

# KCEC Monthly Newsletter



January 2025 Edition

## Message from the CEO

### KCEC Celebrates its Achievements in 2024 and Looks Forward to Making Progress in 2025.

As we approach the new year, we want to reflect on the accomplishments of Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) over the past year. We want to express our gratitude to our dedicated members, Board of Trustees, and employees for contributing to another successful year. We look forward to continuing our service in 2025. Throughout the year, KCEC has worked tirelessly to provide resilient and reliable services to the rural communities we serve. We are proud to highlight our progress in becoming one of the top cooperatives in the country. The key priorities for KCEC are essential to the organization's success and those of its affiliated companies. These initiatives and programs include:

#### **A Comprehensive Safety Program**

At KCEC, the safety of our communities and employees is our top priority. We proactively engage with our members to promote safety awareness, education, and protocols. Both inside and field employees undergo regular safety training to maintain a safe and healthy work environment.

#### **Strategic Operations and Tree Trimming Maintenance Programs**

KCEC recognizes the critical role of maintenance in ensuring resilience and reliability. With increasing extreme drought and weather events affecting KCEC's service area, the organization assigns three tree trimming and maintenance crews each year. Their primary focus is to minimize power and communication disruptions for our members. KCEC manages approximately 3,200 miles of electric and fiber optic lines within its service territory.

#### **Implementation of Microgrids Throughout KCEC's Service Territory**

Microgrids serve as standalone power systems designed to provide energy for local communities when electrical distribution lines are threatened by wildfires or during extreme weather events. KCEC is planning for the future of electrical distribution by strategically constructing microgrids in its service territory. These microgrid projects will enable rural communities to maintain power for critical infrastructure in emergencies. In 2025, KCEC will begin the construction of battery storage microgrid facilities in Penasco, Taos Ski Valley, and El Rito, NM, to offer on-demand energy solutions for its members. Additionally, KCEC intends to develop more microgrids in communities where power and communication are vital.

#### **Advanced Cybersecurity and IT Infrastructure**

Cybersecurity attacks pose significant threats to our nation and its leading companies and institutions. KCEC is committed to implementing robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard both our internal and external networks, as well as the privacy of our members. We are actively engaging with emerging technologies to reduce the risk of cyberattacks. Additionally, KCEC collaborates with the nation's top laboratories to ensure that our members and infrastructure remain secure against cyber threats.

#### **100% Daytime Solar & Beyond**

KCEC is making significant progress in developing its locally distributed renewable energy resources. Currently, KCEC operates on 100% daytime solar energy. This means that when the sun is shining, all KCEC members with electric service utilize solar power to energize their homes and businesses within our service area. All solar resources are locally installed in our rural communities. KCEC owns or operates 42 MW of solar generation and 16.25 MW of battery storage. KCEC is also working on additional projects to increase the capacity and generation of renewable energy within its service area. These projects include:

- Taos Pueblo (5 MW Solar and 5 MW Battery Energy Storage System - (BESS). The project began in 2022 and is expected to be completed in 2026.
- Amalia II (8.75 MW Solar and 8.75 MW BESS). The project started in 2021 and is projected to finish in 2025.
- KCEC Microgrid Project for Fire Mitigation\*\* (7.5 MW BESS). Project locations include Taos Ski Valley, Penasco, and El Rito. The project began in 2023 and is expected to be completed by 2026.

#### **KCEC's Green Hydrogen Solution for Long-Term Energy Storage**

KCEC's Green Hydrogen Distributed Project Model will harness water resources from reclaimed mine sites and wastewater treatment facilities. These distributed projects are designed for long-duration energy storage and have the capability for load peak-shaving. The generation of green hydrogen and its capacity can be applied in various scenarios. In September 2024, KCEC was selected as a finalist for a \$95.6 million award from the Empowering Rural America (New ERA) Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service, for an Innovative Green Hydrogen Energy Project in New Mexico. This project is expected to create approximately 200 local jobs during the construction phase and will contribute to revitalizing the economy of the Village of Questa.

#### **Connecting with Communities and Members**

This year, KCEC has donated more than \$120,000 in student scholarships, community projects, and sponsorships to meet the needs of our members. KCEC is a vital part of every community it serves and recognizes the importance of supporting its members.



*Luis A. Reyes Jr.*  
*Chief Executive Officer*

KCEC provides electric services to over 30,000 members, high-speed fiber optic broadband to more than 14,200 customers, and propane services to approximately 3,600 customers. KCEC has successfully applied for and received roughly \$241.6 million in grants for its members. The organization is committed to ensuring that its members receive safe, affordable, and reliable services. As we move towards the new year and embrace exciting opportunities, KCEC wants to express its gratitude to the communities and members we serve.



## Kit Carson Propane

Happy New Year!

As we look back on 2024, Kit Carson Propane would like to express our gratitude to our customers and employees for a successful year. KCP has continued to deliver affordable propane to the surrounding areas while meeting the demands of our customers. We offer emergency after-hours service, a “keep-full” program, an in-house payment assistance program, and customized payment plans tailored to our customers' individual needs.

In June, we hosted our annual Community Appreciation event in Taos, Questa, Penasco, and Ojo Caliente. During this event, we offered discounted cylinder fills, free cylinder recertification, and had vendors on site while providing the community with snacks and drinks. Additionally, we ran a sale for our residential customers in July and August.

KCP remains actively involved in the community. We participated in events such as Touch-a-Truck and Trunk-or-Treat, and we sponsored the Balloon Fiesta, Taos Rodeo, and Taos Hunting Events. We also contributed propane to The Paseo Project and the Questa Tree Lighting, along with donations to several local groups.

KCP continues to grow while providing safe and friendly service. We are grateful that you have chosen us as your local propane provider. We pledge to maintain competitive prices and excellent customer service. Wishing you a happy and healthy 2025!

Sincerely,  
Shannon Vigil, KCP Manager



### Giving to Community. 2024 KCEC's Annual Toy Drive

This year, KCEC proudly donated more than 310 gifts to children in need. These gifts were distributed to schools and organizations within our service area, and the children who received them were filled with joy. The gifts were generously provided by the KCEC Board of Trustees and employees. KCEC remains committed to being an active part of the communities it serves.



## Kit Carson Internet

Happy New Year to all,

We would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each of our loyal customers and members. We would also like to extend our thanks to our hardworking employees, whose dedication has made 2024 a successful year. Without the Kit Carson Internet team, we wouldn't be where we are today in the industry.

Thanks to this commitment, Kit Carson Internet is experiencing significant growth.

This past year, we finalized the design for our new expansion towards Abiquiú and down to Gallina, which construction is set to begin in early 2025. This expansion is funded by a RUS/USDA Reconnect III grant totaling \$23.6 million. The grant will help us extend broadband services to other rural communities in Northern New Mexico that desperately need them. As the project progresses, we will provide updates on its milestones and developments.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited about the new upgrades to our network and the enhanced capabilities they will bring throughout the year. Customers can expect improved circuit reliability, more diverse pathways, upgraded electronics, and our unwavering commitment to providing service 24/7, 365 days a year—something the competition struggles to match.

We believe that 2025 will be our best year yet. Once again, we wish everyone a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Best regards,

Jose Lovato, KCI Manager

## KCEC Board of Trustees

|                     |                |                      |            |
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| Arturo Rodarte      | Trustee        | Ojo Caliente         | District 3 |
| Russ Coyle          | Trustee        | Angel Fire           | District 5 |
| Sylvia Vigil        | Trustee        | Upper Llano San Juan | District 4 |

Next Board of Trustee Monthly Board Meeting will be held January 28 2024, at 9:00 am.