

Communiqué

The **AMEA Communiqué** is a monthly publication of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority
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MISSION STATEMENT

AMEA's mission is to provide for our Member communities a reliable and economical source of electric power, enabling them to preserve and enhance the benefits of municipal utility ownership for their citizens and the electric customers they serve. We strive to offer services that our Members need and can adapt to provide the best value for their communities and customers.

Kelly urges members to be "at the barricades" in advocating for public power

The American Public Power Association (APPA) is hard at work advocating for the public power community across a range of issues including defending the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and pushing back against threats to power marketing administrations.

But Association members also need to be “at the barricades” in helping to make sure public power’s collective voice is heard both inside the beltway and across the country, said Sue Kelly, president and CEO of the Association, on June 19 at the Association’s National Conference in Orlando, FL.

The conference was opened by Andrew Boatright, the Association’s board chair and deputy director of Missouri’s Independence Power & Light, who noted that approximately 1,500 participants were attending. “I think that’s close to a record,” he said. The conference also heard from Greg Lee, president of the Orlando Utilities Commission.

In her remarks, Kelly said that since the Association’s national conference in Phoenix in 2016, “a lot has happened. We survived a downright crazy presidential election and the outcome of that was a shock to many, no matter what your political affiliation.”

She added, “We are not dealing with the same issues in DC that we would have had the election gone the other way, but that does not mean we are idle.” The Association is “defending public power on different issues that we had not planned.” The Association is “defending on tax-exempt status of municipal bonds as Congress and the Administration consider tax reform.



Sue Kelly

See Kelly, Page 2

Kelly

Continued from Page 1

As you well know, bonds are the primary tool that public power utilities use to fund new infrastructure.” Eliminating or undercutting the tax-exempt status of those bonds “increases our borrowing costs,” which in turn is reflected in the electric rates of “every customer we serve regardless of their income level. It is a regressive tax.” The Association is working with other public power groups and larger coalitions of bond issuers and their allies, like Municipal Bonds for America, “to get our message out to Congress and to the Administration,” Kelly noted.

“Even if we are spared in the initial proposals, and it looks like we may be, that does not mean we are not going to be put on the table later,” the Association’s president and CEO emphasized. “We have to keep hammering on our core message — you cannot be for infrastructure and against tax exempt bonds,” Kelly told conference attendees.

Advocating for PMAs

The Association is also advocating for power marketing administrations and the customers that PMAs serve.

President Donald Trump’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget request proposes to divest the transmission assets of three PMAs — the Western Area Power Administration, the Bonneville Power Administration and the Southwestern Power Administration.

“This would threaten their ability to provide reliable, cost-based power to public power utilities and rural electric co-ops, our cousins, in 34 states. We have urged Congress to reject this misguided proposal,” she noted.

Physical and cyber security

In addition, the public power group is “highlighting your needs and your key role in keeping the grid resilient and safe against cyber and physical attack,” Kelly said, noting that “this is the number one issue that keeps me up at night.”

The Association is building strong industry-government partnerships “that will help us be better prepared.” The Association has a three-year cooperative agreement funded by the Department of Energy to “help us help you improve your cyber and physical security. We’re using that money to work with you. We conduct table-top exercises, we’re doing on-site evaluations, and we’re developing tools and technologies to help you address this threat.”

Saying it was inexplicable that the Trump Administration’s 2018 budget proposes to cut the funding for the agreement, Kelly noted the Association is working to keep it.

While on the topic of cyber security, Kelly gave a shout out to the Burlington Electric Department. In late December, the Vermont public power utility detected suspicious internet traffic on an isolated laptop. “It promptly reported that finding to

See Kelly, Page 3

Kelly

Continued from Page 2

the federal government in the spirit of the industry-government cyber partnership that we've been working so hard to develop," Kelly noted. But the information was leaked and subsequently misreported in the media as a hacking of the grid. Burlington "worked tirelessly to correct these false reports and they did not rest until media and policymakers got the story right," Kelly said. "And when it was over, Burlington said it would continue to cooperate with the federal government because it's the right thing to do."

Members need to be "at the barricades"

At the same time, "we can't do this alone," Kelly said. "Many of you have been working with us. You've been visiting and writing to your elected representatives, you've been stirring up action on social media, and you've been educating your communities and decision makers on these key issues. We need all of you at the barricades. Your voice matters."

Noting that former Sen. Everett Dirksen once said, "When I feel the heat, I see the light," Kelly underscored the point that good leaders "turn up the heat so our lawmakers will see the light."

She recalled being at a forum this spring where several Congressional staff members discussed tax reform. "They said that everything — including tax-exempt financing — might be at risk in a tax reform package," Kelly said. But one of the staff members went on to say, "I don't want a hundred mayors in my office."

When Kelly heard that, she thought to herself, "Well, that's what we've got. We've got one hundred mayors. That's the ability that we have — to bring mayors, city council members, the utility managers — to the offices of our elected officials to turn up the heat and help them see the light and we're going to need to do that this year, ladies and gentlemen, so I hope you will assist us in that effort."

The evolving profile of retail customers

Meanwhile, Kelly believes that over time, more and more retail customers are going to want to use technology that monitors and controls their electric usage. "They're going to want to tell Siri or Alexa, 'pay my electricity bill,'" she said. These customers are going to want to invest in their own on-site power and storage facilities, so that they never experience an outage and "to keep up, we as utilities are going to have to up our game. And to do this, frankly, we're going to need new business partners and new skills."

She reminded conference attendees that the Association can help its members when it comes to improving retail customer service through a variety of tools including conferences and summits, training, cyber and physical security tabletop exercises, and communications tools and resources to promote public power in member communities. **(Source: APPA Public Power Daily, June 20, 2017)**

AMEA hosts Cyber and Physical Security Preparedness Exercise

AMEA hosted a half-day DOE/APPA Cyber and Physical Security Preparedness Exercise for Members this month at the AMEA headquarters in Montgomery.

The event was a tabletop-style exercise where facilitators presented actual cyber incidents. Members worked together to manage the evolving cyber threat scenario, said Mark Ennis, Manager of Compliance and Distribution Services.



Anthony Hurley, Associate Managing Director, Utility Practice, Witt O'Brien's, facilitates the exercise.

"During this exercise, Members discussed the roles, responsibilities and overall decision-making process within their city/utility when responding to cybersecurity incidents," said Ennis. "They also talked through actions they may take at their city/utility to improve the effectiveness of their cyber risk management and emergency response programs."

The target audience for this exercise included supervisory, managerial, Operational Technology (OT) (e.g., SCADA) and IT personnel within AMEA Members.

AMEA hosts first Safety Symposium for Members in May

AMEA hosted its first Safety Symposium on May 16 and 17 at the AMEA headquarters in Montgomery. The Symposium focused on lineworker safety. Identical programs were presented each day to allow as many lineworkers as possible to attend, said Mark Ennis, Manager of Compliance and Distribution Services.

The event also included a vendor expo, which provided attendees a wide range of products and services to help them in their everyday operations.

Speakers included Fred Clark, AMEA President & CEO; Mark Ennis, AMEA Manager of Compliance and Distribution Services; Tracy D. Moore, Founder, Highline Hero Foundation; and Jody Fuller, comedian, speaker, writer and soldier.

(See related photos on Page 5)

Highlights of AMEA Safety Symposium



(Clockwise) David DeLee, Electric Superintendent, City of Lanett, and Kevin Johnson, Line Foreman, Dothan Utilities, are shown with speaker Tracy D. Moore, Founder, Highline Hero Foundation, following her presentation; some 160 electric personnel were on hand May 16 and 17 for the first AMEA Safety Symposium in Montgomery; Joe Wolchina, City of Fairhope Electric Department, visits with Cody Pannell of Snap-On during the vendor expo; and 10 vendors participated in the first AMEA Safety Symposium at the AMEA headquarters in Montgomery.

Register now for Webinars

An internet connection and a computer are all you need to participate. As a member of AMEA, you have access to live and recorded webinars at no cost to your utility. Register today at www.PublicPower.org/Academy and click on webinars. Enter coupon code **AMEA** to take advantage of this opportunity.

- Public Utility Governance Webinar Series
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Did you know that as an AMEA Member, you have **FREE** access to over 70 live and recorded webinars on hot topics in the electricity industry?

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For more information, please contact Lisa Miller, AMEA Manager of Communications and Marketing, (800) 239- 2632, Ext. 118, or lmiller@amea.com.

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FREE! 2017 WEBINAR SERIES



Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) is partnering with **Hi-Line Engineering** to provide the following 2017 Webinar Series **FREE** to our AMEA Member Organizations.

2017 Remaining Webinar Dates and Subjects		\$	✓
1.	July 11 – Solar Design - The goal of the webinar is not to teach how to design a solar system, but to understand the concepts and NESC articles that pertain the solar systems. This webinar specifically addresses AC/DC inverter requirements, sizing both AC and DC conductors, voltage drop limitations, grounding requirements, interconnection requirements and overcurrent protection methods.	Free	
2.	August 8 – Distributed Generation Interconnection - The presentation provides a detailed review and application of IEEE Standard 1547 for interconnection of solar systems as well as other types of prime movers. The discussion will include screening techniques to help speed the process, as well as how to analyze new DG units from 5 watts to 3MW.	Free	
3.	September 12 – Techniques for Reducing System Losses - This presentation will cover the cause of losses both at peak (kW) and over time (kWh), as well as accounting for unmetered sales. A benchmarking methodology will be provided to compare your system losses to similar electric systems. The webinar will present mitigation techniques to address loss reduction.	Free	
4.	October 10 – Understanding Conductor Characteristics - This presentation will discuss the effects of sag and tension on conductors from initial sag to final sag, how the inelastic deformation of the conductor affects the final sag values, and methods of verifying sag at initial installation. The webinar also discusses the practical application of sag tables to identify the sag and tension values for initial sag.	Free	
5.	November 14 – Understanding Distribution Grounding - This webinar addresses the safety goals and describes approved methods for effectively grounding the system neutral and other non-current carrying equipment. Different types of grounding electrodes are covered which provide options for achieving a well-grounded system. The rules for grounding guys and insulating guys are also addressed including secondary guys and span guys. Equipment to be grounded is covered along with common methods used by utilities.	Free	

Please check all or the individual webinars you are interested in, complete the information below, and email to: jennifer@amea.com - 334-387-3502 - 80 TechnaCenter Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117

Company Name _____ Company Contact _____
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July Webinar Topic: **Solar Design**

Tuesday, July 11th
Solar Design

Solar systems are being installed by residential utility customers which will be operated in parallel with the utility system. It is important to have an understanding of the electrical design of these systems. The goal of the webinar is not to teach how to design a solar system, but to understand the concepts and National Electric Code articles that pertain the solar systems. This webinar specifically addresses AC/DC inverter requirements, sizing both AC and DC conductors, voltage drop limitations, grounding requirements, interconnection requirements and overcurrent protection methods.

Course Outline:

- 1. Understanding the Inverter Requirements**
- 2. Conductor Capacity and Voltage Drop Limitations**
- 3. Grounding Requirements**
- 4. Overcurrent Protection**
- 5. Interconnection Requirements**

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