

# HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

*The Beacon*

MARCH 2021



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facebook.com/HighlineElectric

**Our mission** is to provide our members with reliable, high-quality electricity and other needed services, which will improve their economic and social well-being and provide significant long-range benefits for our communities, our state and our nation.



HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION  
IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY  
PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER



Touchstone Energy®

## EFFICIENCY IS OUR GOAL

BY DENNIS HERMAN GENERAL MANAGER



DENNIS HERMAN

One of our ongoing goals at Highline Electric Association is to do everything we can to assist our membership in utilizing electrical energy as efficiently as possible. Our action plan to accomplish this goal includes several different approaches. Our member services staff can provide residential walk-through energy audits. We work with our power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, to provide rebates to help offset the higher cost of high efficiency equipment. We have implemented an on-bill financing program that provides low interest loans, funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy Savings Program, to assist our consumer-members by making investments in energy-saving technologies more affordable.

There are other times when our role is simply to provide information and connect our consumer-members with available resources — that is my objective this month. I want to start by introducing you to the Agricultural Energy Efficiency program that is available to Colorado ag producers through the Colorado Energy Office and provides energy audits and energy coaching at no cost to you. The AgEE program is available to Colorado ag producers who accrue \$4,800 or more in on-farm energy costs annually with any of the following operations:

- Dairies
- Irrigation
- Greenhouses and nurseries
- Cold storage facilities
- Poultry and swine operations
- Feedlots

The program excludes cannabis and hemp operations, and transportation energy expenses do not count toward the \$4,800 in annual energy expense requirement.

Those who are eligible and interested in the AgEE program should complete and submit an application. There is a link to the program application on our website at [www.hea.coop](http://www.hea.coop). Successful applicants will receive a no-cost energy audit and free technical assistance to increase economic and environmental sustainability for their operation. The program provides an energy coach who will perform the on-site energy audit and follow up with a streamlined audit report that identifies:

- Potential energy efficiency upgrades
- Estimated project costs
- Estimated annual savings
- Funding sources and estimated grant funding, and HEA rebate amounts
- Payback periods

Should you decide to move forward with an identified project, the program will help you identify and apply for project funding (HEA rebates, Energy Office incentives, NRCS-EQIP grants or CDA's ACRE3 grants).

There is another new program available in 2021 for Highline's irrigation members who do not qualify for the AgEE program. Tri-State is implementing an irrigation audit rebate program that will be administered through Highline. The Tri-State rebate will cover 75% of the cost of an irrigation system energy audit up to \$1,000. The final details of the program, which we will publicize when available, are still being worked out.

Our member services staff is ready, willing and able to aid you as you work to increase your efficient use of energy. Take a moment to give us a call and see what we can do to assist you with your efforts to increase your operational efficiencies.

# Information From Your Cooperative

## Let Us Know About Life Support

If you have anyone on life-support systems at your residence, please notify Highline. The co-op will try to notify all consumer-members on life-support systems of any planned outages. Highline will not terminate a service if a licensed physician makes a certification in writing of a medical emergency. This continuance of service will be effective for 60 days from the date of said medical certification. One 30-day extension may be granted if a second medical certification is received prior to the expiration of the initial continuance period. These provisions may be used only once during any period of 12 consecutive months.

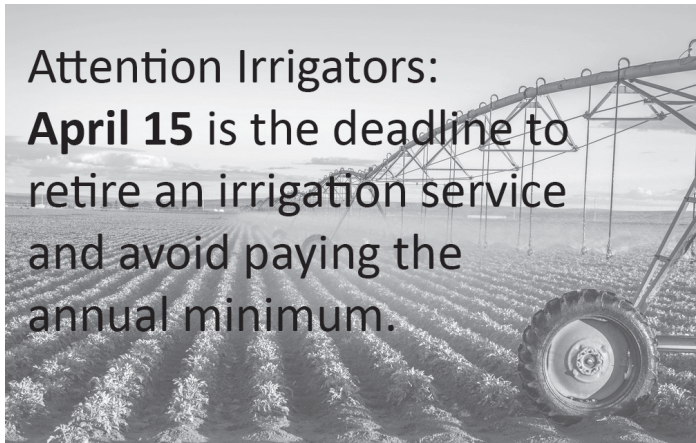
## Cooperative Principles

Highline Electric adheres to these seven cooperative principles: 1. Voluntary and open membership; 2. Democratic member control; 3. Members' economic participation; 4. Autonomy and independence; 5. Education, training and information; 6. Cooperation among cooperatives; 7. Concern for community.

## Congratulations

The following employees observe an employment anniversary in March:

<b>Mark Harshbarger</b> .....	<b>46 years</b>
<b>Deon Skomp</b> .....	<b>28 years</b>
<b>Robie Adams</b> .....	<b>17 years</b>
<b>Ryan Bingham</b> .....	<b>5 years</b>
<b>Tracy Simpson</b> .....	<b>5 years</b>



Attention Irrigators:  
**April 15** is the deadline to retire an irrigation service and avoid paying the annual minimum.

Highline offices  
will be closed on  
*Good Friday*  
**APRIL 2**



**Controlled burns** must be managed safely around **power lines and poles.**

 Safe Electricity.org

*Spring Forward*

**Daylight saving time begins March 14**

# New EV Charging Station Ready For Use

With the generous assistance of programs from the Colorado Energy Office and Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Highline Electric is excited to announce that the new Enel X JuicePedestal 40 dual head Level 2 electric vehicle charging station is ready for use at its headquarters in Holyoke.

Highline Electric applied for the Charge Ahead Colorado EV Infrastructure grant from the Colorado Energy Office last summer for a Level 2 public EV charging station. On July 27, CEO awarded HEA with the Charge Ahead Colorado grant to assist with the purchase and installation costs for the co-op's first EV charging station. In addition to the CEO grant, power provider Tri-State also offers its member co-ops a rebate program through its Electric Vehicle



▲ Tri-State G&T Relationship Manager Sander Blackburn, HEA General Manager Dennis Herman and HEA Manager of Member Services Tadius Huser attend the wire connecting ceremony on January 11.

Infrastructure program that assists with EV infrastructure costs.

Performing the wire connecting ceremony on Monday, January 11, was Tri-State

G&T Relationship Manager Sander Blackburn, HEA General Manager Dennis Herman and HEA Manager of Member Services Tadius Huser.

## In-Person Annual Meeting Canceled

Highline Electric Association's 2021 annual meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 30, 2021, has been canceled and an annual report will be given virtually at a later date. We encourage you to watch our website, [www.hea.coop](http://www.hea.coop), *Colorado Country Life* and social media channels for more information.

As we are unable to host an in-person meeting, this year's election will be mail-in only. There will be an election of four directors, one from each District. You will receive a ballot in the mail to vote for the four director positions.

These positions require the nominees to be a member of Highline Electric and comply with Article III, Section 3 of the association's bylaws.

There will be one director position from District 1, and the nominee must reside in Logan, Weld, Washington or Morgan

county, Colorado. The incumbent director for this district is Jim Lueck.

There will be one director position from District 2, and the nominee must reside in Phillips or Yuma county, Colorado. The incumbent director for this district is Mike Bennett.

There will be one director position from District 3, and the nominee must reside in Sedgwick County, Colorado, or Deuel County, Nebraska. The incumbent director for this district is David Kinnison and the challenger is T.J. Amendt.

There will be one director position from District 4, and the nominee must reside in Chase, Perkins or Dundy county, Nebraska. The incumbent director for this district is Merlin Prior.

## Update Your Contact Information With Highline Electric Association

Maybe you switched cellphone providers and had to get a new phone number or decided to disconnect your landline. Maybe your mail isn't delivered to your house anymore and you have to pick it up at the post office.

Whatever it may be, make sure HEA has your most up-to-date phone numbers, mailing addresses and anything else that can help us get a hold of you if you need to be contacted.

Call today if you need to update your information: 970-854-2236.

# Three Ways to Electrify Your Lawn Care

BY ABBY BERRY

Spring is just around the corner, and you can practically smell the freshly-cut grass. If you're in the market to upgrade your lawn care equipment, you may want to consider electric (or battery-powered) options.

Gas-powered lawn mowers and trimmers may be your go-to, but times they are a changin'. Electric lawn care equipment options are becoming more popular than ever, offering consumers faster charging times, longer battery life and quieter, greener products compared to their gas-powered counterparts. Here are three ways you can electrify your lawn care this spring.

## Electric lawn mowers

Electric lawn mowers have come a long way over the last few years. Early models required corded connections, which were tricky to manage — but the cord has been cut. Newer cordless electric mowers are certainly more expensive than gas-powered mowers, but much of the upfront cost can be recovered since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines. Cordless electric mowers typically range from \$200 to \$500.

Electric mowers are suitable for most lawn care needs, with batteries that typically require about one to two hours to fully charge, and most batteries can run for a full hour. That said, if you have a large yard (half an acre or larger), a gas-powered option may be best to suit your needs.

## Electric trimmers

Cordless electric string trimmers are a great option for most lawns. Traditionally, like lawn mowers, string trimmers have typically been powered by gas. But new versions of electric trimmers are improving and are



## ▲ Electric leaf blower

Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver. *Photo by Scott Van Osdol*

now considered worthy competitors of gas-powered models.

Cordless electric trimmers are much quieter and easier to use, but most batteries last about 30 to 45 minutes. So, if you have a lot of space to trim, you may want to consider a back-up battery or plan to work in short bursts. If you're interested in purchasing an electric trimmer, the main factors to consider are the battery's life, charge time and power. Costs can vary depending on your needs, but you can find a quality version for about \$100.

## Electric leaf blowers

After cutting and trimming your lawn, you'll need to clear off those walkways and patios for the finishing touch. If you don't want to deal with the maintenance of a gas-powered blower or the restraints of a corded blower, a cordless electric version is a great option.

Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver, but they don't

offer quite as much power as gas-powered and corded blowers. If your leaf blowing and clearing needs are minimal, a cordless electric leaf blower can get the job done. Costs for a cordless electric blower vary depending on power and battery quality, but you can purchase a dependable model for about \$150 and up.

If you're looking to electrify your lawn care equipment, be sure to do your homework. Search online for the latest reviews, and check trusted websites like [ConsumerReports.org](https://www.consumerreports.org). With a little research, you'll be well on your way to Lawn of the Month — with less maintenance, hassle and noise (and your neighbors will thank you!).

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.