

# UNITED NEWSLINE

Information for the members of United Power, Inc.

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## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>FEBRUARY</b> 14	<b>Director Nomination Deadline</b> Petitions due by 4 p.m.
<b>APRIL</b> 15	<b>Annual Meeting &amp; Director Election</b>



## 2019: A Year in Review

United Power works around the clock year after year to ensure its members continue to receive the safe and reliable power they've come to expect from the cooperative. There have been some big changes over the past year. Some of these exciting changes have helped the cooperative better serve members living in different parts of the service territory and many have been for member use and convenience. This past year was a banner one for the co-op, which also celebrated its 80th anniversary at the annual meeting this past April.

### A Cooperative Milestone

Celebrating 80 years was a special cooperative milestone for United Power. Not only was the

cooperative one of the earliest co-ops formed, but it also took overcoming tremendous odds to achieve the milestone. Originally established by a group of rural farmers in 1938, United Power, formerly Union REA, overcame an aggressive takeover attempt from Public Service Company of Colorado (now Xcel Energy) with the help of its members and has become one



of the most progressive cooperatives across the country. Today, United Power proudly serves more than 93,000 members.

### Officially Welcomed Frederick

This past January, United Power officially acquired Frederick Power & Light and became the sole power provider to the Town of Frederick. Along with the addition, the cooperative also welcomed approximately 2,400 new members, which pushed its total services above 90,000 meters. The acquisition closed a crucial hole in the middle of the service territory, helping United Power better integrate its electric delivery system and reduce operations costs for all.

### Carbon Valley Office Staffed



United Power purchased a large facility near Carbon Valley in 2017 to operate as a base of services in the western part of its service territory. After significant renovations and remodeling, crews began operating out of the facility toward the end of 2018. The western office quickly began providing value for members in the area. Crews stationed in Carbon Valley have quicker and more convenient access to the highways and communities in United Power's western service territory, eliminating a 45-minute commute from the cooperative's Brighton-based facility. The shorter commute allows crews to respond more rapidly in the event of an outage and restore power more quickly.

Although some operations staff were already stationed at the Carbon Valley Service Center, the facility wasn't officially staffed until 2019. As the cooperative continues to grow, more departments will be staffed within the new

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

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



## Online, Paperless & Auto Pay

Through United Power's online billing and payment portal, you have the ability to view and pay your bills online, and to sign up for options like Paperless Billing and Auto Pay. All of these options are available through the SmartHub Billing Portal – available as a website and mobile app.

### Sign up for Paperless Billing:

- From SmartHub, select **My Profile** from menu options.
- Select **Update My Printed Bill Settings** from options
- Click **Turn Off Printed Bills** for any account(s) you'd like to convert

### Sign up for Auto Pay

- From SmartHub, click on **Auto Pay Program** from **Billing & Payments** menu
- Sign up for Auto Pay by adding a new account or using an existing account
- Please note if your account info changes, you must also update your Auto Pay settings

Update your account payment methods at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).



## ENERGY SAVERS

### Keep the Oven Door Closed.

Don't open the oven door to see what's cooking. Instead, turn on the oven light and check the status through the oven window. Opening the oven door lowers the temperature inside, which increases cooking time and wastes energy.



# All your Account Needs in One Easy Location

Enjoy the convenience of checking your electric bill from the comfort of your computer or phone with United Power's free online billing and payment portal, SmartHub. With the SmartHub billing portal, members have the ability to view and pay their bills online, sign up for payment options – such as paperless billing and auto pay – and monitor their electric usage.

When you sign up for paperless billing, you will stop receiving a paper bill in the mail, and you will receive an email notification when your statement is available. You can then make payments how you prefer, whether in person, online or over the phone. Combine auto pay with paperless billing, and you can rest easy knowing your bill will be paid on time each month.

With the turning of the New Year, you may be preparing to file your 2019 taxes soon. If you need your United Power billing history, SmartHub can make life easy for you by providing them in one online location. If you take home office deductions on your taxes,

you may be able to deduct a portion of your utility bills. Also, members who donate to Operation Round-Up, which rounds up their monthly bills to the next whole dollar, may be able to deduct annual contributions to the charitable foundation. (Annual contributions may be found on the January or February billing statement.) SmartHub is your source for all this information.

Learn more about how to get registered at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com), or access all of your billing history, for self-monitoring, peace of mind and tax purposes, by logging into the SmartHub Billing & Payment portal at [www.unitedpower.com/smarthub](http://www.unitedpower.com/smarthub).

**United Power does not provide legal, tax or accounting advice. This information is provided as a courtesy. Review IRS guidelines before deducting utility bills for a home office and consult your own professional tax advisor on individual tax matters.**

# February Bills to Reflect Rate Changes

In November, the United Power Board of Directors approved rate changes for 2020 that included a modest 1.5-2% rate increase for residential members. Members on the standard rate will see a 1.5% rate increase, or an average of \$1.58/month. Members on the Time of Day or Irrigation rates will see a 2% increase, or an average of \$3.23/month.

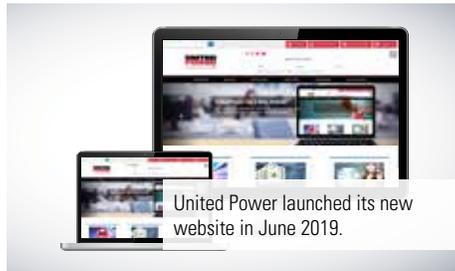
New rates went into effect for energy use beginning **January 1**, so members will see these changes reflected on their **February 2020** billing statements.



## United Power Accomplished a lot in 2019

office. The office, located along East I-25 Frontage Road just south of Highway 119, offers construction services and, as of December, a payment kiosk in the office lobby. A community room is also available for local community groups to use free of charge.

### New Website Launched



United Power overhauled its website in 2019, launching the new version toward the end of June. The new site was designed with a more member-focused approach. Not only was the new site designed with more user-friendly navigation, it was also tailored to be responsive on mobile devices, making it more intuitive for member use. In addition, the visually focused layout was intended to make the site more engaging while providing assurance members can find the appropriate content to meet their needs more quickly. United Power continues to update the site with the latest cooperative news and information, so it's important to check back regularly.

### Landmark Achievements



From energizing the first community solar farm and becoming one of the first utilities in the country to utilize a single-axis tracking system on its large-scale solar farms, United Power has become synonymous with innovation over the past 10 years.

The cooperative celebrated achievements for two innovative projects in 2019. In May, the Sol Partners Community Solar Farm turned 10. An immediate hit at inception, the solar farm sold out quickly and has been adopted by cooperatives across the

country. In the fall, United Power's battery storage project was ranked in the top 10 for interconnected storage capacity by the Smart Electric Power Alliance. The cooperative was the only Colorado utility to appear on the list.

### Payment Options that Work for Members

To round out a busy and successful year, United Power also adopted two new payment methods for members. **Pay Now** allows members to make quick, one-time payments online via check or credit card with just an account number or invoice number, a quick way to pay when you don't have your password on hand. The cooperative also placed two payment kiosks at office locations in Coal Creek Canyon and Carbon Valley. Like the **Pay Now** feature, members can make payments using the kiosk with just an account number and form of payment. Payments made by cash or credit are applied immediately and restores accounts subject to disconnection immediately upon payment.



Throughout 2019, United Power had many opportunities to celebrate continual growth and innovation with members and leaders in the communities we serve. As we look to the future, we'll continue to set the bar for others to follow. We look forward to all 2020 has to offer, and continuing to provide our members safe and reliable energy.

# 2020

## ANNUAL MEETING & DIRECTOR ELECTION

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 15, 2020

**4:30 p.m.** Registration Opens  
**6:30 p.m.** Balloting Closes & Meeting Begins

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

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

### BALLOTING DEADLINES

#### FEBRUARY 14, 2020

Director Nominations by Petition Deadline at 4 p.m.

#### APRIL 13, 2020

Mail-in Ballots must arrive at the P.O. Box by 6 a.m.

#### APRIL 15, 2020

Ballot Drop-Boxes at offices close at 2 p.m.

#### APRIL 15, 2020

Ballot Drop Box Open from 12–4 p.m. at the Riverdale Regional Park & Fairgrounds

### CANDIDATE FORUMS

Attend a Meet the Candidate Forum to learn more about each of the candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors. The following events are free to members. Light refreshments will be served. RSVPs are not required.

#### THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.

Carbon Valley Service Center  
9586 E I-25 Frontage Road, Longmont, CO 80504

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 | 7:30 a.m.

Coal Creek Canyon Community Center  
3158 Highway 72, Golden, CO 80403

#### MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.

Riverdale Regional Park  
Rendezvous Room, located in Waymire Dome  
9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020 | 7:30 a.m.

Fort Lupton Recreation Center  
Multi-Purpose Room 3  
203 S. Harrison Ave, Fort Lupton, CO 80621

Dates and locations may be subject to change.

# Electricity-Dependent Medical Devices

United Power strives to provide reliable power to its members. At times, however, circumstances may arise that lead to an interruption in power, such as standard maintenance improvements to our system, or an outage, caused by a number of events such as severe weather. When an outage does occur, the cooperative is quick to dispatch linemen to safely restore power to its members as quickly as possible.

Some outages, however, can create situations that require an extended time to resolve. These kinds of outages can be especially worrisome for members with special medical needs. If you use life-sustaining medical equipment that depends on electricity for operation, such as oxygen generators, kidney dialysis machines or respirators, it's important to put together a plan for a power outage before it happens.

## Have a Backup Plan for Prolonged Outages

United Power can't guarantee your service won't be interrupted by scheduled maintenance or an outage. In the event of an outage, we recommend you plan for how to respond.

**Register with United Power.** United Power can place a flag on the accounts of members who utilize special medical equipment, allowing us to contact you in an unplanned outage and before a planned outage.

**Have a Power Backup.** Outages can happen at a moment's notice and without warning. Though the cooperative makes every effort to quickly restore power, we cannot provide a specific time frame for when your power will be restored. If you use medical equipment, consider obtaining a power back-up, such as a battery or generator, in the case of an extended outage.



**Plan for Evacuation.** In the worst case event, such as a significant weather crisis like a blizzard or flood, prepare to evacuate to an alternate location. These events can result in outages lasting several days.

## How You Can Help

If you do experience an outage or other electrical emergency, always report it. Do not assume United Power knows about your outage. You can report your outage by logging into our online portal available at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) or by calling our outage reporting line at 303-637-1350.

More information about medically necessary devices can be found online at [www.unitedpower.com/medical-devices](http://www.unitedpower.com/medical-devices).

## READER REWARDS

FEBRUARY  
2020



### Three Winners Every Issue!

1<sup>st</sup> place: \$150 Lowe's Gift Card

2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$50 Lowe's Gift Card (two winners)

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

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

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

Mail entry form to: United Power • Reader Rewards  
500 Cooperative Way • Brighton, CO 80603

### Reader Rewards Online

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

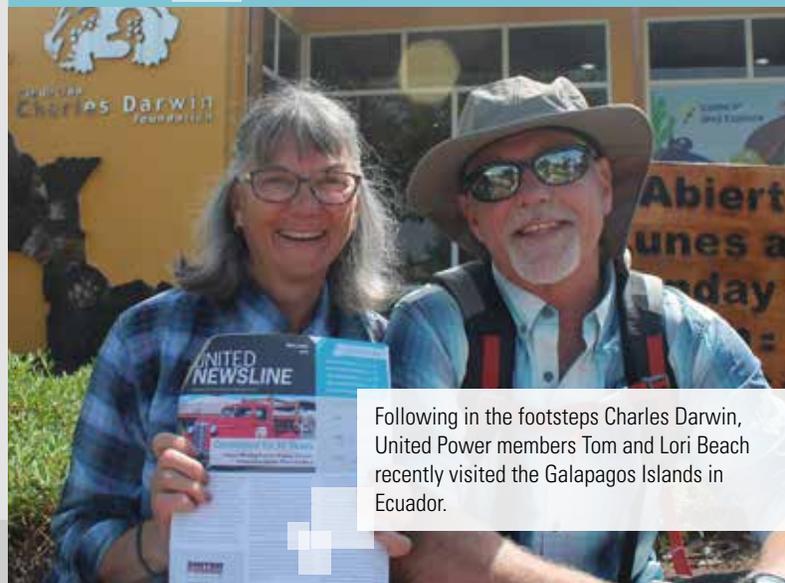


Save a stamp! Visit [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) and find Reader Rewards under the "News & Community" drop down menu. Answer the question below with your entry:

### What anniversary did the cooperative celebrate in 2019?

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.

## UNITED POWER PRIDE



Following in the footsteps Charles Darwin, United Power members Tom and Lori Beach recently visited the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador.

### United Power Pride Photos

Snap a photo with the *United Newsline* and you'll get a \$50 bill credit if we print it or share it on social media. **Send your name, address, phone number, and a description of the photo to:**

E-MAIL: [unitednewsline@unitedpower.com](mailto:unitednewsline@unitedpower.com)

MAIL: United Power—Attn: United Newsline  
500 Cooperative Way, Brighton CO 80603



# Democracy at the Co-op

## Member Votes Determine Board Representation

Prior to this year's national elections in November, United Power members have the opportunity to have a say in the future of their electric cooperative. Each year our members' votes in the director election determine who will represent them on the co-op's board.

United Power invites participation from its members. Members have a finger on the pulse of their communities and understand what's important to them. As an electric utility, your knowledge is critical to helping the co-op better serve its members.

### Every Vote Matters Equally

United Power is a not-for-profit cooperative owned and controlled by the members it serves. When you become a member, you automatically receive the benefits all other members share, including the right to vote for board representation. Your vote always matters. As a member, your vote carries equal weight as any other member's vote, regardless of what kind of account they have or how large it is. This is a cooperative principle known as "one member, one vote." Director candidates must also live within United Power's service territory, so you know you'll be voting for someone who understands your community's needs. They could even be your friends or neighbors.

### Running for a Board Position

The primary difference between an investor-owned utility (IOU) and cooperative is democratic control. IOUs make decisions to appease stakeholders and shareholders who might not live in the same state, let alone the same community. Any United Power member in good standing is eligible to run

for a position on the cooperative's eleven-member board of directors. Directors serve three-year terms in one of four geographical districts. Although directors must live in one of these districts, members vote on an "at-large" basis, explained in more detail next.

### Voting in the Election

The cooperative mails director ballots in March and encourages all members to cast votes in the election. Although directors live in a specific geographic district, they represent all members and are therefore elected on an "at-large" basis. This means members may cast a vote for a director in each district and not just their own. Directors serve in geographic districts to ensure adequate accessibility for members and to provide a representative cross-section of United Power's member base in their leadership role. Learn more about voting policy at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).

Your vote always matters. To learn more about a director candidate, consider attending one of our Meet the Candidate events. (Details on page 3.) Director profiles will be available online after February 14.

### 2020 Director Election

This year, four positions on United Power's board are up for election at the 2020 Annual Meeting & Director Election, scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2020. Members may submit their ballot via mail, at drop boxes located at any United Power office location or in-person at the Annual Meeting. More information about how to submit your ballot may be found online at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).

## RECIPES



### No Bake Oatmeal Energy Bites

#### Energy Ball Base

- 1 1/4 cup rolled oats
- 2 Tbsp chia, flax or hemp seeds
- 1/2 cup nut butter
- 1/3 cup sweetener (honey or maple syrup)
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 cup mix-ins (see below)

Start the new year off with this healthy-ish energy ball. Combine ingredients in a bowl, stir to combine and refrigerate to set. Portion into desired ball size. Mixes below suggest which nut butter and sweetener to include, but your options are limitless!

#### Classic Chocolate Chip:

Any nut butter, honey, 1/2 cup chocolate chips

#### Trail Mix:

Peanut butter, honey, 3 Tbsp chocolate chips, 3 Tbsp chopped peanuts, 2 Tbsp raisins

#### White Chocolate Cranberry:

Almond butter, honey, 1/4 cup dried cranberries, 1/4 cup white chocolate chips

#### Almond Joy:

Replace 1/2 cup oats with unsweetened coconut flakes, almond butter, any sweetener, 1/4 cup chocolate chips, 1/4 cup chopped almonds

## 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

# Why United Power Plans Outages

You may have at one time or another received a recorded message from United Power informing you of a “preplanned” outage in your area. At the time, you may have been curious what a planned outage is and why the cooperative needs to perform them. In order to maintain the reliability of the system, sometimes repairs need to be made to crucial parts of the electric grid. Some repairs can be made without interrupting power, but at other points it either wouldn’t be possible or would be too dangerous for linemen to work while power is flowing.

While the interruption of power may sound like an inconvenience, the short outage ensures greater long-term reliability. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance. The cooperative’s engineering and operations teams are constantly reviewing the system and identifying areas of improvement or where upgrades can minimize outages while increasing both reliability and security.

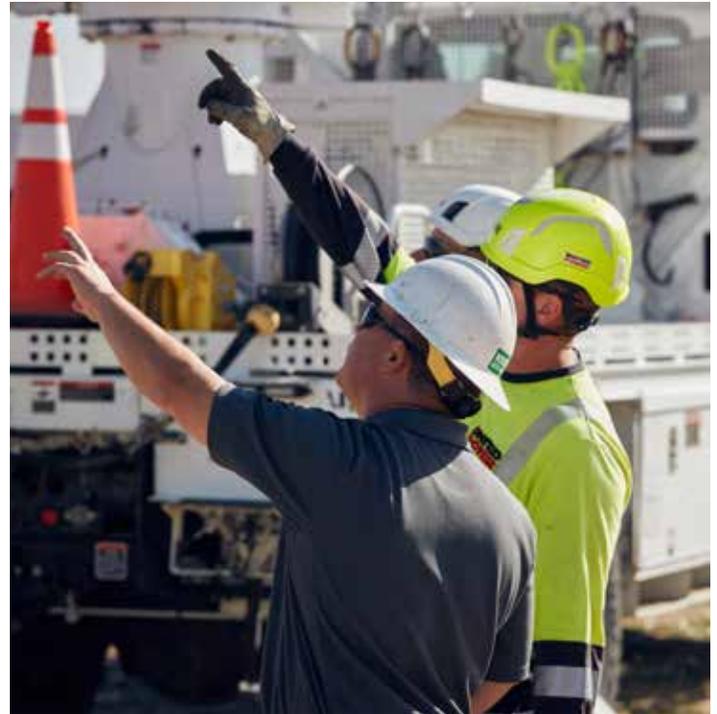
Aside from the safety of you and our crews and better performance leading to greater reliability, there are a few more things you should know about preplanned outages. When one of these outages is necessary, the cooperative makes upgrades that affect as few members as possible. Rarely do preplanned outages impact more than a few members. In the rare instance a larger number of members are impacted, there will be more advanced notice. Generally, the larger the outage, the more advanced notice members will receive. Preplanned outages are also scheduled for small windows – usually no more than five hours – when most members are away from the home.

United Power also sends members prerecorded phone messages informing them of work happening in their area. It’s important to differentiate these calls from preplanned outage notices. A notice of work in your area does not always mean you will experience an interruption in power.

In order to receive notices about work in your area or preplanned outages, your contact information on file with the cooperative

must be up to date. As new software becomes available, you may also have more options for how to receive important updates from United Power. However, any notice the co-op sends will be tied to the information on your account. If the information on your account, such as phone numbers and email addresses, is not current or is incorrect, you could be missing these important notices.

You can check your contact information and make updates using the free online payment portal, SmartHub, available to members at [www.unitedpower.com/smarthub](http://www.unitedpower.com/smarthub), or by calling the Member Services team at 303-637-1300.



## ENERGY SAVERS

### Keep up on your HVAC system.

A little do-it-yourself maintenance ensures your heating/cooling system doesn’t have to work as hard to keep your house warm. Swap out your air filters at least once every three months.

## Online Demand Calculator Available

Do you want to know what is driving your demand? United Power recently launched its new online Demand Calculator. Members can use this estimator tool to see how stacking appliances impacts their demand needs, and how to manage demand charges.

To calculate your demand, simply toggle appliances your household typically uses simultaneously to the “ON” position, and scroll to the bottom to view your estimated demand charges.

Please remember the calculator is only an estimate. Your actual demand will depend on all electric use during your highest 15-minute interval throughout the month.

The Demand Calculator is available online at [www.unitedpower.com/demand-calculator](http://www.unitedpower.com/demand-calculator). You can also find it on the Understanding Demand page of the United Power website.





# The Myths of Energy Efficiency

As a cooperative, United Power wants its members to know how they can use their energy more efficiently and save on their bills. There's a stigma surrounding energy efficiency, though, that it's either too hard or too expensive to implement in a home. Other members may be unintentionally using more energy from implementing some not-so-energy-efficient "savings" myths. In this article, we dive into a few of these energy efficiency myths to separate fact from fiction and help you make more energy efficient choices.

## Electric Space Heaters Save Money

Some people have heard using an electric space heater to heat individual rooms in a house is more cost effective than running a heating system. In fact, electric space heaters are among the most energy inefficient appliances you can use in your home. A central heating system is more effective at heating your home. It's best to use space heaters as supplemental heat for short periods of time only. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

## Closing Vents Reduces Consumption

It may seem logical that closing vents in a room would mean saving energy. You're not heating an extra room in the house, after all. However, closing vents actually puts an added weight on your central heating system. Closed vents only redirect air and throw the system off balance, forcing it to work harder. An energy efficient alternative is investing in a smart thermostat that gives you more control of your system, especially when you're away. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

## Try Blasting Your Thermostat

This idea stems from a misconception about how central heating and cooling systems work. Your thermostat is designed to keep a room at a steady temperature. When you crank it up or down, it does not heat or cool more quickly, but it will work continuously until it has reached the temperature setting. From then on, it will turn on or off as required to maintain the temperature setting. Because your home will continue to gain or lose heat through various escape points, this will cause your system to run more frequently and use more energy. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

## You Can Save with a Microwave

Cooking is not a large part of the average household's electric bill. However, heavy use of an oven or stove can contribute to an increase in your bill, especially if you cook much during the summer. The heat produced by a stove or oven can cause your A/C to work harder to maintain the temperature in the room. By contrast, a microwave is quicker and uses less energy. **Myth or Truth: Truth**

## Using a Dishwasher is Better than Hand Washing

Most homes aren't equipped with an electric water heater, so you might not think of how this could ultimately save you on energy efficiency. However, washing your dishes by hand requires a lot of hot water. Dishwashers actually use your hot water more efficiently, and many of them have energy efficient settings to help conserve gas, electricity and water. **Myth or Truth: Truth**

## Close Doors to Unused Rooms When Heating

If you're like most people, you've probably heard energy efficiency points from both sides, but here's the truth. Your heating system operates through a convection current. As air cycles into a room, hot air rises and sinks as it cools. The cool air is then reheated, beginning the cycle again. Keeping doors to unused rooms closed keeps this cycle of heated air within a contained space, which is more efficient than dispersing it throughout the house. **Myth or Truth: Truth**

Becoming energy efficient doesn't mean spending lots of money on the latest technology or struggling with strict rules. It's about making small lifestyle changes or remembering to make a few changes around the house. It's also about sifting the fact from the fiction. As your trusted energy provider, we're here to provide you with the best resources to take control of your usage, become more energy efficient and save.

If you're curious about more ways you can save, check out [www.unitedpower.com/energy-tips](http://www.unitedpower.com/energy-tips) or contact an Energy Management Specialist at 303-637-1300.

# Inside This Issue

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## Rate Change on Feb Bills

A rate change went into effect in January, and will show on February bills.

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## Democracy at the Co-op

United Power encourages its members to participate in director elections.

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## NEW Demand Calculator

Curious how your appliance use affects demand? We have a helpful tool for you.

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## Energy Efficiency Myths

Part of becoming more energy efficient is separating fact from fiction.

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## STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR CO-OP

**email**.....UnitedNewsline@UnitedPower.com  
**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:** Alex Remaklus, Commerce City  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place:** Shana Stevens, Firestone  
Susan Anne Flow, Keenesburg

See your name listed as a winner? Call 303-637-1325 to claim your Reader Rewards.

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