



# OKLAHOMA PUBLIC POWER

A publication of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma

March 2019

## The Deadline to Register for the 2019 Public Power Conference Is March 27

The deadline to register for the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference – March 27 – is approaching fast, so members are encouraged to register today at [www.meso.org](http://www.meso.org).

The annual conference will be April 14 – 16, 2019 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman Hotel & Conference Center in Norman, OK.

New for 2019 is the MESO Public Power Corn Hole Tournament. For those who aren't familiar with this game, think indoor horse shoes with bean bags. The tournament will be after dinner Sunday, April 14. The entry fee is \$50 per two player team with proceeds going to the [Oklahoma Lineworkers Association](http://www.oklahomalineworkers.org). Prizes will be awarded for winning teams (depending on number of competing teams).

Sam Choi, Manager for Emerging Technologies and Renewables, Orlando Utilities Commission, and

Wally Haase, General Manager, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, will be the conference's featured speakers.

Choi will discuss "The Changing World of Public Power." He will be covering developments in Solar, Battery Storage, Electric Vehicles and Charging Stations, and Regulatory Challenges.

Haase will present information about the Light Up Navajo initiative. It is a pilot effort to begin electrifying the 15,000 Navajo households that still do not have power.

The annual conference will again include traditional learning tracks – Customer Service, Generation, Lineworker, and Superintendent. The Human Resources track returns for the second year.

The annual pre-conference Two-Person Golf Scramble will be at Westwood Park Golf Course (see CONFERENCE, page 9)

### NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS: PLAN TO ATTEND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION

At the Annual Meeting of the Association (12 noon, Monday, April 15), members will be asked to take action on amending the association's by-laws. If approved, the amended by-laws are the first step in moving MESO to the Oklahoma Municipal Alliance and expanding our services and programs to other municipal departments.

The proposed by-laws will be distributed to all members March 13th. Hard copies will be mailed and electronic copies will be sent to city managers, city clerks and electric superintendents. If you do not receive the amended by-laws, please email Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@meso.org](mailto:deborah@meso.org) or call her at 405-528-7564 ext. 1.

The meeting is part of the MESO Public Power Conference and will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Norman. Lunch is provided to conference participants. Interested individuals who want to attend with or without lunch should email Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@meso.org](mailto:deborah@meso.org) for more information.

All questions about the transition are to be directed to Tom Rider, General Manager at [tom@meso.org](mailto:tom@meso.org).

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## UPCOMING MESO & AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER EVENTS

March 29 – 30, 2019

**American Public Power Association  
Lineworkers Rodeo**  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

April 14–16, 2019

**MESO 2019 Public Power  
Conference**  
Norman, Oklahoma

June 7-12, 2019

**American Public Power Association  
National Conference**  
**Austin, Texas**

**MESO Job Training & Safety  
Sessions**

- May 21-22, 2019 – Hot Stick Line School (Advanced), Edmond
- June 18-20, 2019 – Apprentice Lineman School, Fairview
- July 25, 2019 – Metering School, Edmond
- October 16-17, 2019 – Tree Trimming Class, Claremore

### ON-GOING PROGRAMS:

**MESO Electric Supervisor  
Development (ESD) Sessions**

- Tuesday, April 2, 2019
  - Tuesday, June 4, 2019
  - Tuesday, August 6, 2019
  - Tuesday, October 1, 2019
  - Tuesday, December 3, 2019
- MESO Training Center, Okla. City

**The Supervisor Course**

- March 12, 2019
  - April 9, 2019
  - May 7, 2019
  - June 4, 2019
- MESO Training Center, Okla. City

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## The Power of Community Service

In the City of Comanche, the spirit of Public Power's commitment to Community Service shines bright.

Community Service is a foundational value of the Our Local Power Campaign along with Local Control, Reinvestment, and Reliability & Accessibility.

Members are encouraged to go to [www.ourlocalpower.org](http://www.ourlocalpower.org) and watch a 30 second video about Comanche's "Field of Dreams" where young people can play softball and baseball night games under some of the best lights in the state.

However, the real story is what Public Power utilities do for their cities and towns every day. For every game played in Comanche, there is a story about the electric guys putting up Christmas lights or helping with some project in town. It's just

how they roll. The challenge is how to graciously tell the story, and that is where the Our Local Power Campaign enters the picture.

The campaign is intended to help customers of municipal electric systems in Oklahoma become more aware of the value their utility brings to their community. Campaign information and resources are now available at [www.ourlocalpower.org](http://www.ourlocalpower.org). Questions about the Our Local Power Campaign may be directed to Ryan Piersol at [rpierisol@ompa.com](mailto:rpierisol@ompa.com).

Editors' Note: This is the fourth of a four part series to cover each of the four foundational values of the Our Local Power Campaign. Also, submit any stories about your activities to support to [jeffk@meso.org](mailto:jeffk@meso.org), so we can share.





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For more information contact Matt Robinson at [MJRobinson@GarverUSA.com](mailto:MJRobinson@GarverUSA.com)



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## MESO Presents Level 1 Climbing School

As part of the MESO Job Training & Safety, the association hosted Level 1 Climbing School Program February 12 and 13 in Cushing.

"We had a great group of guys in the class from several different utilities, and we had a great group of veteran lineworkers come to assist," said Tom Dougherty, MESO Director of Job Training and Safety. "I appreciate the guys who helped us and the City of Cushing for hosting the event."

The two-day training focused on essential skills distribution linemen need to understand and master to be successful. The course combined classroom instruction, field practice, and significant time working with experienced, journeyman lineman.

Matt Tucker with Integrity Tools & Safety was the lunch sponsor for the second day of the training session. GRDA and OMPA were sponsors of the Level I Climbing School.

For information about any MESO Job Training & Safety program contact Dougherty at [tomd@meso.org](mailto:tomd@meso.org).

### COURSE PARTICIPANTS

**City of Collinsville**  
Darrel Suffel  
Mathew Pfeiffer

**City of Cushing**  
Ethan Simpson  
Shandon Greenfield  
Brad Kaslt

**City of Lindsay**  
James Davis

**City of Pawhuska**  
Pat Lynn

**City of Purcell**  
Cole Wartchow

**City of Stroud**  
Floyd Brown

**City of Wynnewood**  
Brett Lee

### COURSE INSTRUCTORS

**City of Cushing**  
Mark Miller  
Mike Starks  
Kyle Williams  
Jacob Schroeder

**GRDA**  
Jerry Doak  
Casey Walters

**City of Purcell**  
Dillon Gardner



Register now at [www.meso.org](http://www.meso.org) for the

## MESO PUBLIC POWER CONFERENCE

APRIL 14 – 16, 2019

Embassy Suites by Hilton Hotel & Conference Center  
Norman, Oklahoma

Presenting Partners:



## **OMPA Offers Scholarship for American Public Power Association National Conference**

OMPA is again offering a scholarship program to pay for a representative from a member city or town to attend the American Public Power Association's (APPA) National Conference.

The program is in its third year. In the first two years, Chuck Ralls of Comanche and Toni White of Watonga attended. The conference will be in Austin, Texas on June 7-12.

Eligibility is open to decisionmakers of in-state OMPA members, like elected officials or chief administrative officers. The offer is available to the community's Elector if not already covered by one of those previously mentioned. It is not available to members with someone sitting on the Board of Directors, which already will be attending the conference.

The APPA National Conference is an opportunity for those in a leadership position at a public power utility to learn more about the issues facing public power, network with peers, and take home valuable information and ideas on how their locally-owned utility can better serve their community.

The person selected must make a commitment to attend the conference and two pre-conference seminars, as well as provide a verbal report to the Board of Directors regarding their experience.

Nomination forms were sent out to member cities and towns and are due back by March 8. A selection will be made by double-blind drawing on March 15.

Return nomination forms to OMPA's Carolyn Hart at [chart@ompa.com](mailto:chart@ompa.com), by fax at 405-359-1071 or by mail at P.O. Box 1960, Edmond, OK 73083-1960.

## **AMP Develops EV Toolkit for Public Power with DEED Funding**

American Municipal Power has teamed up with the Smart Electric Power Alliance to develop an electric vehicle toolkit and related guidebook for public power utilities. The project is being funded in part by a grant from the American Public Power Association's Demonstration of Energy & Efficiency Development (DEED) program.

The goal of the project is to help mitigate challenges faced by AMP's 135-member communities and Association members "related to the significant and transformational impact electric vehicles are expected to have on the market and the business of electric utilities in particular," a recent quarterly report on the project notes.

"Partnering with SEPA, this will be accomplished by providing a toolkit and accompanying guidebook to conduct economic analyses assessing municipal EV Fleet options and providing insight into the potential budgetary impacts of customer EV adoption," the report said.

The toolkit and guidebook are intended to allow a utility to move forward with EV planning and investments.

Goals expected to be achieved include, but are not limited to the following:

- Increase awareness of EVs and associated market trends in AMP and public power members; (see AMP DEVELOPS, page 7)

### **MESO Affiliate/ Associate Members**

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## GRDA: Celebrating Partnerships Through Open Communications

Each February the Grand River Dam Authority plays host to its electricity customers during two days of annual customer meetings.

These meetings are the opportunity to meet with those in charge of the operations that provide electricity to Oklahoma citizens in 15 communities. GRDA also meets with those responsible for the important industry and manufacturing operations that help drive Oklahoma's economy from their locations in the MidAmerica Industrial Park.

While these customer segments and operations are different, one thing they certainly have in common is their relationship with GRDA. It is because of that relationship that GRDA holds the annual meetings to discuss the issues of the year ahead, to provide updates on ongoing system improvements, to share its 10-year financial forecast and to answer any questions or concerns from the group.

For Team GRDA, positive feedback from customers serves not only as a boost, but also as a reminder about why the organization does what it does. Producing and supplying electricity to Oklahoma public power communities as well as industries in the nation's largest rural industrial park is a round-the-clock commitment that helps improve the

quality of life, and the economy, for everyone who lives, works and plays in the state.

This kind of open and ongoing communication with customers is integral to GRDA's mission and operations. After all, many of the municipals represented at these meetings have been in partnership with GRDA for nearly 70 years. Long-

term relationships like that are built not only on the benefits of reliable electricity and the economic boost it provides, but also on communications.

GRDA and its employees are proud to be a part of an operation that exists to serve the communities, cooperatives, industries and people of Oklahoma.



*Dan Sullivan, GRDA President/Chief Executive Officer*

## GRDA Recognized for Excellent Financial Reporting

For the 18th straight year, the Grand River Dam Authority has been recognized for its excellent financial reporting efforts.

GRDA recently learned the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) was recognizing the 2018 GRDA Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (Grand New Beginning) with a "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting."

This continues the tradition for the GRDA CAFR, which has been recognized for excellence by GFOA every year since 2000.

According to GFOA, the GRDA CAFR was judged by an impartial panel to meet the highest standards of the GFOA program. Further, GFOA determined the GRDA CAFR demonstrated a "spirit of full disclosure" while clearly communicating the Authority's financial

story.

"Producing an excellent report is the priority for us every year," said GRDA Vice President of Corporate Communications Justin Alberty. "We want the best annual report possible to inform all of our stakeholders of our financial position."

While the recognition is nice, Alberty added that maintaining a commitment to financial reporting is GRDA's main goal.

The award-winning 2017 CAFR is available for viewing online at [www.grda.com](http://www.grda.com), along with other CAFRs dating back to 2004.

Headquartered in Chicago, the GFOA is a major professional association servicing the needs of nearly 19,000 appointed and elected local, state and provincial-level government officials and finance practitioners.





## Integrity Tools & Safety Supports MESO Level 1 Climbing School

Integrity Tools & Safety was the second associate member to participate in MESO's new sponsorship program for specialized training events. Several opportunities remain for the rest of the year.

The Lunch Sponsorships can provide associate members an opportunity to interact with training attendees.

MESO has provided specialized Job Training & Safety (JT&S) Events for decades. These events cover a wide variety of topics and attract Public Power professionals from municipal utilities across the State of Oklahoma and neighboring states.

### HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

- All sponsorships will be accepted on a first paid, first served basis.
- MESO will make all lunch arrangements.
- Sponsorships include lunch with the event participants & instructors; an opportunity to distribute company literature; and each sponsor will have a five-minute opportunity to introduce their company/product at the end of the lunch break.
- Sponsors will receive recognition at the event and on the MESO Facebook page.
- Each event will have a varying number of attendees so MESO will provide good faith estimates for planning purposes.
- For multiple-day events, sponsorships will be made available for each day.

The pricing for the sponsorships vary based on expected attendance. Complete details are available at [www.meso.org](http://www.meso.org).



*Matt Tucker with Integrity Tools & Safety at Level 1 Climbing School in Cushing.*

### Schedule of Remaining Events for 2019-\*

- May 21-22 - Hot Stick Line School (Advanced) (Edmond)
- June 18-20 - Apprentice Lineman School (Fairview)
- July 25 - Metering School (Edmond)
- October 16-17 - Tree Trimming Class (Claremore)

\*-Subject to change. MESO will update as needed.

For more information contact Tom Dougherty or Deborah Gonzales, by telephone at 405-528-7564 or toll-free at 800-636-6376 or by email at [tomd@meso.org](mailto:tomd@meso.org) or [deborah@meso.org](mailto:deborah@meso.org).

## AMP Develops *(continued from page 5)*

- Reduce strain on staffing and provide value by developing a toolkit and avoiding the need to "recreate the wheel" for AMP's member utilities;
- Support early stage efforts by AMP member communities to prepare for business and customer engagement models around the electrification of the transportation sector;
- Provide insight into the potential timing at which proactive steps are best taken for maximum economic impact/value;
- Supply accurate data and useful resources to support preliminary EV planning activities;
- Produce an accurate toolkit that provides users a template that allows for the simple modification of key inputs for members with more refined or

updated values, or those wanting to conduct parametric analyses;

- Develop a platform that can be leveraged for expanded functionality going forward; and
- Deliver a toolkit with a multi-year useful life, without the need to incur expensive maintenance and upkeep costs.

The total project budget is \$193,135, of which \$85,000 is coming from a DEED grant.

Once grant deliverables are submitted, the Association will engage in various toolkit promotion and education related activities.

Additional information about the DEED program is available [here](#).

Additional information about SEPA is available [here](#).

## Report Details Interest of Consumers in Online Energy Portal

*From the American Public Power Association*

By Ethan Howland

A recent report from the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative (SECC) said that research it conducted found that about half of consumers (49 percent) would definitely or probably use a platform that is “enabled by the new energy environment of connected technologies.”

SECC described the platform as an online energy resource that consumers can access from their computer, smartphone or tablet. The portal would combine a household’s energy usage data (current and historical), preference settings, real-time energy usage data, energy provider and third-party programs and offers and use this information to help consumers understand and manage their energy use.

“When we asked about specific products and services that might be delivered in this new environment, consumers were even more interested,” SECC noted. Over half were interested in an energy rewards program (52%), and almost half (46%) were interested in an energy manager that could help them manage day-to-day energy use in their homes. Less than one-quarter of consumers were disinterested in any of the tools SECC tested.

Since these tools and technologies can support high degrees of automation, SECC said it also explored consumer attitudes about using automated functions to make choices, whether through machine learning or preference setting.

“Interestingly, we found that consumers expect ‘learning’ capabilities so that offers can be filtered; however, products or services that act independently (even if preferences are set by the consumer) are preferred by only a small proportion of consumers (5-16%), depending upon the product or service offered. Full automation, while potentially useful and technologically possible, is still out there ahead of most consumers.”

The report — the 2019 State of the Consumer — digs into consumer attitudes and needs and offers steps utilities and energy service providers can take to more fully engage with their customers.

The report is an analysis of five 2018 research studies that provides an up-to-date look at major trends regarding the behaviors, attitudes and motivations of U.S. energy customers, according to SECC.

### Small and medium business sectors

The residential and the small and medium business sectors want personalized information that will help them control their energy usage, a finding that offers utilities a way to connect with their customers, according to the report.

“Consumers have values beyond saving money including interest in new technology and environmental sustainability, and all consumers express an interest in ease of use and offers that can make their lives easier and more comfortable,” SECC said in the report released earlier this month.

Most low-income customers — defined as earning less than \$25,000 a year — fall into SECC’s “status quo” category.

“Status quo consumers are the hardest to engage, and their perspective on energy can be summed up as ‘we’re okay, you can leave us alone,’” SECC said. Also, low-income consumers are likely to be older, not in the workforce and living alone, the non-profit organization said.

Although there may be fewer opportunities to offer services to low-income customers, they are nearly as interested as other consumer groups in programs that help them manage their energy use, according to the report.

SECC said industry stakeholders, sometimes with community organization partners, can help low-income customers get over financial hurdles they may face in taking advantage of energy saving programs.

Energy-focused nonprofits, for example, can partner with local service providers for on-bill financing where the provider pays the up-front cost of the upgrade and the consumer pays back the costs over time, SECC said.

With roughly half of consumers using smart meters, data analytics can be used to design programs tailored to consumer needs, according to the report.

SECC explored with consumers three types of programs: replace and save; manage and save; and shift and save. In all three cases, consumers were most interested in how the programs could increase their understanding of their energy use and possible areas for saving money, according to the report.

“In a nutshell, consumers want tangible, actionable information to help them make decisions that affect their bottom line,” the report said.

(see REPORT DETAILS, page 10)



## Public Power Mutual Assistance Goes Beyond Large-scale Events

*From the American Public Power Association*

By Paul Ciampoli

While public power utilities have repeatedly shown their ability to excel in helping each other out during large-scale mutual aid events, there are also plenty of examples where such aid takes the form of providing materials, as opposed to manpower.

The American Public Power Association facilitates materials-related requests through an Association supply management list serv available to member utilities and mutual aid requests through a separate list serv.

"The public power community has proven time and time again that we can effectively respond to major mutual aid events such as hurricanes," said Mike Hyland, Senior Vice President for Engineering Services at the Association.

"But what often goes unnoticed is the variety of other ways that the public power utilities regularly lean on each other for assistance," he said.

A recent request made by John Harbin, a line supervisor at Alabama public power utility Huntsville Utilities, illustrates Hyland's point.

Harbin on Feb. 8 sent a message to the Association's Mutual Aid Working Group (MAWG) list serv seeking a bushing. He attached pictures of the name plate on the bushing, transformer and pictures of the bushing and said that the utility would also take "any other bushing that will replace this one."

Harbin's request was subsequently shared that same day by the Association through its supply management list serv. Sam Rozenberg, Engineering Services Security Director, also shared Harbin's request through the Association's transmission and distribution list serv.

Edward Abed, supervisor of purchasing at Santee Cooper, on Feb. 8 responded to the supply management list serv query by saying that the South Carolina state-owned public power utility had a bushing available. Harbin then confirmed that the Santee Cooper bushing was a match.

Harbin told Public Power Daily that Santee Cooper shipped the bushing to Huntsville Utilities on Monday, Feb. 11 "and we had it in hand first thing Tuesday morning."

Harbin said that "if we had used our normal vendors the time line would have been 16 to 18 weeks" so by using the management list serv, Huntsville Utilities was able to have the bushing in hand and installed in less than one week.

For additional information about the Association's supply management or other list servs, send an email to Mary Rufe at: [mrufe@publicpower.org](mailto:mrufe@publicpower.org).

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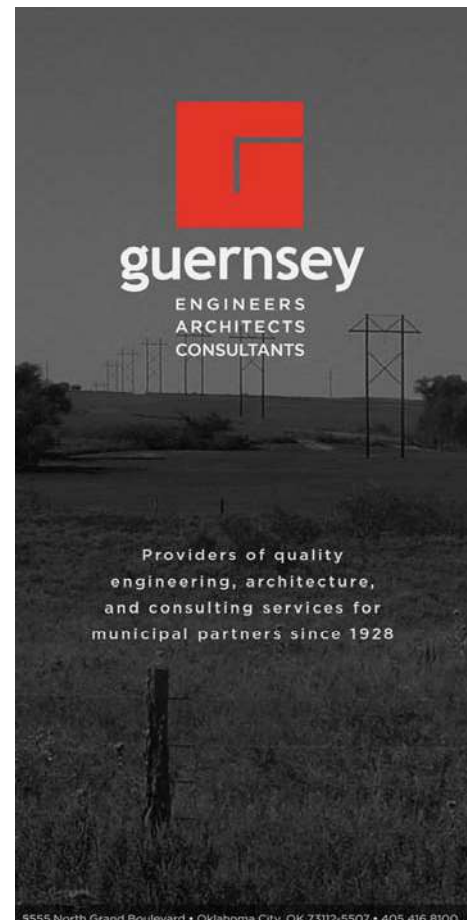
## Conference

*(continued from page 1)*

Sunday, April 14. Tee times will begin at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$50 per person for green fees and ½ cart.

GRDA and OMPA join MESO as presenting partners for the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference.

Registration questions may be directed to Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@meso.org](mailto:deborah@meso.org).



## Report Details

(continued from page 8)

SECC also looked at ways to motivate selectively engaged consumers who periodically use energy management technology and incentive programs.

Utilities and others that want to spur disengaged customers can begin by making it as easy as possible for them to take energy-related actions, according to SECC. Also, satisfied customers are more likely to take energy-related actions, the group said.

Also, utilities and energy service providers should try to communicate with their customers through additional channels such as a smartphone app, social media or text, according to the report.

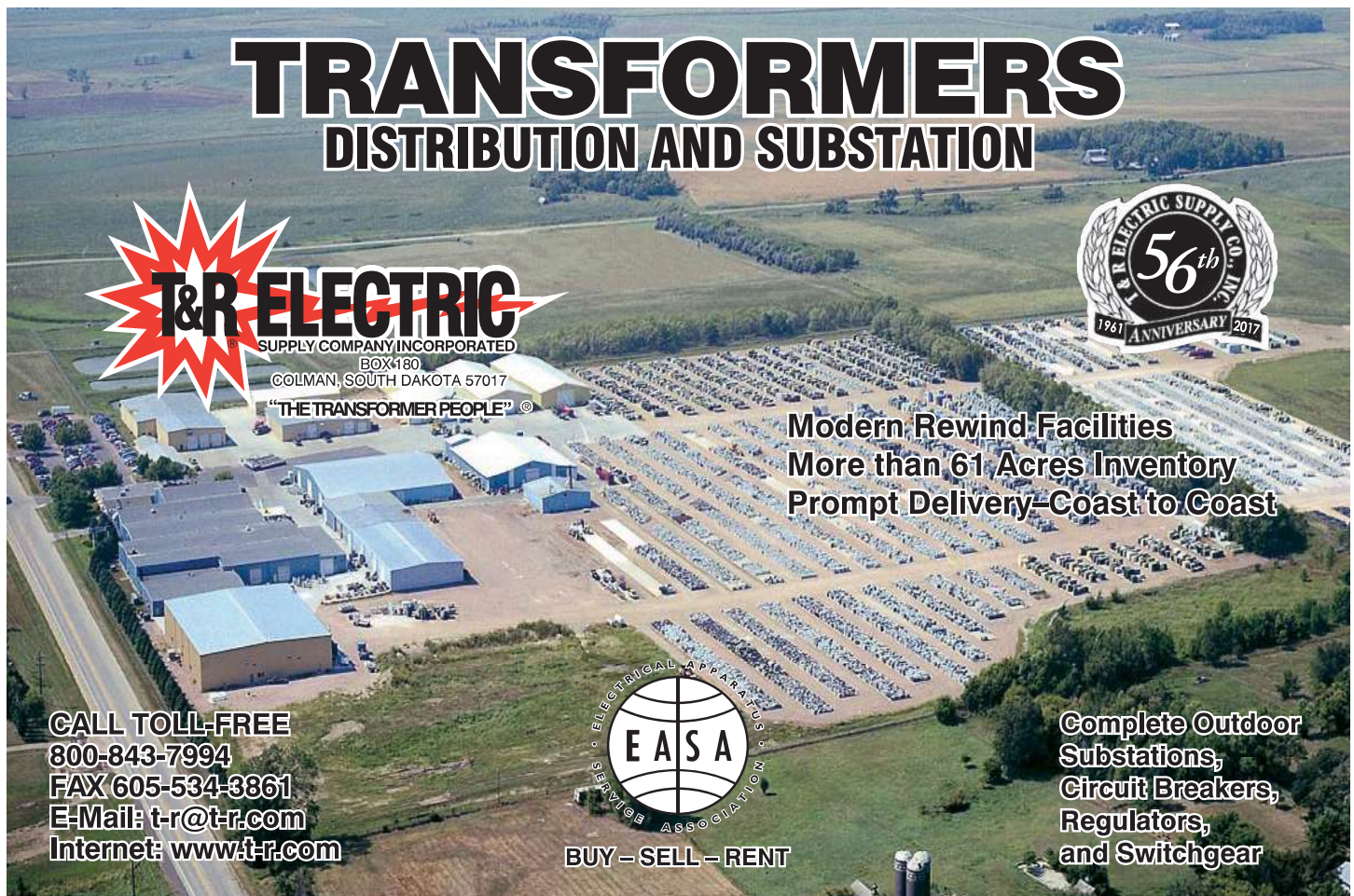
Report highlights community engagement campaign by Colorado Springs Utilities

The report highlighted a community engagement campaign by public power utility Colorado Springs Utilities.

Amid an environment of local population growth and utility industry change, Colorado Springs Utilities sought to develop a comprehensive customer engagement campaign that would unite the city's unique community — including both local businesses and residential customers — around the wise use of energy and water.


By the close of 2017, the program had achieved or exceeded all of the eight measurable objectives that Colorado Springs Utilities had set at outset of the program, the report noted. These included 6,171 customer pledges, the top 27 percent nationally in J.D. Power's Communications ratings and 50,892 MWh in electric consumption savings.

Additional information about the report is available [here](#).




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