

Quarterly Operation Round Up® Community Grants Awarded

Operation Round Up® is supported by KEC members who voluntarily “round up” their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar to help our neighbors in need. The extra pennies go into the Kootenai Electric Trust fund, which distributes grants to worthy causes in our community. Through this program, over \$1.2 million has been invested in our community. In November 2021, the Trust Board awarded Operation Round Up® grants to the following organizations:

- \$7,500 to the Community Action Partnership (CAP) for Project Share (see details to the right).
- \$2,500 to GEM Community Citizens Project Group/Hayden Senior Center to purchase groceries for their meals program.
- \$2,500 to St. Vincent de Paul to help purchase household necessities for homeless or low-income citizens moving into subsidized housing.

Members may “opt-out” or “opt-in” to Operation Round Up® in one of the following ways:

- On your billing statement.
- By logging in to SmartHub.
- By contacting KEC by phone, letter or email.

For applications and deadlines visit www.kec.com.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

KEC is accepting applications for \$2,000 academic and professional technical program scholarships. KEC members or their children who are either seniors in high school or currently enrolled in an accredited college, trade or training institution for fall 2022 or spring 2023 may apply. Online applications are due February 15, 2022. For details, eligibility and applications visit www.kec.com. Winners will be selected by the Kootenai Electric Trust Board.



KEC AND PARTNERS DONATE \$25,000

In late 2021, KEC, its lender CoBank and the Kootenai Electric Trust/Operation Round Up® program donated a combined \$25,000 to the CAP/Project Share program. These funds are available to KEC members who qualify for help paying their energy bills.

Photo above (from left): Paige Bingham, KEC Lead Member Services Representative; Dan Green, Kootenai Electric Trust Board Member; Jenifer Womack, CAP Energy Program Manager; Cheri Zao, Kootenai Electric Trust Board Member; Kimberly Spencer, CAP Community Services Manager and Kalynn Raugh, CAP Community Engagement Specialist.

WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Below are 10 KEC account numbers. If you find yours contact us at 208.765.1200 to receive a \$50 bill credit.
**1853937, 1851368, 1827890, 1700152, 1833204,
1386161, 1842392, 1302092, 1611452, 1363802**

KEC BOARD MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meeting dates vary—call Constance Felten at 208.292.3211 for details.

Employee Spotlight: Scott Davis

Scott Davis is the Vice President of Engineering and Technical Services and has worked for KEC for three years.

What made you interested in working as an engineer? How did you train for work in this field?

At an early age, I developed an interest in troubleshooting and making repairs or improvements as I worked with my dad on all kinds of projects. He worked for an electric utility as an engineering technician, and later got me interested in taking summer internship opportunities at the utility. He was a big influence in my decision to study electric power systems in college. After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering, I began my career with an electric utility and worked in various positions responsible for the design and operation of distribution, substation, transmission and generation systems. Even after 29 years of working with experienced engineers, taking additional classes, attending professional development seminars or technical conferences, the training has not stopped. This environment of continuous learning is something we promote at KEC, too.

What does a day look like for you as the Vice President of Engineering & Technical Services at KEC?

The typical day has me giving attention to a variety of capital projects, operations and maintenance of our substations, or specialty material and equipment needs. I oversee and work with a team of engineers, electro-technicians and a designer responsible for the analysis and planning of the power system, developing construction work plans and designing capacity and reliability improvement projects. Our group also performs meter testing, substation maintenance and other equipment inspections and condition assessments.

What projects is the Engineering Department working on right now?

The engineering department is currently working on a large project to build a new substation that will provide capacity to meet forecasted load growth and bolster reliability to our membership in the northern part of our service area.

Another large project for our group is the installation of a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. Phase I of the new SCADA system is to install system software and new hardware in all KEC substations by first quarter 2022. Once the



SCADA system is commissioned, it will provide KEC with real-time monitoring and control of devices on 37 distribution feeders across our entire service area. Advance work on Phase II of this project has begun and involves integrating SCADA with our mapping system and outage management system. The additional features provided by Phase II will allow the cooperative to better respond to outage situations, perform switching to re-route power, improve reliability and reduce wildfire risk.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

One of the biggest challenges we face in engineering is planning for new electrical infrastructure needed to serve the unprecedented growth in our community. Material lead time on some equipment is 18 months, so we must work diligently to forecast the needs for the cooperative and stay ahead of the growth.

I am also involved with various committees working on the design of the new KEC headquarters. It is a challenging project that involves a lot of thought and discussion with other employees. We are excited that our new facility will have a specialized area for the engineering department to configure equipment and test new technologies, as well as a SCADA control center and war room from which to operate the new SCADA system. Learn more about the war room on the next page.

What is the best part of your job?

One of the best parts of my job is the people I work with, and the collaboration that takes place with all other departments. The KEC staff is highly motivated and focused on doing things right to achieve our mission of providing our members with exceptional service and dependable power at competitive rates.



New HQ Update: War Room

For the next several months, we plan to provide updates on the new headquarters facility. The KEC team is currently working with our consultants on the architectural layout and engineering design. This month we'd like to feature the war room.

You might be asking yourself: what is a war room? A war room is a large conference room or collaborative space focused on keeping the lights on and used for emergency response. In KEC's case, this high technology space will be central to KEC's engineering and operations department. Four TV screens in the war room will display real-time SCADA data 24/7. The other four screens can display KEC's outage management system or be used for video conferencing. The war room is large enough to also be used for cross department meetings when not in use for emergency response. You can see renderings of the room above.



As mentioned in Scott's employee spotlight on the previous page, KEC has been working on the installation and deployment of a new SCADA system. We don't have a SCADA control center today and one of our goals with the new headquarters is to have a space for SCADA operators from which to control the system. The SCADA control center will also have a glass wall that can open up to the war room when involvement of other KEC staff is needed. When outages occur, our goal is always to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. As our substations and field devices communicate with the new headquarters, SCADA will provide the operators the status of feeder breakers and other devices. This means our SCADA operators will know what major devices operated during an outage so they can more quickly isolate problem areas, perform switching on the system, and restore power to as many members as possible until necessary repairs are made. The control center will also be used to remotely monitor our substations and equipment loading levels, voltages and power factor to increase system operating efficiencies.

Power Outage Reminders

Winter weather has arrived and that means the potential for weather-related power outages. Power outages are usually infrequent and brief, but there are times, due to the weather and acts of nature, when your electricity may be interrupted. KEC crews are on call 24 hours a day and ready to be dispatched throughout our service territory. Remember, stay away from power lines on the ground. Always assume downed lines are energized even if the lines are sagging or broken. Review the graphic below to learn more about our outage restoration process.

What you should do when the power goes out:

Report the outage using the SmartHub app or by calling 1.877.744.1055. KEC's outage management system will let you know if we are already aware of the outage and provide updates, such as estimated restoration time, if available. You may also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KootenaiElectric for updates or visit our outage map at www.kec.com.

Get outage alerts:

Text and email outage notifications are offered at no cost. To sign up, log in to your KEC account or download the SmartHub app. Visit www.kec.com/outage-center to watch a video about how to sign up.

If you have any questions, contact us at kec@kec.com or 208.765.1200.

