

## Sustaining a Reliable Electric System



**Alena Brandenberger**  
*General Manager/CEO*

We've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." This popular adage is often used in conversation or a story when someone is about to do something foolish or risky. If they heed this advice, it means they did not commit to "one basket", but instead hedged their bets with multiple options.

This strategy is how I describe CNMEEC's common sense approach to the current energy transition. We know that consumer interest in renewable energy continues to grow. We've seen this trend here in New Mex.

Recent innovations and advances in renewable energy technologies have led to sharp decreases in costs, making renewables more feasible, accessible and scalable. Over the last few years, Tri-State G&T, our power provider, has adjusted our fuel mix by utilizing more renewables, and by 2024 50% of the electricity consumed within our cooperative family will come from renewables.

Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources at the same time that we're seeing fossil fuel plants taken off-line, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, we're seeing more pressure on the electric grid due to the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events and rising electricity demand.

### Competing Pressures

So how do we reconcile these challenges of grid pressure and a changing fuel mix? Solar and wind energy are certainly beneficial for the environment, but they are limited resources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7 to you and our community. To do this, we need reliable sources of power that will meet *all* the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world.

So where are we netting out? That's where our familiar adage comes into play. While utilization of renewables is increasing, we still need to incorporate other forms of energy in the mix to ensure reliable service. Remember, solar and wind are intermittent power sources. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its own challenges.

That's why we spread our eggs into multiple baskets. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources, fossil fuels and renewables to ensure reliability, resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

### The Bottom Line

Lowering the overall carbon footprint in this country means we're going to electrify more and more of our economy. Solar and wind power are an important part of a broader energy portfolio, but they are not available 24/7. In today's ever-connected world, people need power around the clock.

As our nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the economy, CNMEEC is working to anticipate, plan and respond to market trends and policy shifts. That's how we can power your home and our economy, while continuing to serve as your local energy provider.

# CNMIEC

## Energy-Saving Projects for the Weekend Warrior

Are you a weekend warrior? If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money, we've got a few project ideas for you, all of which can be completed in a day or less! Here are three energy-saving projects that you can easily tackle whether you're a weekend warrior pro or a DIY dabbler.

### Get smart about home cooling and heating.



Cooling and heating your home typically account for a large portion of energy bills. Smart thermostats can help keep your cooling and heating costs in check, with ENERGY STAR®-certified models saving about 8% on annual energy costs.

Now that smart thermostats are more affordable (as little as \$70!), This simple upgrade makes for a fun, efficient weekend project. Smart thermostats offer a variety of bells and whistles, but the average model will allow you to set custom temperature schedules, adjust the settings from anywhere (from your phone), and over time, learn your cooling and heating preferences.

Your new smart thermostat will come with step-by-step instructions, but this project typically involves shutting off your HVAC at the breaker panel, disconnecting/removing the old thermostat, installing the new smart thermostat and connecting it to your home Wi-Fi. Remember to carefully read the installation instructions before you get started.

### Go green and boost your greenery with a rain barrel.



If you've got a green thumb, you already know that rainwater is the best water for your outdoor plants. Rainwater is free of minerals, salts and treatment chemicals found in tap water or groundwater. It also contains helpful macro-nutrients to foster healthy plant growth.

Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to harvest large amounts of rainwater and reduce home water use, it's a win-win. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one rain barrel can save a homeowner 1,300 gallons of water annually.

Most residential rain barrels range in size from 50 to 90 gallons, so the size you purchase will depend on your watering needs.

The simplest way to install a rain barrel is positioning a plastic or wooden barrel directly under your gutter downspout. Basic piping may be required, but this is an easy way to harvest rainwater, and the barrel won't take up much space. Consider a cover for the top of your rain barrel to keep insects and small debris out of your harvested water.

### Create fresh savings with a DIY clothesline.



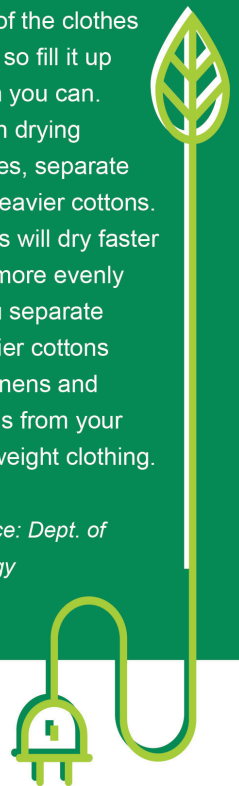
If you have enough outdoor space available, installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy. Not only will you save on dryer costs in the summer, you can also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home (which makes your air conditioner work harder). Additionally, air drying is much gentler on fabrics and will keep your clothes and linens

looking fresh longer.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for additional ways to save energy this summer? Your laundry room is a great place to start. Wash clothes with cold water, which can cut one load's energy use by more than half. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up when you can. When drying clothes, separate the heavier cottons. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Central New Mexico Electric  
Cooperative  
Phone (505) 832-4483  
Out of Area 1-800-339-2521  
[www.cnmec.org](http://www.cnmec.org)