



Building strong communities through a well-trained workforce

A publication of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma

January 2022

2022 Public Power Conference

Register today for the 2022 MESO Public Power Conference

Both Attendee and Sponsorship registrations are now open for the 2022 MEO Public Power Conference scheduled for April 24-26 in Norman, Oklahoma at www.meso.org.

General Sessions speakers include Dr. Chuck Jackson, Colin Hansen, and Kevin Sesock.

Jackson, a highly respected and dynamic motivational speaker, brings his unique and entertaining style to every session he presents. Hansen is the Chairman, American Public Power Association Executive Director, Kansas Power Pool, and one of the nation’s leading experts on locally owned and controlled municipal electric utilities. And Sesock, OMAG’s Chief Information Officer, will discuss “how you hold the key to cybersecurity in the palm of your hand.”

The 2021 Public Power Conference breakout sessions provide something for people in all areas of municipal operations including Customer Service, Human Resources, Electric Utility Operations and Linework, and Power Generation.

Breakout sessions include:

- Changing/Developing Workplace Culture
- The Ins and Outs of Severe Weather Management
- Lessons Learned from an Emergency: the Leader’s Perspective
- Basic Lockout/Tagout and Switching
- Grow House Loading
- New Technologies & Funding Opportunities
(see REGISTER TODAY, page 2)

Cheryl Adams joins MESO team

MESO is pleased to welcome Cheryl Adams to our professional staff as Assistant General Manager.

She most recently served as Program Director for the Oklahoma Municipal League. In addition to her service with cities and towns at OML, she worked on the in-state staff for former U.S. Senator Dr. Tom Coburn. She earned her master’s degree in public administration while working full-time at OML.

“I expect Cheryl to hit the ground running,” said MESO General Manger, Tom Rider. “Developing the MESO Government Relations Program will be among her first priorities, followed by taking over day-to-day issues, and jumping into the planning and preparation for the MESO Public Power Conference scheduled for April.”

To help everyone get to know her, we sat down and asked her a few questions.

(see CHERYL ADAMS, page 6



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Register here

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- Communications: Awareness Beyond Your Own Department
- Rooftop Solar – Is It Right For You?
- How to be a Public Power Ambassador
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Reducing Stress & Burnout

Attendee registration is available at www.meso.org.

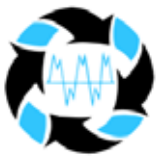
For potential sponsors: The annual Public Power Conference brings together leaders of municipal electric systems across the State of Oklahoma and neighboring states. By participating in the 2022 conference, you will have the opportunity to connect with key decision-makers. This is a great marketing opportunity for any company that wants to partner with and serve municipalities.

Public Power Conference participants represent municipally owned electric systems in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Arkansas. This annual event draws city managers, supervisors, lineworkers, and customer service professionals, so regardless of who you are looking to partner with, they may be at this conference.

Due to the ongoing COVID 19 Pandemic, MESO continues to monitor the situation. "We will work with the hotel and take reasonable precautions to help keep our members safe," said Tom Rider, MESO General Manager.

For all sponsorship details, click here: [2022 Public Power Conference Sponsor Packet](#).

Registration questions may be directed to MESO Director of Administration and Finance, Deborah Gonzales, at deborah@meso.org or at 405-528-7564 ext. 1.



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2022 Public Power Conference

Applications for Mike Nunneley Scholarship are due by March 1

The Mike Nunneley Scholarship is awarded annually to a deserving governing body official, appointed official, or staff member from an Oklahoma Public Power community who has not attended a past MESO Public Power Conference.

The scholarship was established in 2018 to honor the late Mike Nunneley. He served the Public Power communities of Granite and Mannford, promoting not only Public Power but also the value of professional management for Oklahoma's cities and towns. He was committed to the continuing professional education of municipal officials at all levels of government.

The 2022 MESO Public Power Conference will be held April 24-26, 2022 in Norman, OK. The scholarship covers conference registration, meals, and 2 nights lodging. The recipient is responsible for transportation to and from the conference.

An applicant may apply directly, or an individual may apply on behalf of another person, with the understanding that the person being submitted meets scholarship criteria.

Below are the submission requirements to be considered for the scholarship. Applications must be received by March 1, 2022 to be considered for the 2022 MESO Public Power Conference.

To be considered the application (a one-page letter) must include:

- Who they are.
- How long they've served their Public Power community and/or Public Power communities in Oklahoma.
- What they hope to gain by attending the MESO Public Power Conference.

To apply for the scholarship, address applications to the MESO Board of Directors, attention General Manager. Applications should be submitted to MESO in one of the following methods:

1. Mail: Tom Rider, GM; 308 NE 27th Street; Oklahoma City, OK 73105
2. Fax: (405) 524-5095
3. Email: tom@meso.org

Nominations received after March 1, 2022 may not be considered. Questions should be submitted in writing to tom@meso.org.

MESO Job Training & Safety

MESO Lays Out 2022 Electric Utility Operational Training

Under the leadership of Tom Dougherty, MESO Director of Job Training & Safety, the MESO schedule for 2022 Electric Utility Operational Training Schedule has been set.

"These training sessions are for professional lineworkers regardless of experience and skill level," Dougherty said. "There will be something for everyone who wants to improve their abilities."

The Training Sessions Schedule is:

- Climbing School / Cushing, OK – March 15-16, 2022
- Basic Lineman School / Fairview, OK (OMPA Training Yard) – June 14-16, 2022
- Underground Trouble shooting / Kingfisher, OK – July 20-21, 2022
- Why we Ground/Hotline School / location tbd, – November 15-16, 2022

About sponsorship opportunities:

MESO Electric Utility Operational Training sessions regularly attract Public Power professionals from

municipal utilities across the State of Oklahoma and neighboring states. MESO Associate Members have the opportunity to interact with training attendees as a "LUNCH SPONSOR."

How sponsorships work:

- All sponsorships will be accepted on a first paid, first served basis.
- MESO will make all lunch arrangements.
- Sponsorship includes lunch with event participants & instructors; opportunity to pass out literature; and an opportunity introduce yourself at the end of the lunch break and speak for 5 minutes.
- Sponsors will receive recognition at the event and on the MESO Facebook page.
- For multiple-day events, sponsorships will be made available for each day.

The cost of the sponsorship is \$300 per day. Registration questions may be directed to Deborah Gonzales at deborah@meso.org or 405-528-7564, ext. 1.

MESO Professional Development

MESO Electric Supervisor Development Course returns in March 2022

The MESO Electric Supervisor Development (ESD) Course provides Journeyman Lineworkers with the skills necessary to lead high-performing teams while enhancing critical on-the-job skills. The program kicks off with its first classroom training session on March 24, 2022, and the final session will be in November 2023.

“Efficient and effective organizations and teams develop their people,” said Jeff Kaufmann, Director of Communications and Professional Development who leads the ESD Course. “Preparing skilled professionals to become effective leaders who train and develop others requires enhanced people skills and a continuing development of their soft skills.”

The course combines 16 Development (PD) topics (1/2 day per topic for a total of eight classroom days) focusing on Leadership, Teambuilding, Customer Service, and Communications. It also includes and three Electric Utility (EU) Classroom sessions over two classroom days.

To successfully complete the program, participants will be required to complete additional EU work including serving as a judge at the MESO Lineworkers Rodeo; coaching at MESO JT&S Specialty events such as Climbing School - Level 1 or Lineman Basics School; and, serving as a reviewer at an Apprentice Program at Apprentice Skills Assessment for two days.

All ESD Course details including topics covered, dates, etc. are online at [2022-23 MESO Electric Supervisor Development Course Information](#).

Registration is available for Journeyman Lineworkers at www.meso.org or by clicking here: [2022-23 MESO Electric Supervisor Development Course Registration](#).

The cost of the program is \$999 per attendee per year and \$899 for each additional attendee per year. Class size is limited.

GRDA & OMPA have slots in the course as part of their respective MESO membership agreements. After participants have registered online, MESO will work with GRDA & OMPA to determine eligibility for financial support for individuals in the course.

Questions about the Electric Supervisor Development Training Program can be directed to Kaufmann at jeffk@meso.org. Registration questions may be directed to Deborah Gonzales, MESO Director of Administration and Finance, at deborah@meso.org.

Save the Date
2022 MESO Lineworkers Rodeo and Safety Training
September 21-22, 2022
Edmond, Oklahoma

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 - Pelco
 - Power Equipment Sales Reps
 - Saber Power
 - Second Sight Systems
 - Solomon
 - T&E
 - T&R Electric Supply Co
 - Techline Inc
 - TESCO
 - Toth & Associates
 - Ultimate Tool and Safety
 - Universal Field Services, Inc.
 - Utilismart Corporation
 - Utility Sales Agents of North Texas
 - Utility Sales Agents of Oklahoma
 - Utility Technology Services
 - Wesco Distribution
- See "Associates" @ www.meso.org

MESO partnering with Okie 811 for One-Call Law Changes Webinar

During the 2021 session of the Oklahoma Legislature, HB 2028 was passed and enacted into law effective November 1, 2021.

MESO is partnering with Okie 811 to present an update webinar titled "Understanding Recent One-Call Law Changes." The session is free of charge and is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 8, 2022.

Susan Bohl, Okie 811 Executive Director, will present the session and will discuss updates resulting from HB 2028 to the Oklahoma Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act.

Highlights of the changes include:

- The Life of a Ticket will be 14 Calendar Days
- Mandatory Positive Response for Members, Excavators & OKIE811
- Provisions for State of Emergency Declaration
- Required Damage Reporting to OKIE811 in addition to the Operator
- Better Defined Excavator Responsibilities

around Hazardous Pipelines HB-2028

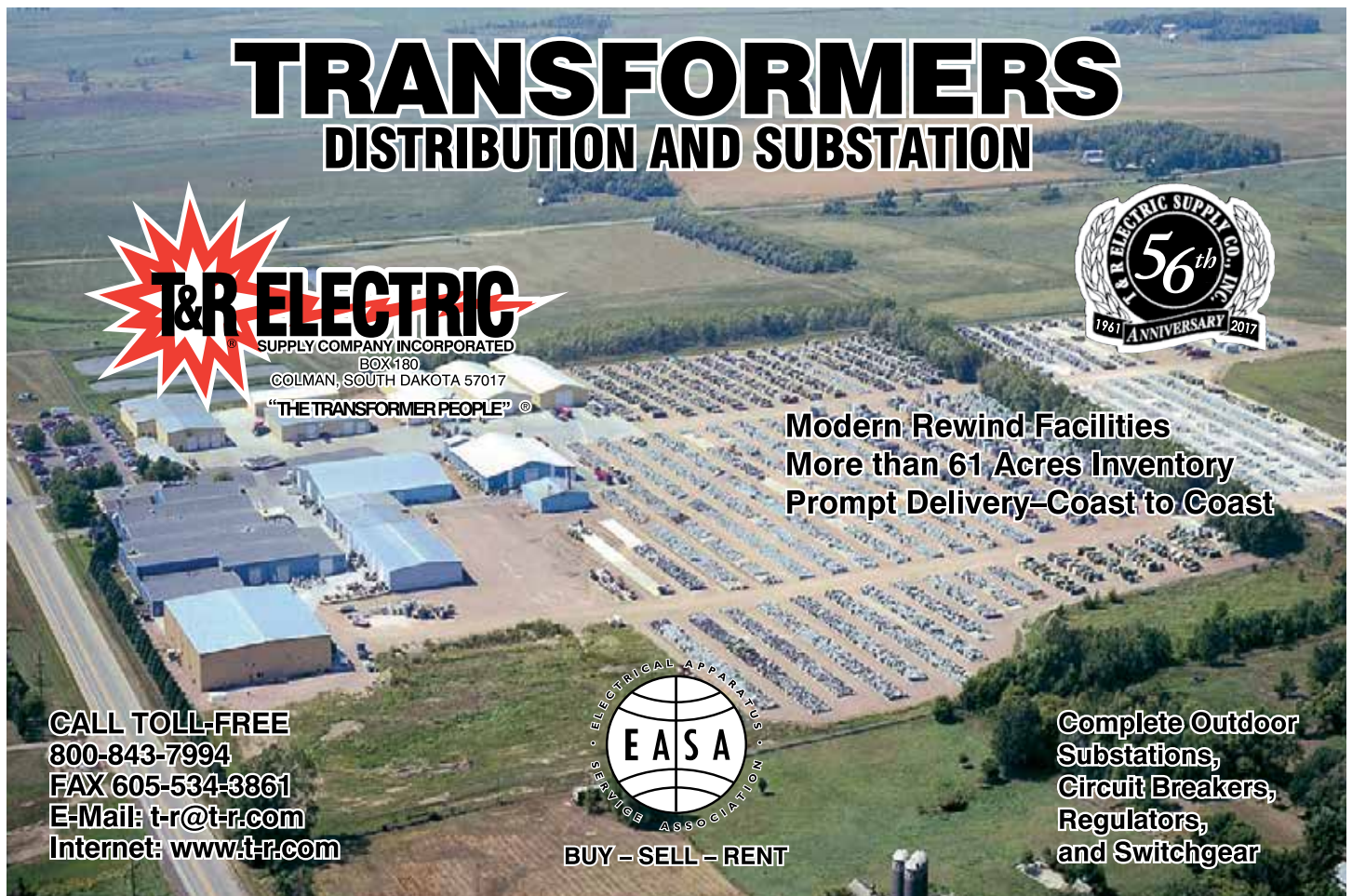
- Excavator may be liable to Operator for misuse of Emergency Tickets
- Excavator may be liable to Operator for Excessive & Unreasonable Updates on a Ticket

Register at www.meso.org or by clicking here [Understanding Recent One-Call Law Changes Registration.](#)


About Registration:

- Registration is free of charge.
- Anyone who wants to attend must register individually or one registration may be used if planning to gather a group at one location.
- To register a valid email must be provided.
- After registration is complete, a confirmation email with login information will be sent.


Questions may be directed to Jeff Kaufmann, Director of Communications and Professional Development, at jeffk@meso.org.




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Cheryl Adams

(continued from page 1)

Q: How did you get your start working with municipalities?

A: My first experience working with municipalities was working for U.S. Senator, Dr. Tom Coburn. During my time with Dr. Coburn, I worked closely with cities and towns as a field representative. I spent my time meeting with municipal officials and really grew to admire the work of local government and developed a passion for Oklahoma cities and towns. After my time with Dr. Coburn, it was a natural transition for me to work at the Oklahoma Municipal League.

Q: A priority for MESO is developing a Government Relations Program and you will be leading our charge; will you tell us a little bit about your philosophy in this area?

A: Having a strong government relations program for Public Power from an organization like MESO is imperative. The first step will be working with the MESO board and members to identify our legislative and other priorities. It will be important to include all members and partner organizations to create a coalition to be a strong voice of Public Power. Finally, make certain state and federal legislatures and other governmental agencies have a good understanding of what Public Power means to local communities

Q: What is the best advice you've ever been given?

A: My dad always told me "know who you are." I feel this rings true personally, and professionally.

Q. What value do you believe MESO provides to its members?

A. From my experience working with Oklahoma municipalities, I have always heard good things about the services MESO provides to its members. I look forward to helping increase members' value by adding a strong government relations program that supports members and Public Power.

Q, What thoughts do you have for moving MESO forward?

A. As a membership association, I feel the most important aspect of the organization is the relationship with members, and the services provided. I plan to work with the MESO team to find ways we can better improve services and programs to better serve our members.

Q: Sometimes, we consider Public Power to be a "family," will you tell us about your family and background?

A: I was raised in a large family, and although we are miles apart, we are very close. I have one adult daughter, whom I am very proud of. She graduated last year from OU and is currently working in the music marketing industry. I love dogs and after the first of the year will be looking to add a new pup to my family.

Q: Citizens may not always understand the municipal services provided by cities and towns, if you could teach them one thing, what would that be?

A: While citizens may not understand the process of municipal services, I think there needs to be a way to highlight the dedication of the professionals providing the services to the cities and towns where they live. I would say almost every single person I know in municipal government is dedicated to the role they play.

Q: Is there one thing that you tell every member of your team?

A: Mondays are new opportunities.

Q: Would you tell us one thing about yourself that most people don't know?

A: I have a great passion for photography, and I want to hone my skills in night photography.

Q: What, if anything, keeps you awake at night?

A: Not much keeps me awake at night. However, the Covid19 pandemic has had me up early praying a lot for my friends, family, state, and country.

MESO Professional Development

2022 dates for OMPA Professional Development provided by MESO set

As part of OMPA's Affiliate Membership Agreement with MESO, OMPA received five regional onsite professional development training days.

These training sessions exist to help OMPA Members Cities with CUP training hours and to provide valuable training.

The 2022 training dates and locations are:

- April 19 - Watonga
- June 22 - Pawhuska
- July 21 - Laverne/Mooreland
- October 25, 26 or 27 – Purcell (date to be determined)
- December 13 – OMPA Edmond Office

The training dates generally have two sessions in the morning and the same two topics are presented in afternoon sessions. This allows for attending cities and towns to send part of their team in the morning and others in the afternoon.

Topics to be presented to are being finalized. All topics will fall into one of four general categories: customer service, leadership, team building, and

communications. All sessions will qualify as "C" type hours required under the OMPA CUP Program.



"We are honored to be allowed to work with Public Power utilities across Oklahoma," said Jeff Kaufmann, MESO Director of Communications and Professional Development. "It is our goal to provide value to all of our members while focusing on our mission 'to enhance our members' value to their customers through industry best-practice, training, and services.'"

Palma Lough will be the primary contact for OMPA Regional Professional Development sessions, and questions may be directed to her at plough@ompa.com. Any questions about MESO Professional Development Training, contact Kaufmann at jeffk@meso.org.

2022 Public Power Conference

Nominations Are Open for MESO Public Power Recognition Awards

Submit nominations for MESO Public Power Recognition awards by March 1 to recognize the outstanding employees at your utility.

The annual awards include:

Clarence Fulkerson Electric System Achievement Award

Awarded to an MESO member (city/town/utility/joint action agency) that has distinguished itself during the year for its exemplary system enhancement, improvement, reliability or other innovative efforts to improve municipal power in Oklahoma. The Clarence Fulkerson Electric System Achievement Award was named for the utility director in Ponca City who was an early board member at MESO and proponent of municipal power plant ownership.

Marvin Hicks – Al Middleton Meritorious Service Award

Awarded to an individual employee from a MESO

member city/town/utility who has 25 years of employment as a good employee and is/ has been very active in their community. This award is named for two of MESO's original Board members – Marvin Hicks, Tahlequah and Al Middleton, Pryor. Hicks and Middleton both helped to grow MESO membership and were committed to the success of their respective communities. Together, they had almost 80 years of service to their communities.

Drake Rice Customer Service Award

Awarded to individuals who best exemplify the qualities of a true customer service professional. For more than 30 years, Rice served as the Director of Member Services for the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority and many other roles in municipal government. Throughout his career Rice worked tirelessly advocating for customers and promoting customer service.

(see NOMINATIONS, page 8)

City of Edmond, UCO solidify continued commitment to sustainability

The City of Edmond's commitment to sustainability reflects the values of our community. A vital part of that community — and a vital partner in the City's sustainability efforts — is the University of Central Oklahoma.

The two community leaders came together this month to agree on an extended memorandum of understanding, updating the commitment by both to support sustainable best practices by both the City and the University.

This new memorandum — an extension of the original established in 2014 — makes official the commitment by both to further collaborate on programs that will produce a more healthy, livable, and sustainable local community.

"The City is proud to partner with the University in making this continued commitment," said Phil Jones, City of Edmond Sustainability Planner. "We have engaged in several activities over the years to make Edmond more sustainable — too much to mention along with this great news. I would encourage residents to visit edmondok.com/Sustainability to find out more."

Recent progress in the City's focus on sustainability includes making all city facilities fully powered by renewable energy, distributing thousands of trees through Edmond Electric and Urban Forestry departments, installing new bike lanes around

(see CITY OF EDMOND, page 9)

Nominations

(continued from page 7)

The Drake Rice Customer Service Award recognizes individuals in Public Power who best exemplify the traits of a quality customer service provider —

- Consistently positive attitude towards customers to assist them as needed;
- A positive and helpful attitude with co-workers to ensure a cooperative, customer-focused work environment; and,
- A personal commitment to always giving his or her best in every situation.

Ray Duffy Personal Service Award

Awarded to an individual who, throughout their career, has consistently demonstrated a commitment to Public Power and the improvement of services and reliability. Further, has actively promoted Public Power within their organization and the state.

Pruett – Lamb Lifetime Achievement Award

The MESO Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an individual who has contributed to the growth of their organization and/or Oklahoma's Public Power community over the lifetime of their professional career. The award is named after two of Oklahoma's strongest Public Power proponents — Gary Pruet, longtime General Manager of the Municipal Utility Board of Pryor, and Charles Lamb

who served as a councilman then Mayor of the City of Edmond and on the OMPA Board of Directors for 25 years and the last 19 as chairman. To qualify for the award, the person nominated must be able to document how his or her professional contribution has improved the quality of life in the community(ies) in which they served, or Oklahoma's Public Power community as a collective.

To submit a nomination, please complete a nomination detailing the individual's contribution to both their community and Public Power as appropriate. Sufficient detail should be provided so that the Awards Selection Committee is provided a clear understanding of the individual's contributions. Further, each submission should have contact information for the person submitting the nomination. All Recognition Award nominations are due NO LATER THAN — March 1, 2022.

Nominations should be submitted to MESO in one of the following methods:

Mail: Tom Rider, GM; 308 NE 27th Street;
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-2717

Fax: (405) 524-5095

Email: tom@meso.org

Questions should be submitted in writing to tom@meso.org. Nominations received after March 1, 2022 may not be considered.

From the American Public Power Association

Power Plant Coal Stockpiles Fall To Lowest Levels Since 1978: EIA

By Peter Maloney

Coal stockpiles at electric power plants are at their lowest levels since 1978, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Stockpiled coal dropped to 80 million metric tons in September, their lowest level since March 1978 when stockpiles hit 77 million metric tons, according to EIA data.

The [federal agency attributed](#) the decline to two factors: less coal is needed as coal plants continue to retire and increased generation by coal plants over the summer reduced coal inventories.

In 2019, [Moody's Investors Service](#) projected that utility demand for coal would decline significantly between 2020 and 2030, reducing coal-fired generation to as little as 11 percent of overall U.S. power generation, down from 27 percent in 2018.

Last summer, [Moody's predicted](#) coal company earnings would fall by 50 percent in 2020 because of weak fundamentals and the effects the COVID-19 economic slowdown. The ratings agency also predicted a 25 percent drop in thermal coal production in 2020.

Coal plant operators typically stockpile more coal than they can burn in a month. Generating plants consume the most coal during the summer and winter months, causing stockpiles to drop to their lowest levels in the spring and fall and prompting generators to build back their reserves. However, physical

delivery constraints in the supply chain can limit how quickly coal generators can increase their stockpiles, the EIA noted.

Nonetheless, coal stockpiles at generating plants, as measured by the "days to burn" metric, remain within recent historic parameters, the EIA said. "Because of less coal consumption as well as coal capacity retirements over the past three years, the days of burn of U.S. coal

remain within the typical range, even though total stocks are low," the EIA said.

For bituminous coal plants, which are mostly in the eastern United States, the average number of days of burn was 88 days in September, a slight increase from the 86 days of burn recorded by the EIA in August. The average number of days of burn for subbituminous units, which are mostly in the western United States, was 82 days in September 2021, the EIA noted.

The EIA, noting the long-term trend of [declining coal consumption](#), also said many U.S. coal mines have begun to close. That trend, combined with supply chain disruptions, has created some concerns about the ability of coal-fired generators to replenish stockpiles to last through the winter.

Grid operators are, however, closely monitoring coal inventories. As an example, the EIA cited temporary [changes taken by the PJM Interconnection](#) regarding minimum inventory requirements to provide more flexibility for coal-fired generators.



City of Edmond

(continued from page 8)

campus, and deploying free electric vehicle charging stations around the community.

Areas of collaboration between the City and University include energy efficiency, healthy ecosystems, alternative public transportation, solid waste and recycling, urban forestry, water and wastewater resources, electric vehicle charging stations, walkability and bicycle grants and educational opportunities.

"I think it's exciting that we can continue this voluntary collaboration between UCO and the City of Edmond. Edmond has always been incredible

supporters of UCO," said John Wood, Ph.D., UCO associate professor of public administration.

UCO designated Wood to meet quarterly with the City to discuss best practices and cost-effective solutions to advance sustainability.

"Whether it's speaking to my classes as guest lecturers or collaborating on Earth Day activities, we have had a long-term synergistic relationship with Edmond that I feel certainly helps both organizations to make the metro a better place to work and live," Wood said.

For more information about Central, visit www.uco.edu.

From GRDA

2022 Budget includes no rate increases over the next 12

For the sixth straight year, the Grand River Dam Authority has approved a budget that includes no rate increases over the next 12 months. The GRDA Board of Directors approved the 2022 budget at its December 14 meeting in Tulsa.

GRDA plans to keep base rates level by continuing to pursue greater efficiencies in all areas of its operations, while retaining key employee talent. Other goals for the 2022 budget include continued efforts to efficiently utilize and leverage cash reserves to fund capital projects and increase major maintenance activities.

"We are excited to enter our sixth straight year without a base rate increase," said GRDA President and Chief Executive Officer Dan Sullivan. "Efficient operations and the continued productivity of our



workforce, even through the challenges of the pandemic, have been key."

GRDA Board Chairman Dwayne Elam echoed Sullivan's comments, saying the budget puts GRDA in a strong position to meet its goals in the year ahead, while also giving its customers the assurance that rates will remain consistent. "It continues to reflect GRDA's commitment to greater efficiency and responsiveness to customer needs."

The new budget will also allow GRDA to pursue some goals that were delayed in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. An expansion of customer programs and a possible refunding of existing debt are among those goals.

From the American Public Power Association

U.S. Power Sector's Use Of Water Continued Downward Trend

By Paul Ciampoli

The U.S. electric power sector's cooling water withdrawals fell 10.5% from 53.1 trillion gallons in 2019 to 47.5 trillion gallons in 2020, continuing the downward trend in withdrawals, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported on Dec. 17.

The decline has been driven by the increased use of renewable and natural gas-fired generation in place of coal-fired generation, as well as less use of once-through cooling technologies, EIA noted.

As the fuel mix has shifted to less water-intensive energy sources, the water intensity of U.S. power generation -- the average amount of water withdrawn per unit of electricity generated -- has declined from 14,928 gallons per megawatt hour (gal/MWh) in 2015 to 11,857 gal/MWh in 2020, EIA said.

It noted that thermoelectric power plants -- including coal, nuclear, and natural gas plants -- boil water to create steam, which then spins a turbine to generate electricity. Cooling water is passed through the steam leaving the turbine to cool and condense the steam. This step reduces the steam's exit

pressure and recaptures its heat, which is then used to preheat fluid entering the boiler.

According to EIA, U.S. thermoelectric plants are the largest source of U.S. water withdrawals, accounting for more than 40% of total U.S. water withdrawals in 2015.

The changing U.S. electricity generation mix accounts for approximately 80% of the downward trend in water withdrawals by the electric power sector.

EIA noted that natural gas-fired generation uses a more energy-efficient technology to produce electricity than coal and has a lower water withdrawal intensity than coal. Natural gas combined-cycle generation had an average water withdrawal intensity of 2,793 gal/MWh in 2020, compared with 21,406 gal/MWh for coal.

The share of renewable generation, which on average has a very low water withdrawal intensity, also significantly increased from 2015 to 2020.

The remaining 20% of water withdrawal reductions came from the reduced use of [once-through cooling systems](#).



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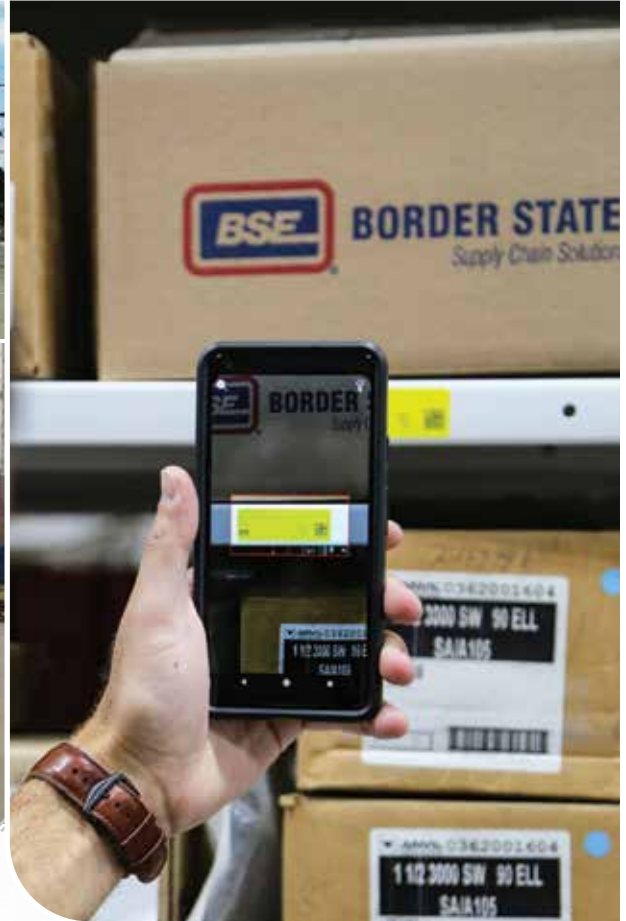
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- Multi-Commodity
- Voltage Monitoring
- Outage Alerts
- Scalable
- User-Friendly
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