



# THE TAOS NEWS

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## My Turn

### Let's go forward not backward

Jason Weisfeld

I was proud to be a member of the Kit Carson Electric Cooperative until I read of the proposed rate increases. If Kit Carson needs more profit in order to function, then all members should support the more progressive and fair method of increasing rates per kilowatt-hour, not an increase that discriminates against the most conservative users and rewards those who use electricity inefficiently or large-scale users. Kit Carson Electric has offered wind energy for years, has now teamed up with UNM to install solar panels (that bring electricity to my daughter's preschool as well as UNM Taos and the Taos grid), is one of the great advocates for bringing more renewable energy to our community and the state by taking on Tri-State in a heroic David vs. Goliath battle for the betterment of our whole region. Why then, is Kit Carson discriminating against its most frugal user?

As a fifth-grade teacher, who works hard to impress upon my students the importance of conserving our resources for the benefit of future generations, it would be challenging to explain the reasoning of the rate change. How would Kit Carson Electric explain to my students why they should buy wind energy credits or install active solar systems, if they will just be charged more per month because they conserve energy?

Charging frugal energy users more per month than those energy users that use more or waste electricity is backward thinking. Should I start wasting electricity? I could leave my windows open during winter, leave my lights on all the time and still have the same bill.

Kit Carson should be encouraging conservation not discouraging it. Is this the same forward thinking Kit Carson Electric of the past?

What we need from the leadership of our cooperative is a change in their proposal.

If people use less electricity, they should pay less. This is the progressive direction we need.

If the cooperative needs more profit (a whole other issue) then it should just increase its rates per kilowatt-hour of usage for all members. This is the only fair solution.

Please write a letter to Kit Carson (following their very bureaucratic format for protest) and if need be, follow-up with a letter to the Public Regulation Commission. We, who conserve energy, need to be heard.

P.S. I just read that right after the Taos County Commission officially scolded Kit Carson Electric for increasing its rates in these difficult economic times, Taos County is hypocritically considering increasing the rates of those of us who haul our own trash, while reducing the cost to those who use a service.

Why not apply for grants to provide scales at each loading station, weigh our garbage and charge us by the pound?

Thereby encouraging reduction of waste and conserving resources — a win, win situation.

Taos County residents: Let's work together to help Kit Carson Electric and the Taos County Commission to encourage conservation. Let's go forward not backward.

*Jason Weisfeld is a Taoseno, father, husband, teacher, musician and small scale farmer/rancher.*