



## A Message From The CEO By Roger Andrade

### *The Value Of Electricity*

As I sit here in the early hours of the morning, I find myself realizing just how dependent we are on electricity. The sun is not out yet, but I am still able to flip a switch, turn on a computer and type away. Electricity has become an intrinsic part of our daily lives. From our homes, businesses, industries, and technology & innovation in general, much of what we enjoy today would not be possible without the availability of sustained electricity. Electricity is one of the greatest technological innovations of mankind.

At home, electricity has, by all accounts, made our everyday lives much easier. The use of electrical appliances makes our everyday chores much simpler and more efficient. Our refrigerators allow us to preserve and maintain food products. Electricity has also made our lives much more comfortable and entertaining. It gives us the ability to control our home's temperature at the touch of a dial, as well as the ability to turn on the television for some entertainment. All of these great advantages we usually take for granted. We do not give the value of electricity a second thought until we experience a power outage. This reminds me of an anecdote from about five years ago. One of my closest friends had his first child and was sharing with me the joys and trials of becoming a new parent. He shared with me how, in his mind, his life changed when he first used a pacifier for his son. His words were something to the effect of, had he known how much a simple gadget like that would simplify his care of his son, he would have paid 100 times its cost. Obviously, no one would be crazy enough to pay hundreds of dollars for a pacifier; but the message there was the value he perceived from that little contraption. In my mind, electricity has much more value than the example of the pacifier because of the multiple uses in our lives. It is a necessity, like clean air and water, and one that should probably not be sold for profit in my estimation.

In commercial and Industrial applications, electricity has taken us leaps and bounds in efficiency. Just this week I had a conference call with a prospective new member of our cooperative, and he referred to us (obtaining grid power) as his easy button. Their operations are currently run on gas generators, due to necessity, but we are in the process of finalizing the agreement to upgrade and extend line to serve their needs. Another example of the value of electricity is its use in medical facilities. In general, our care has improved significantly because of the electrical equipment used to provide health care; some examples include equipment such as x-rays, ECG, and defibrillators.

There are numerous other applications where electricity has improved our daily lives. It is sometimes easily lost on us that for about the cost of a coffee a day at a national chain, or even a pack of cigarettes a day, we have access to a commodity -- a necessity, really -- that improves our lives as a whole.

Electricity is, very simply, "the lifeblood of a modern society". This statement, which I wish I could take credit for, was borrowed from an article in Forbes Magazine. It succinctly states what I've been trying to convey -- that it enhances our quality of life in so many ways. Rio Grande's role is, and always has been, to make sure our members have the same access to the modern necessities others enjoy -- and that is a pretty good value for about the price of a cup of coffee.