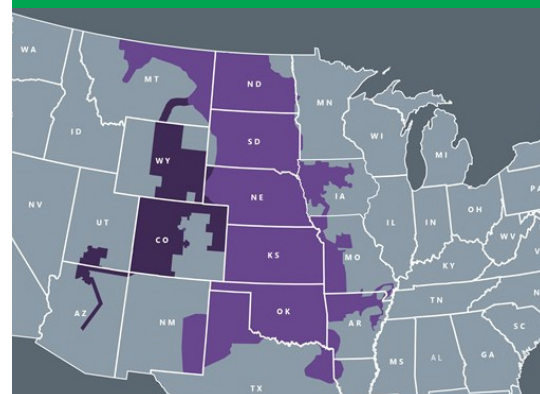
It's important to note that MPE's highest electricity use rarely happens at the same time as the highest electricity use across the SPP region. As a result, our members have less influence on the region's demand than larger utilities or those in a warmer climate zone.

What is an RTO?

The U.S. Energy Information Administration defines an RTO as an "independent, membership-based, non-profit organization that ensures reliability and optimizes supply and demand bids for wholesale electric power."

SPP is one of seven RTO's in the United States. Prior to 2026, all transmission in Colorado was owned and operated independently. Under an RTO, utilities still own their transmission lines, but an independent organization, the SPP, coordinates the day-to-day operation of the regional power grid.

Ideally, an RTO helps utilities work together by coordinating the regional transmission system into a centralized, transparent, and fair regional market.



A map of the SPP footprint. The dark purple areas are SPP-West, the area MPE territory is in. The light purple is SPP East.



"Mountain Parks Electric is not a single person. We are 18,400 and counting member-owners. We are nearly 70 employees who work together to make electric service possible in our 4,000 square mile territory."

—Liz McIntyre

Representing MPE at the Citizen/Pioneer of the Year Lunch were Board President Liz McIntyre, CEO Virginia Harman, VP of Operations Adam Paulson, and VP of Member Relations Aaron Street.

MPE Named 'Citizen of the Year'

Mountain Parks Electric (MPE) was named a Citizen of the Year for the 2026 Middle Park Fair and Rodeo. MPE representatives attended a luncheon at the fair honoring the fair's citizens and pioneers of the year on August 8, 2026.

"In addition to providing safe and reliable electric service, Mountain Parks Electric is a valued member of the community — putting action behind its stated commitment to better lives," wrote Middle Park Fair and Rodeo Citizen and Pioneer of the Year Superintendent Larry Banman in the 2026 Fair Book.

Banman's article highlighted MPE's involvement with the Middle Park Fair and Rodeo, including Rosemary Knerr's annual MPE booth dating back to the 1980s, followed by Rob Taylor from 1999 to 2022. "Although time has passed and faces at MPE have changed, many long-standing traditions of MPE's community support continue to this day," added Banman. This includes CEO Virginia Harman or other MPE

representatives attending the annual 4-H auctions in Middle Park and North Park to support youth by purchasing animals.

Other listed community involvement highlights included local giving from MPE's Unclaimed Capital Credits Fund, members helping members through Operation Round Up, and food security and senior support initiatives in partnership with Mountain Family Center.

MPE Board President Liz McIntyre and CEO Virginia Harman spoke at the lunch while accepting the award on behalf of MPE.

"Mountain Parks Electric is not a single person. We are 18,400 and counting member-owners. We are nearly 70 employees who work together to make electric service possible in our 4,000 square mile territory," said McIntyre. "It's a great honor to accept this award on behalf of the members and employees."

What is the SPP RTO and How Does it Impact Members? cont.

Was this Energy Emergency because Mountain Parks left Tri-State and went to Guzman?

No, regardless of power supplier, MPE would have been required to respond to this EEA in support of efforts to maintain grid reliability, as our transmission providers, Tri-State and WAPA, are part of SPP. All utilities in the SPP footprint had to respond to the EEA, regardless of who supplies their generation.

If I had solar and batteries, would that have helped MPE during this EEA event?

Depending on how much sunlight is available at the time of an EEA, solar can help reduce our demand. If you have a battery that can power your home during the EEA, that can also help. Additionally, energy conservation is always a

measure you can take during an EEA—such as delaying non-critical tasks, unplugging devices not in use, and turning up your thermostat if you have AC.

How does being in the Southwest Power Pool benefit MPE members?

Across the state, there are high hopes for what an RTO can provide. According to Tri-State, "RTOs coordinate participant utilities' and power providers' electricity generation and transmission on a regional basis, which increases efficiencies and lowers costs for utilities and, by extension, their consumers." We are hopeful that the RTO will live up to its promise and benefit our membership. Currently, MPE is expecting increased costs associated with the SPP, rather than the much-anticipated savings. While a lot is out of MPE's control, we are always advocating on behalf of our members and will continue to do so as we all adjust to the SPP in Colorado.

Energy Conservation Workshop

BY SUSTAINABLE GRAND

Thursday, September 10 | 5:30 PM

Osteria Giocondo (78786 US-40, next to Volario's), Winter Park

Join Sustainable Grand and Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort & Spa for a free, interactive Energy Conservation Workshop focused on simple, practical ways to reduce energy use at home.

Learn how small, low-cost changes can improve comfort, lower utility bills, and make your home more energy efficient.

Sign up at at: mailchi.mp/sustainablegrand/energy-conservation-workshop



Protecting Your Appliances and Equipment During Fire Season



During fire season, safety-driven power outages can happen with little warning. While the outage itself is usually harmless, there are risks to your appliances and equipment when electricity is restored. When your power returns after an outage, electricity can surge before it stabilizes. This sudden influx of electricity can damage sensitive control boards, motors, and chips. Low-voltage events, a.k.a. brownouts, can also cause motors to draw more current, sometimes leading to equipment failure.

A few simple preparations can help you protect your TVs, equipment, and workstations before the power ever goes out.

Here are a few simple steps to take right now:

- **Unplug major electronics, appliances, and equipment** when you experience an outage to avoid a surge when the power turns back on
- **Plug items into a surge protector** to keep them protected at all times
- **Use a battery backup system for critical equipment** like medical devices
- **Avoid sharing outlets** between high-draw appliances or equipment
- **Label circuit breakers** so you can address problems quickly

Once the power returns, it's important to give the grid time to stabilize before turning everything back on.

Here's what to do when your power returns after an outage:

- **Wait for 10-15 minutes for the grid to stabilize** before plugging in your sensitive appliances and large equipment
- **Check circuits** before plugging in appliances and equipment
- **Reconnect essential appliances first** (refrigerator, freezer, medical equipment)
- **Plug appliances in one at a time** to avoid a surge

As our system remains on high-sensitivity settings at the end of wildfire season, it is more crucial than ever that members take these precautions.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT MPE'S WILDFIRE MITIGATION EFFORTS
AT MPEI.COM/WILDFIRE-MITIGATION**

UPCOMING EVENTS



Wednesday, September 2

MPE Member Appreciation Event

At Polhamus Park in Granby, 7–10 a.m.

Thursday, September 10

MPE Board of Directors Meeting at 9 a.m.

In Walden at the River Rock Cafe and Lunch with JCCOA

Tuesday, September 15

Coffee with MPE—Grand Lake

At Sagebrush BBQ & Grill, 8–10 a.m.

Monday, September 28

Coffee with MPE—Fraser/Winter Park

At Simple Coffee, 8–10 a.m.

Tuesday, October 13

Coffee with MPE—Kremmling

At Big Shooters, 8–10 a.m.

Monday, November 16

Coffee with MPE—Granby/

Hot Sulphur Springs area

At Java Lava, 8–10 a.m.

**More details to come! Check in at
www.MPEI.com/Events for updates.**



**BACK TO SCHOOL COOKOUT
AT KREMMLING HIGH SCHOOL**





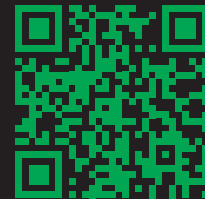
Enter Our Outdoor Photo Contest, Win Prizes!

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.



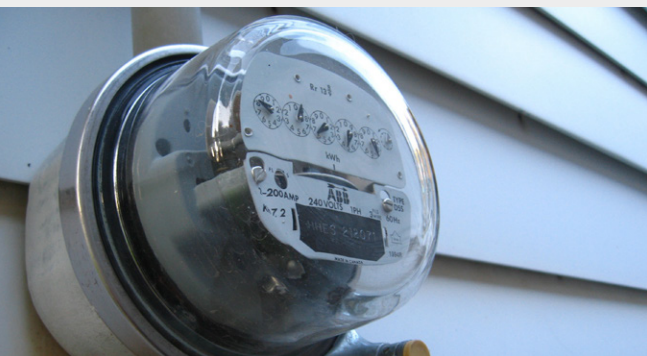
Lori Birch, MPE member from Fraser, earns the August 2026 Outdoor Photo Contest Photo of the Month with her well-composed photo of a mountain goat atop Rollins Pass.

METER TESTING NOTICE

Notice to Members: Meter testing for more than 700 meters, primarily those serving commercial accounts, is scheduled to **begin around September 15.**

The inspections will be performed by technicians from Sitewise, who will be driving vehicles clearly marked with the Sitewise logo. Technicians may need access to meter locations, but no interruption of electric service is expected.

Routine meter testing helps ensure that meters accurately measure electricity use, so members are billed fairly.



MPE TIME MACHINE:

Member News in 1950s & 1960s

As we continue to celebrate our 80th anniversary, we're taking a look back at what life was like in MPE's service area over the years.

IT'S TIME TO TELL OUR STORY



City cousins don't know it, Our own folks sometimes forget that the rural electric co-op system . . . didn't just happen.



Years had to pass before we found our way. Dark dull years. We needed light and power. Instead we lived with: "Sorry" . . . "Unsound business" . . . and other poor excuses. We had to serve ourselves. Nobody else would serve us.

Sure, there were some, at the start, who said: "We can't" or "We never will." But others—lots of others—with courage and imagination used the spades, and sowed the seeds. Then everybody watched the co-op grow.

Our roots are deep in this community And still folks far away—and even here at home—have questions.

What is our Co-op? Why, it's a partnership. Owned, operated and cherished by those it serves. Free enterprise. Based on loans, not charity. And one of the largest taxpayers in the community. Non-profit, with only one aim: A brighter life for rural people.

That isn't the whole story, of course. Just the beginning. But we wrote a fine chapter for the history books that no-one can re-write.

