

# UNITED NEWSLINE

Information for the members of United Power, Inc.

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## Electricity Powers Your Life

## IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 23-24, 2023	Thanksgiving Holiday Offices Closed
Dec. 22 & 25, 2023	Christmas Holiday Offices Closed
Dec. 29 & Jan. 1	New Year's Holiday Offices Closed
April 17, 2024	Annual Meeting & Director Election

## Recently Announced Rate Change Takes Effect Jan. 1, 2024

Last month, United Power announced a rate increase taking effect Jan. 1, 2024, and while it is never easy to hear about prices going up, electricity remains one of the best values in most households. Today's modern household is powering more appliances with electricity. It provides warmth, safety, sanitation, and entertainment. Consider what was in your home just ten or twenty years ago. How many televisions do you have today, compared with how many were in your home growing up? How many connected devices like laptops, tablets, or phones are charging in your home every day? Even something like air conditioning, which was not a standard

feature in Colorado homes twenty years ago, is making the modern household more comfortable.

When people talk about the rising cost of electricity, they often fail to notice how much more they are using. Rates at United Power have not changed since Jan. 1, 2020. During the pandemic and through the many months while inflation was running rampant in everything our members need to live – from groceries to gas – United Power rates did not change. Advanced planning was one of the key reasons we were able to hold rates steady during that period – from existing orders of heavy equipment and vehicles to belt-tightening in every function at the cooperative. United Power was able to provide stable rates while our members navigated rising prices on everything they need for their households.

**TAKE A LOOK AT THE ILLUSTRATION ON PAGE 3 TO SEE HOW INFLATION & RISING COSTS ARE IMPACTING UNITED POWER.**

The Colorado Sun recently reported on the cost of the five most common grocery items Colorado households purchase – milk, one pound of hamburger, a loaf of bread, a dozen eggs, and a pound of coffee.

They reported that over the last five years the cost of these items has risen 35%. The price of many goods has been impacted by increases in transportation costs, labor, and raw ingredients. Any homeowner who was lucky enough to lock in a low interest home loan is still seeing their monthly payment rise due to increases in property taxes and homeowners' insurance. All of those factors also impact your utility.

Keeping the system operating efficiently and making sure we can replace and upgrade equipment where necessary are adding to our operational costs. Consider when we need to purchase land for a substation to serve a new



www.unitedpower.com

Report an Outage 303-637-1350  
Customer Service 303-637-1300



# Along These Lines

## A Message from United Power's President & CEO



**Mark A. Gabriel**

President & Chief Executive Officer

### Have Feedback For Us?

Submit your questions, comments, concerns, or general feedback at [www.unitedpower.com/CEO](http://www.unitedpower.com/CEO).

### Our Cooperative Roadmap

Our Cooperative Roadmap contains the cooperative's long-term action plan and key priorities to maintain its strength and competitiveness in the evolving electric industry.

Read Our Cooperative Roadmap at [www.unitedpower.com/roadmap](http://www.unitedpower.com/roadmap).

Transitions in life, both personal and professional, always have interesting twists.

I lived the switch from conventional “hot type” typesetting to “cold type” primitive computers in my first career out of college as a newspaper reporter. The old way of making newspapers required placing individual letters — that were made of lead — into large, heavy frames in a reverse mirror image. The frames were then bolted onto giant printing machines where rolls of paper became the newspapers we read every day. The thunderous, dangerous, and noisy pressrooms gave way to an era of photo sensitive paper, waxed into big sheets, copied onto plastic and attached to the same giant printing machines. It was just the beginning of the change that would make everyone into a journalist — good and bad — with the ability to wirelessly send their stories anywhere in the world with the touch of a button. Unfortunately, it has sadly meant the demise of many printed newspapers.

The twists and turns and unintended consequences did not happen overnight. In fact, in the world of publishing, the death of local newspapers has been gradual over the decades, not a sudden crash and burn. This change has been a bit painful for those of us who still cherish the smell and feel of a Sunday morning newspaper. I have never been able to get used to the feeling of reading on an iPad; it does not give me the same warm memories as a paper rolling off the presses, making my fingers slightly dirty.

The energy transition has many parallels with newspapers that are rolling out over a quickening pace. The traditional “hot type” world of large power plants and massive transmission projects is giving way to smaller scale generation, power at the distribution system level, and thousands of households adding local resources.

United Power is working through the ins and outs of our transition to new power suppliers and a new way of operating. We are moving from a single large supplier to more than a dozen —

managing our risk through system diversity. We are looking at new ways of operating our system and trying to keep as much hyper-localized and home grown resources as possible. The hyper-localized model, including significant amounts of energy storage, is going to be required as the time to build new transmission is coupled with the closure of major coal plants. This is not a political question but the reality of the marketplace matched with the changing face of regulatory environments.

Hyper-localized generation has significant benefits for our communities as it keeps tax dollars in our region, brings a higher level of reliability and control, and reduces the stress on the transmission grid at a time when more and more electrification is occurring. Our new fuel mix will dramatically reduce carbon intensity rates as we blend natural gas, renewables, and storage while also making the best use of the Board of Directors' investments in the distribution system over the decades.

For United Power, the transition will occur in phases. Knowing our low tolerance for risk, we have constructed a portfolio that in the short-term mirrors much of what we have with our current supplier in terms of capacity — albeit slightly lower in cost than what we expect it to be in the next 24 months — with a significant change in the mix of energy. As capacity becomes less expensive and markets develop in the short time beyond that window (2026-2027), we will become experts in managing and operating our system with the new tools in place.

As one of my business school professors always mused, “The future is already here, it is just not widely distributed yet.” At United Power we are committed to this transition for the benefit of our members.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

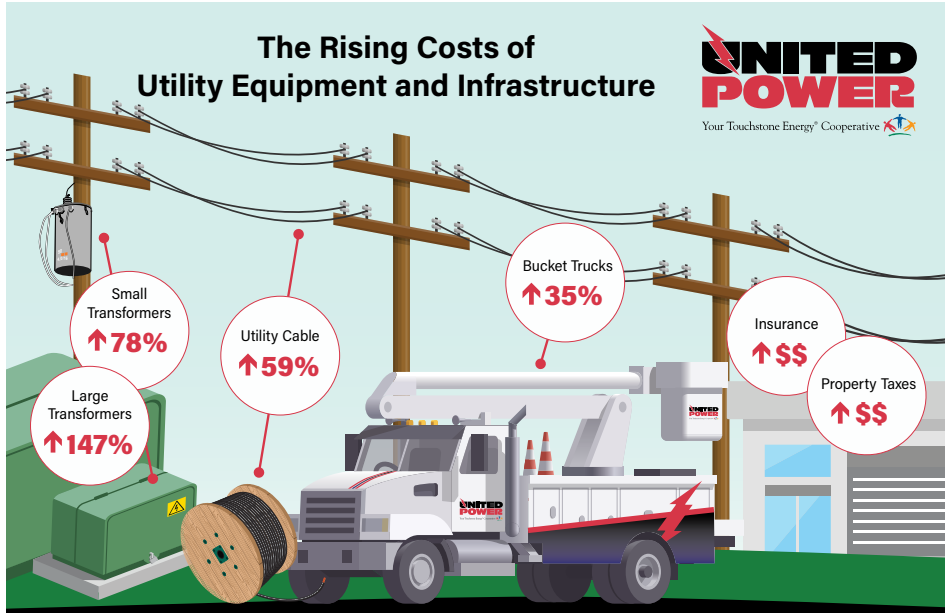
## Rising Costs Impacting the Cooperative

neighborhood; United Power is paying higher and higher prices to acquire land for this development, and all those costs are paid through the rates members pay for electricity.

One of the most powerful things about being served by a cooperative is that United Power is a not-for-profit entity. The cooperative does not work for shareholders who want to see profits. Anything collected above what we need

to operate is considered patronage capital – and is eventually returned to members as capital credits. United Power serves its members with the goal of providing reliable electricity without an eye on profits.

If you want to learn more about the upcoming rate changes, you can find details on the cooperative’s website at [www.unitedpower.com/2024-proposed-rates](http://www.unitedpower.com/2024-proposed-rates).



## Annual Director Election Four Board Seats Up for Election

Four positions on United Power’s eleven-member Board are up for election at the 2024 Annual Meeting which is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2024. The meeting will be hosted at Riverdale Regional Park and broadcast live for members who are unable to attend in person. One seat in the Central, South, North, and Mountain districts will be up for three-year terms.

Eligible members interested in running for a seat on the Board of Directors must submit a director candidate application and petition. Director eligibility information is available in the United Power bylaws at [www.unitedpower.com/bylaws](http://www.unitedpower.com/bylaws).

Director candidate applications and written petitions must state the nominee’s name

and district, be signed by 15 or more United Power members, and be filed with the cooperative no less than 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Members who are unclear of their membership or account status may call Member Services at 303-637-1300 for verification.

The deadline for director candidate applications and petitions is noon on Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024. Petitions are available at United Power’s headquarters office in Brighton at 500 Cooperative Way. Additional information can be obtained by visiting our website at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) or emailing [elections@unitedpower.com](mailto:elections@unitedpower.com).

## 2024 ANNUAL MEETING & DIRECTOR ELECTION

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 17, 2024

Members may view the 2024 Annual Meeting online or attend in person.

#### MEETING LIVESTREAM

[www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting](http://www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting)

#### IN-PERSON MEETING

Riverdale Regional Park & Fairgrounds  
9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601

4:30 p.m. In-person Registration, Balloting, & Dinner

6:30 p.m. Online & In-person Meeting Begins

### BALLOTING DEADLINES

Balloting in the 2024 Director Election will be conducted by both electronic and paper balloting.

Ballot boxes will not be available in our offices this year. Please vote via mail or electronically.

#### JAN. 18, 2024

Director candidate applications and petition deadline at 12 p.m.

#### MARCH 15, 2024

Electronic balloting opens and paper ballots are mailed to members.

#### APRIL 16, 2024

Mail-in ballots must arrive by 11:59 a.m.  
Electronic balloting closes at 11:59 a.m.

#### APRIL 17, 2024

Noon - 4 p.m.  
Ballot dropbox at Riverdale Regional Park  
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.  
Registration and in-person voting open

### CANDIDATE EVENT

Every March, the cooperative provides the opportunity for members to meet candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors, hear their vision for the cooperative, and ask questions.

The event is free to members and RSVPs are not required. Light refreshments will be served.

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024 | 6 p.m.

United Power Brighton Headquarters  
500 Cooperative Way, Brighton, CO 80603



## Decking the Halls Safely

The holiday season is quickly approaching, and with it, the time to put up festive lights, both indoors and outdoors.

According to Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), nearly 90% of Americans decorate their homes as part of winter holidays. While holiday lighting does contribute to the joy, appeal, and splendor of the season, using them without following important safety precautions can increase the risk of fires and electrical injuries.

ESFI recommends the following holiday safety steps to ensure you and your family are able to enjoy the season comfortably and worry-free:

- The best decorations are safe decorations, so when you are decorating, make sure not to run cords under rugs or furniture.
- Always turn off your decorations when you leave your home and when you are sleeping.
- Do not overload outlets or extensions cords. If you are using extension cords or adapters that add receptacles, consider having a qualified electrician add more outlets to your home.
- Only use electronics in dry areas. As tempting as it is, you should not decorate your aquarium with icicle lights.
- Every home needs a working smoke alarm in each bedroom, outside sleeping areas, and on every level, including the basement.
- Inspect your decorations and discard any that are damaged or worn out. Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, loose connections, or frayed or bare wires. Plug light strings together as you inspect them but before hanging.
- ESFI recommends buying your family arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) breakers or outlets. Many electrical fires that occur every year could be prevented by AFCIs.

## READER REWARDS

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Three Winners Every Month!  
1<sup>st</sup> place: \$100 Bill Credit  
2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$50 Bill Credit (two winners)

### Submit Reader Rewards Online

[www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com)



Visit [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) and click on 'News & Community' to enter Reader Rewards online. Answer the question below with your online entry:

### How many Member Choice Grants were announced?

By submitting this entry, I agree to allow United Power to publish my name in subsequent issues of United Newsline if I am selected as a winner. For complete contest rules, visit [www.unitedpower.com/newsline](http://www.unitedpower.com/newsline).

Members may also enter by mailing the following entry form to:  
**United Power - Reader Rewards**  
500 Cooperative Way - Brighton, CO 80603

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## UNITED POWER PRIDE



David Thoutt, Thornton, recently visited Bardstown, Kentucky, the Bourbon Capital of the World, to learn about the rich history of one of America's most iconic liquors.

### United Power Pride Photos

Snap a photo with the United Newsline and you'll receive a \$100 bill credit if we print it. Submit your photo along with your name, address, email, and a description of the photo online at [www.unitedpower.com/unitedpowerpride](http://www.unitedpower.com/unitedpowerpride).



## RECIPES

# Member Choice Grants

## Members Select Nonprofits to Receive \$12,000

### 4-H Tail Twisters

Tail Twisters is a local 4-H Club based in Fort Lupton, providing hands-on, real-world learning that takes place in the community where youth have the opportunity to develop relationships, skills, and leadership, with a focus on “learning by doing.” The grant will be used to make blankets for nonprofits serving the local community.



### Brigit's Bounty

Brigit's Bounty offers food to the local community. All food grown at its one-acre Giving Garden in Frederick is donated to community members in need. Its goal is to be a community resource with low-cost youth programs; fresh produce for residents in need; and educational resources about gardening, nutrition, and the environment.



### Erie Food Bank

The Erie Food Bank provides food assistance to those in need in Erie. It primarily supplies perishable and supplemental items that are not received through organized food drives, as well as provides assistance with utilities. Food bank volunteers also prepare holiday meal baskets.



### Graceful Oaks Youth Ranch

Graceful Oaks serves the Weld County community by working with kids and providing trauma informed animal therapeutic services. They also offer the Empowering Youth Leadership Program for teens, helping them build a foundation in leadership, including career and business skills.



### Pastor's Pantry

Pastor's Pantry is a food pantry operating out of the Whispering Pines Church, providing food and pantry supplies to those experiencing food insecurity in Coal Creek Canyon and the surrounding area. It is open to the public and you do not need to attend the church to receive help.



### Pennock Center for Counseling

Pennock Center exists to fill a gap in mental health services by increasing access to care through the use of a sliding fee scale to determine the cost for counseling services. The center also adjusts fees to meet the needs of those experiencing financial hardship.



### Crispy Smashed Potatoes

4 lbs small red or Yukon gold potatoes  
 1/2 cup vegetable oil, plus more as needed  
 1/4 cup sliced chives, parsley, or tarragon  
 Kosher salt  
 Freshly ground black pepper

Place potatoes in a large pot and cover with cold water. Season heavily with salt. Bring to boil over high heat and cook until potatoes are completely tender, about 10 minutes. Drain and let rest for 10 minutes.

Place one potato at a time on cutting board and smash firmly with bottom of a heavy skillet to 1/2 inch thick. Transfer to large plate.

Heat oil in large non-stick or cast iron skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add potatoes in a single layer. Cook, shaking occasionally, until bottom is deep golden brown, about six minutes. Carefully flip and cook second side, about five minutes. Transfer to a lined plate and allow to drain. Continue cooking in batches, adding oil as needed.

To serve, preheat oven to 400°F. Spread potatoes on a baking sheet and cook until heated through, about six minutes. Transfer to bowl and season with salt and herbs.

Source: *Serious Eats*

### Share Your Recipes

Earn a free gift if we publish your recipe.

ONLINE: [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com)

MAIL: United Power Recipes  
 500 Cooperative Way  
 Brighton, CO 80603



## 2024 Youth Leadership Trips

United Power annually celebrates the accomplishments of students in its service territory and contributes to the development of standout student leaders at the Youth Leadership Camp and Cooperative Youth Tour. The cooperative selects six students to go on an all-expense paid trip to the nation's capital or spend a week in the Colorado mountains learning leadership skills to model in their schools and communities.



Sydney Dawson, Johanni Delgado, and Gisell Mora on the 2023 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

### Cooperative Youth Tour

June 17-23, 2024 | Washington, D.C.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has been a proud tradition among co-ops since 1957 when Lyndon B. Johnson, speaking at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting, suggested sending youth to the nation's capital to see "what the flag stands for and represents."

Students explore Washington, D.C. with peers from across the country and learn about American history and the cooperative business model while developing leadership skills. Each day is packed with memorable moments.

**Application Deadline: Jan. 12, 2024**

### Youth Leadership Camp

July 13-18, 2024 | Steamboat Springs

The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp is not a traditional camp. Students spend a week near Steamboat Springs establishing and managing their own cooperative, including holding a director election, to learn the value of cooperative principles.

Days are filled with cooperative focused activities, leadership training seminars, and collaborative group projects. Campers also enjoy fun activities like rafting down the Colorado River, exploring Fish Creek Falls, and an end-of-week celebration.

**Application Deadline: Jan. 12, 2024**

*Applications are now open. Apply at [www.unitedpower.com/youth-trips](http://www.unitedpower.com/youth-trips).*

## Make Payments Easy with Auto Pay

United Power members can take the stress out of paying their monthly billing statement with the cooperative's free payment option, Auto Pay. When you sign up for Auto Pay, United Power will deduct your payment on your regular due date. Members may designate a bank account or credit card to be charged.

### Benefits of Auto Pay

- **Convenience.** Auto Pay is an ideal program for members who travel frequently or want the peace of mind knowing their bills are paid on time each month.
- **Security.** Automatic payments are transmitted electronically and securely. No more worrying about mailing checks or carrying cash payments.
- **Save Money.** Ensuring your payments are made on time and for the correct amount each month means you do not have to worry about late fees.
- **Stay Informed.** You will receive notice that your Auto Pay payment has been made so you can focus on more important things.

In addition to Auto Pay, United Power offers a variety of convenient payment and billing options for our members. Visit [www.unitedpower.com/payments](http://www.unitedpower.com/payments) to sign up for Auto Pay and review other convenient options available to you.



# Energy Efficiency During the Holiday Season

We spend all year thinking about ways to effectively monitor and reduce our energy usage, but that becomes more difficult during the holidays. We are often distracted with decorations and preparations, shopping, cooking, and planning. It can be easy to let your guard down, resulting in more excessive energy usage than you might have otherwise expected.

However you choose to celebrate this season, United Power has you covered with the most up-to-date energy efficiency tips and tricks to prevent holiday usage spikes. A little forethought and diligence makes it easy to find savings during this time of year.

## Replace Christmas Lights with LEDs

Updating the lighting in your home is one of the quickest and easiest ways to reduce your energy usage and costs. Light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, are a well-known alternative to traditional lights, and are quickly becoming standard lighting. While many people are making the switch to these lights in their homes, they still might reach for the older, less efficient string lights they have always used when decorating for the holidays.

Depending on how festive your holiday display is, the cost of using these lights can really begin to add up – perhaps to the tune of hundreds of dollars! Christmas lights that utilize LEDs are up to 90% more efficient and have a far longer life than traditional incandescent lights.

## Beware the Holiday Vampires

United Power has regularly talked about vampire loads, which are quickly becoming large consumers of energy. Vampire loads come from devices that continue to use energy even when they appear to be off, such as TVs, gaming consoles, and charging devices. Holiday lights can also contribute to these loads when they stay plugged in throughout the day while not in use. To avoid the additional energy usage, unplug lights during the day or before bed in the evening, or you can plug them into a power strip that can be turned off when not in use.

## Give the Gift of Energy Savings

Electronics have become a more common gift item over the past few years, many of which have the capability of using large quantities of energy. “Green gifting” is the practice of gifting electronics that are certified energy efficient, such as those marked by the ENERGY STAR® label. These devices meet or exceed federal standards for energy efficiency. This allows you to pass on the gift of energy savings to friends and family.

For more energy efficiency tips to help you save on usage throughout the year, visit our website at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).



## 2023 Rebate Deadline Approaching

The deadline to purchase a product and qualify for this year's rebates is quickly approaching. Remember to make your home energy efficiency purchases before Dec. 31 to ensure they qualify for this year's rebates. Do not miss out on appliance, home efficiency, or outdoor power rebates.

**Purchase Deadline:**

**Dec. 31, 2023**

**Application Deadline:**

**Feb. 1, 2024**

For more information about rebates and programs, visit [www.unitedpower.com/rebates](http://www.unitedpower.com/rebates).

# Inside This Issue

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Member Choice Recipients

United Power announced six nonprofits receiving Member Choice Grants in 2023.

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## Youth Leadership Trips

Students in local high schools can hone their leadership skills on summer trips.

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## 2023 Rebate Deadline

Purchase new products by Dec. 31 to qualify for 2023 rebates.

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## Holiday Energy Efficiency

Make the most out of your energy usage this holiday season.

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## STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR CO-OP

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**online**.....www.unitedpower.com

**f**.....facebook.com/UnitedPower

**t**.....twitter.com/UnitedPowerCoop

**Member Services**..... 303-637-1300

**Outage Line**..... 303-637-1350

## CONGRATS READER REWARDS WINNERS

**1<sup>st</sup> Place:** Debby Rodgers, Boulder

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place:** Raymond Walter Anderson, Firestone  
Cody Mortus, Lochbuie

See your name? Call 303-637-1325 within two (2) months of the issue date to claim your Reader Rewards.

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James Vigesaa  
Chair  
James Vigesaa  
Vice-Chair  
Tara Waltham  
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Keith Alquist  
Treasurer  
Stephen Whiteside  
Asst. Sect./Treasurer  
Ginny Buczek  
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Steve Douglas  
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500 Cooperative Way, Brighton, CO 80603

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

