



Photo by David Montoya

Your monthly report from Your Socorro Electric Cooperative, Inc.

City Council's Decisions Shortchange City Coffers

Some of you may have seen a recent article about the City of Socorro and its costs to operate a public electric charging station. The article once again begs the questions – how is the City of Socorro making financially sound decisions for its citizens?

There are many good reasons to install charging infrastructure in your community and business, including supporting emissions free transportation, attracting tourists, visitors, tenants and shoppers, and adding value to your property. But like any other infrastructure investment decision, whether large or small, it is critical to perform your due diligence before you make final investments. Due diligence was clearly once again something that the City of Socorro did not perform when making EV charging infrastructure investments.

The recent El Defensor Chieftan article discusses the impact of demand charges on customer costs but provides no perspective or information on these charges. Utility demand charges, usually applied to customers who have higher peak loads such as commercial and industrial customers, are based on the maximum amount of power that a customer used in any interval (typically 15 minutes) during the billing cycle. These higher peak loads mean that an electric utility must always have the resources in place to provide this power, whether it is consistently used or not.

The City of Socorro and other commercial cooperative customers, such as the hotels owned by the Socorro mayor, pay demand charges on many of their properties. And though the article stated that PNM does not charge demand charges for their commercial electric charging customers, the company has a special electric charging rate which includes all costs including demand charges. The Tesla charging stations installed at some of the hotels in our area also incur demand charges; the difference is that Tesla directly pays electric utilities for all charging costs so this is invisible to the location hosting the charger.

Charging station decisions involve thousands of dollars of investment, but Socorro Mayor Bhasker's idea of taking over part of the Socorro Electric Cooperative's system would cost millions of dollars. The lack of any sophisticated financial models, the lack of understanding how to operate an electric utility, the refusal to acknowledge the majority of SEC's members opposition to the Mayor's proposal, and the overall lack of due diligence, just as has occurred with the charging stations, should be of concern to citizens and city councilors. Once again, councilors need to be asking the tough questions.

Information That Should Have Been Considered

Many of you have heard about the growth of electric vehicles in the auto industry in the United States and throughout the world. Part of supporting the growth in the industry is the installation of electric vehicle charging stations throughout communities. There are currently more than 700 charging stations throughout New Mexico and more on the way.

If you are a business owner or local government organization, deciding to install an electric charging station is like any other investment – you need to do think through what you are trying to achieve and do your due diligence on what it will cost. Here are some factors to consider:

Purpose:

Think through why you want to install electric charging stations and how much you can spend on each EV charging station. Some businesses just have stations for their own business fleets and some offer charging to the public. Some offer free charging to customers, some charge customers at a break-even point, and others develop charging rates that will earn revenue.

Charging Power and Time:

There are three levels of charging stations, which vary based on the amount of power distributed at the station. Level 3 chargers, known as fast chargers, use the most energy and allow for the quickest charging. They also cost the most and often require electric utility upgrades. Level 1 and 2 chargers are less costly, provide slower charging times, and may or may not require electric infrastructure upgrades. See <https://www.transportation.gov/rural/ev/toolkit/ev-basics/charging-speeds> for more information.

Costs:

The cost of purchasing and installing an electric vehicle charging station is just the initial cost involved. It is important to meet with your electric utility first to ask if infrastructure upgrades will be required, what electric rates and fees would be involved in operating a charging station. And just like other equipment, you will need to discuss costs for equipment maintenance, warranties, and fees with your EV charging station provider.

CONTACT US

WEBSITE

www.socorroelectric.com

PHONE

800-351-7575 or 575-835-0560

PAYING YOUR BILL

Check out the SEC App!



Android



Apple

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

REPORTING AN OUTAGE

Before reporting a power outage, please check the circuit breakers in your house first. If you still do not have power after checking your breakers, please call **575-835-0560, 800-351-7575 or 855-881-8159**.

If you get a busy signal, it is an indication that someone else is experiencing an outage as well; however please continue to call, this will help us pinpoint the problem.

MEMBER SERVICE/BILLING

Marilyn Madrid - Member Service Supervisor
575-835-0560, Ext 1504

ACCOUNTING

Jimmy Capps, Chief Financial Officer
575-835-0560, Ext 1503

LINE EXTENSIONS

Eng Dept 575-835-0560, Ext 2004, 2501, 2503

MARKETING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Jerrid Williams - Director of Communications & Public Affairs - 575-835-0560, Ext 2502
jwilliams@socorroelectric.com

SEC Contractor Alamon to be Conducting Pole Inspections

Your Socorro Electric Cooperative Inc., has contracted with Alamon to perform pole inspections in the following areas.

- Fence Lake
- Techado
- Pie Town
- Quemado
- Quemado Lake



BUILDING THE FUTURE NOW

Pole inspections are scheduled to start at the end of September or early October. We will continue to update the members in the areas where the crews will be working when the work begins. Each vehicle will be labeled with Alamon's logo along with SEC Contractor Magnet.

Vegetation Management Update

Crews working to trim trees and vegetation in rights-of-way are currently in the following areas and are expected to remain there for the next few weeks.

- Magdalena Ridge Observatory Line
- Rio Grande River Crossings

SEC reminds members that you may see vehicles and crew members from Windy Tree cutting trees near existing power lines. Vehicles will be marked with their company name and an SEC contractor placard.

August 2024 Board Report...

- Board Policies 112, 113, 114, 116 were reviewed and approved.
- Board approved purchase of new digger truck.
- Board approved the 2024 Audit Engagement Agreement.

All board agendas, minutes, and videos can be found on our website at:

www.socorroelectric.com/board/resources