



OKLAHOMA PUBLIC POWER

A publication of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma

May 2019

Members Unanimously Approve Change

At the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Association, MESO members unanimously approved changing the name of the association to the Oklahoma Municipal Alliance (OMA). The name change will take affect July 1, with the beginning of the new fiscal year.

In changing the name, the members approved the expansion of training and services to other municipal departments, beginning with water and wastewater operators.

"Our members have been asking us to take the quality training we offer municipal electric systems and develop the same level of training for other departments," Tom Rider, General Manager, said.

In addition to moving into water and wastewater operations, OMA will seek out opportunities to provide quality programming for municipal natural gas

systems, broadband, solid waste and other enterprise services.

"Our immediate need is to provide regional training for water and wastewater personnel as quickly as possible," Rider said.

Towards this goal, OMA is seeking municipal training partners.

"Our training partners will be qualified, experienced professionals who can demonstrate the proper skills for a given task," Rider added. "We will take the training to their municipality and open it up to other municipalities in the immediate region."

For more information about OMA's future and training opportunities for water and wastewater personnel, contact Tom Rider at tom@meso.org.

Save the Date
for the
**2019 MESO
Lineworkers Rodeo
and Safety Training**
September 25-26, 2019



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UPCOMING MESO & AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER EVENTS

June 7-12, 2019

American Public Power Association National Conference
Austin, Texas

September 25 – 26, 2019

MESO Lineworkers Rodeo and Safety Training
Ponca City, Oklahoma

MESO Job Training & Safety Sessions

- May 21-22, 2019 – Hot Stick Line School (Advanced), Edmond
- June 18-20, 2019 – Basic 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, June 4, 2019
 - Tuesday, August 6, 2019
 - Tuesday, October 1, 2019
 - Tuesday, December 3, 2019
- MESO Training Center, Okla. City



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Wanted Training Partners

The Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma (MESO) is transitioning into the Oklahoma Municipal Alliance (OMA). We are expanding our safety and operational training into additional municipal operations, beginning with water and wastewater operators. Regional training will be offered around the state. This will allow most municipal water systems an opportunity to attend training at a location close to them.

OMA is seeking Training Partners to deliver high quality training to area operators.

What's required of a training partner?

- A training room equipped with tables and chairs to comfortably seat 30.
- A training area, either permanent or temporary, for hands-on skills training or demonstrations.
- Qualified personnel, with appropriate experience and safety record, who can work with the trainer to properly demonstrate the skill and ensure participants are performing the skill correctly.

What's the benefit to becoming a training partner?

- Training partners will receive two free registrations to every training event they host.
- Demonstrators will practice and refine their skills techniques according to industry best practices.
- Training partners will be providing a needed service to their utility and neighboring communities.

If you have questions or are interested in becoming a training partner, please contact Tom Rider at tom@meso.org or by phone at (405) 394-0100.



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OMPA Staff Honored at MESO Public Power Conference

MESO recognized Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority's (OMPA) General Manager, Dave Osburn; Palma Lough, Energy Services Specialist; and the OMPA Linecrew at the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference.

Osburn, a long-time proponent of locally owned and controlled public power, was awarded with the association's Ray Duffy Personal Service Award.

He began his municipal service in 1977 and joined the staff at the OMPA in 2007. He is a vocal proponent for public power and his OMPA members.

"He is active in the development of services and programs that benefit OMPA members," said MESO General Manager Tom Rider. "His efforts have led to improved reliability and a strong commitment to system enhancements that benefit members' citizens."

He currently services on the American Public Power Association's Board of Directors, as well as the Southwestern Power Pool's Members Committee, the Transmission Access Policy Study Group, and the NERC RISC Committee. In 2007, he was awarded APPA's Kramer-Preston Personal Service Award.

Osburn's insistence that citizens of all public power communities understand the value of ownership led to the implementation of the Our Local Power campaign.

Lough, who is known for her willingness to respond with a ready smile, was selected as a 2019 recipient of the Drake Rice Customer Service Award that recognizes individuals who best exemplify the qualities of a true customer service professional.

"Customer service is a way of life for Palma," Rider said. "Her commitment to her customers propels her to go the extra mile which may include involving others in the development of a solution or taking the time to explain programs or services, perhaps more than once."

As one co-worker said, "her work isn't a job, it's a mission."

MESO recognizes her customer service attributes of a positive attitude towards customers and co-workers, and a personal commitment to always giving her best in every situation.

The OMPA Line Crew was selected as a 2019 recipient of the Clarence Fulkerson Award which recognizes and honors a public power system that works to effectively improve their system operations, resulting in improved reliability and long-term cost savings for its customers.

The crew made outstanding contributions in ensuring reliable public power for members' citizens during 2018.

Highlights of their performance in 2018 include:

- Participating in pole replacements in six OMPA member cities
- Replacing a 69kV transmission line
- Inspecting and replacing old wooden transmission and sub-transmission poles with new steel poles for members and power supplier to enhance reliability
- Performing oil sampling and inspections of member substation transformers. Sampling prevented a transformer failure for the City of Wynnewood which would have caused an extended outage.



MESO President Dave Slezikcky, presents Dave Osburn with the Ray Duffy Award.



Palma Lough was the recipient of the Drake Rice Customer Service Award.



The OMPA Line Crew received the Clarence Fulkerson Award.

MESO Recognizes Charles Lamb

Charles Lamb, the former Mayor of Edmond and Chairman of the OMPA Board of Directors, was honored at the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference for his dedication and service to Public Power.

Lamb who passed away suddenly December 11, 2018 was awarded the MESO Pruett – Lamb Lifetime Achievement Award. Recognizing his faithful service, the MESO Board of Directors placed Lamb's name on this award in continuing acknowledgement of his service and dedication along with Gary Pruett, the long-time General Manager of Municipal Utility Board of Pryor.

Lamb's public service career began as an elected member of the Edmond City Council and then Mayor. In 1993, he was named to the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority's Board of Directors, a seat he held until his untimely death. Since 2001, he served as the OMPA Board chair.

"Throughout his tenure, first on behalf of Edmond, and then working for OMPA members and MESO members, Charles was a vocal advocate for Public Power and the value it brings to communities fortunate enough to own their own power systems," said MESO General Manager Tom Rider.

Lamb served on the American Public Power Association's Policy Makers Council where he advocated for Public Power rights on a national level. In 2017, he was recognized by APPA with the Spence Vanderlinden Public Official Award.

He was twice honored by MESO with the Ray Duffy Personal Service Award and was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame for City and Town Officials in 2006.

His wife, Cheri Lamb and daughter Kelly Lamb Austin, received the award on his behalf at the MESO Annual Conference.

MESO to Present Basic Lineman School in June

MESO will host Basic Lineman School June 18-20 at OMPA's Fairview office.

The course includes classroom training sessions which cover the basics of electricity, lively discussions, and a supporting workbook with reference materials and classroom activities. Hands-on instruction is performed outdoors, where a variety of conventional and not-so conventional equipment is placed in the hands of workshop participants.

This training will assist workers whose job assignments may require pole climbing, assisting journeymen and operating mechanical equipment. While this course covers basic materials and is designed for Apprentice Linemen, professionals at any skill level or knowledge will benefit by participating.

The cost is \$199 per person, which includes lunches and instruction manual. Registration deadline is June 12.

Instructors include MESO Director of Job Training and Safety Tom Dougherty, OMPA Line Crew Superintendent Anthony Hale and retired Duncan Line Foreman Rusty Brown.

Registration information is available at www.meso.org. For more information, contact Tom Dougherty at tomd@meso.org.

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GRDA Crews Take Part in “Light up the Navajo Nation” Project

Thanks to the efforts of the nation’s public power utilities, including the Grand River Dam Authority, thousands of homes on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona are set to receive electricity service for the first time.

In early April, a team of nine GRDA employees traveled to the reservation as part of a mutual aid initiative coordinated by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) and the American Public Power Association (APPA).

The “Light up the Navajo Nation” project’s goal is to bring together more than 100 volunteers from 24 public power utilities to build electric distribution infrastructure across the 27,000 square mile reservation.

Of the 55,000 homes located on the reservation, as many as 15,000 do not have electricity. In fact, these homes make up a full 75 percent of all un-electrified households in the United States.

During its time on the reservation, the GRDA team split into two separate crews, each working 12-hour days for five days straight, to bring power to 20 homes for the first time.

“GRDA is pleased to be a part of this initiative to bring much needed electricity into these homes,” said GRDA President/Chief Executive Officer Dan Sullivan. “Providing mutual aid is really foundational to all of public power and this effort is a great illustration of what can be accomplished when these utilities work together.”

Of course, GRDA is no stranger to providing mutual aid to neighbors in need. However, past work has always been done to help another utility restore its system following an ice storm, tornado or hurricane. The “Light up the Navajo Nation” project is the first time GRDA has provided assistance for a new electrification project. Because of the unique nature of this project, the GRDA linemen who participated say it is an experience they will never forget.

“You get out there and you hear some of the stories about a lot of people not having power and that really tugs at your heart,” said Trent Fittje, a GRDA lineman and veteran of several mutual aid trips. “This was people helping people and I am glad I had the chance to be there.”

Another GRDA lineman, Steven Willis, shared about the positive impact electricity would have on a family that would no longer need to refrigerate their child’s medicine at a relative’s home.

“The look on this father’s face when he said ‘I can put the medicine in my own refrigerator now’ will stick with me from now on,” said Willis.

Echoing Willis’ comments, lineman Brent Scott also shared about the impact electricity was having on another resident’s efforts to warm her home.

“There was an elderly lady, a retired school teacher, who had moved back to the reservation after retirement and lived alone. She had been hauling wood for fuel to keep her warm,” said Scott, adding that an electric heater was now going to make life much easier for her.

Although they battled some difficult terrain, dust storms, high winds, cold weather and even a bit of snow, David Hefner, who served as the GRDA lead in Arizona, called the week of long hours and difficult work a great experience.

“NTUA was very pleased with the work we did and also very grateful to GRDA for allowing us to do this,” said Hefner. “All of us who worked out there are also grateful to everyone within our organization for helping to make this happen.”



GRDA Linemen at work on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona in early April.



GRDA Lineman, Ben Curnutt, prepares an electric distribution pole for connection to the power line.

Pryor's Gary Pruett Recognized for Career of Service

MESO recognized Pryor's Gary Pruett for his 46 years of commitment to Public Power and the citizens of Pryor with the association's Pruett-Lamb Lifetime Achievement Award.

Pruett committed his entire professional career to service with the Municipal Utility Board of Pryor Creek. He began his career in 1973 as a B mechanic in the gas and water department. Forty-six years later, he retired on December 31, 2018.

His career highlights include:

- 1975 – began work in the electric department as a groundman
- He earned his Electric Journeyman status in 1980
- Through the 80s, he served his utility in the roles of Lead Lineman and Line Foreman
- In 1990 he was named Director of Operations
- Became General Manager in 1996, a position he held until his retirement

"His career is a testament to his drive and determination to improve the efficiencies and quality of utility services for his customers," said MESO General Manager Tom Rider. "His service to the betterment of public utility services extended beyond just his utility and city."

Pruett is a founding member of the Oklahoma Gas Association, working tirelessly for municipal natural gas system across the state; he served on the MESO Board of Directors for 22 years, serving as president in 2006; and he served the GRDA Wholesale Customer Group as a member and past president.

Recognizing his faithful service, the MESO Board of Directors placed Pruett's name atop this award in continuing acknowledgement of his service and dedication along with the late Charles Lamb who served the people of Edmond, the members of the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority and Oklahoma's public power community for 25 years. He served as OMPA chairman for 18 years, until his untimely death.



MESO President Dave Slezický (right), presents Gary Pruett with the Pruett-Lamb Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kingfisher Electric and City of Kingfisher Receives Clarence Fulkerson Award

Kingfisher Electric and the City of Kingfisher received the 2019 Clarence Fulkerson Award at the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference.

The MESO Clarence Fulkerson Award recognizes and honors a locally-owned and controlled public power system that works to effectively improve their system operations, resulting in improved reliability and long-term cost savings for its customers.

"We recognize the commitment made by Kingfisher Electric to the citizens of Kingfisher and for making great strides in rebuilding customer confidence in the value of the city's public power system," said MESO General Manager Tom Rider.

During the last 18 months, this team:

- developed and implemented a department safety program
- significantly improved pole replacements resulting in moving from 30% past due to 15% ahead of schedule
- improved safety through personal protective equipment and mandating tailgate briefings as well as post project assessment reviews to capture how operations could be improved on every project
- converted 80% of street lights to LED
- installed battery backups on all city traffic signals to enhance public safety
- successfully recruited talent and increased the line team from four to seven

The result of this work has allowed the city to experience 99.9 percent reliability for the last six months.



GRDA's Herron Honored with Substation Name, MESO Lifetime Achievement Award

A Grand River Dam Authority electrical substation, located in the MidAmerica Industrial Park, will bear the name of GRDA's retired Vice President of Engineering, System Operations and Reliability Mike Herron.

GRDA President/CEO Dan Sullivan told Herron at the April 18 meeting of the GRDA Board of Directors the substation, formerly known as the "3500 West Main Substation" will now be GRDA's "William M. Herron" substation.

"You have left an indelible mark on GRDA," said Sullivan. "We appreciate your steadfast commitment to our customers and all of the tireless effort that you have put forth on behalf of them and the entire organization."

Earlier in the month, Herron, who joined GRDA as Chief Engineer in 2004, was also presented with the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma (MESO) 2019 Pruett-Lamb Lifetime Achievement Award during MESO's annual Oklahoma Public Power Conference. That award is given annually to an Oklahoma public power professional who has contributed to the growth of their organization and/or the state's public power community over the lifetime of their professional career.

His career as an electrical engineer spans nearly four decades. The last 29 years were spent in Oklahoma, first with the City of Stillwater (one of the state's largest public power utilities) before his GRDA tenure began. At that time, he was already recognized as one of the Midwest's leading experts on electric distribution design. Always an advocate for public power and electric reliability, Herron has overseen many upgrade projects to the GRDA electrical transmission system during his 15-year GRDA career.



GRDA President/CEO Dan Sullivan (right) presents a retirement resolution to GRDA Vice President of Engineering, System Operations and Reliability Mike Herron during the April 18 meeting of the GRDA Board of Directors, in Tulsa.

Courtney Jarvis' Commitment to Customer Service Recognized

Courtney Jarvis who served as a Land Agent for GRDA was selected to receive a 2019 Drake Rice Customer Service Award. She passed away suddenly on August 22, 2018.

In her role with GRDA, she was a helpful, positive link between landowners and GRDA crews. She worked tirelessly to resolve issues for all involved.

As a farmer/rancher herself, she understood the concerns of landowners and the impacts that building

and maintaining large electric transmission lines rights-of-way could have on property.

She was always available with a ready smile and willingness to assist. MESO members who participated in past Lineworker Rodeos were often rewarded with the smile and the energy behind it.

Jarvis' family — her parents, Dana and Joe Collins and sister, Jennifer Hinson — were guests at the 2019 MESO Public Power Conference. Her husband, Josh Jarvis, received the award on her behalf.

Boulder takes another step toward municipalization, offering \$68.5

From the American Public Power Association

April 25, 2019

By Peter Maloney

The city of Boulder, Colorado, this month took another step in its effort to separate itself from Xcel Energy and set up its own public power utility with a \$68.5 million offer to acquire electric assets from Xcel.

The bid is for more than 100,000 assets, including everything from meters and poles to conduits and easements, but no generation assets are involved.

"The purpose of the dollar figure is to kick off a negotiation," Emily Sandoval, communications specialist with the city, said. "If we can't reach an agreement, we would make a condemnation filing in court, so this is one major step."

Boulder began its municipalization effort in 2011, but costs have not yet been discussed with Xcel. Boulder is eager to have some figures on how much

municipalization would cost so it can put together a proposal to present to voters, possibly as soon as November 2020.

When Boulder began its municipalization effort, Xcel's generation portfolio was heavily dependent on fossil fuels, and Boulder wanted to switch to renewable resources and have more control over its energy future, as well as capture some of the economic benefits of being a public power utility.

Since then, Xcel has been moving away from fossil fuels and has pledged to have zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.

In a first step toward municipalization, Boulder in 2010 allowed its franchise with Xcel to expire, including the franchise fee which provided the city with \$1.4 million in annual revenue. Residents in 2010 voted to replace the franchise fee with a utility occupation tax that goes into the city's general fund, and renewed this tax in 2015. In 2011,

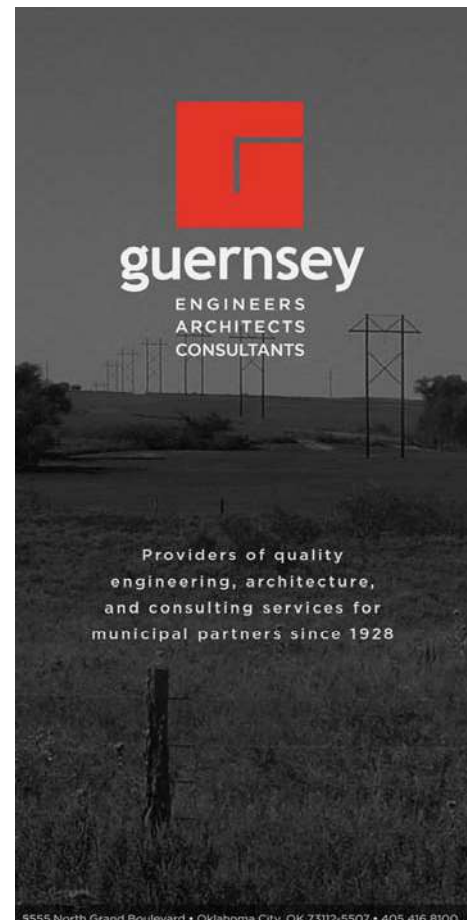
voters approved an increase in the utility occupation tax that is directed at funding municipalization efforts. Voters increased and renewed that funding in 2017.

Boulder is building toward assembling all the data and details it needs to present a proposal to voters in 2020 or 2021 on whether or not to move forward with municipalization. Right now, "we don't know how much it would cost to construct a separate system," Sandoval said. "We have estimates, but we don't know the costs of billing, of hiring people."

"The best way to characterize the work we're doing right now is we are just trying to assess the costs," she said.

Read more about Boulder's municipalization efforts in a recent article in Public Power Magazine.

Our future ...



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for

Basic Lineman School

June 18-20, 2019

OMPA Fairview Field Office, Fairview, Oklahoma


Participants are expected to gain proficiency in the following areas:

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- Digger Derrick and Bucket Truck Operation
- Meter Base Inspection
- Line Design & Construction
- Personal Protective Equipment Truck Grounding
- Pole Climbing
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