



News from Alaska Power Association

2008 Annual Meeting Special Edition

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Polar bears and power people



It's not every day that one has the opportunity to view polar bears while you attend an annual meeting. The Alaska Power Association membership was treated to this experience and many more memorable ones at our annual meeting last month in Barrow, Alaska.

The host utilities for the APA annual meeting were Barrow Utilities and Electric Cooperative, Inc. and North Slope Borough Power & Light. The hospitality and marketing efforts of both organizations attracted more than 100 electric utility CEOs, directors, commissioners and employees to meet in Barrow to discuss industry challenges and opportunities, shape energy policy, and share information.

Alaska Power Association members were officially welcomed with opening remarks from North Slope Borough Mayor Edward Itta and City of Barrow Mayor Michael Stotts. General session speakers included Senator Donny Olson, Representatives Kurt Olson and Reggie Joule, and Regulatory Commission of Alaska Chairman Robert Pickett.

The estimated economic impact of the annual meeting on the Barrow community was approximately \$100,000. APA members filled nearly all of the local hotel rooms and many stayed at Iisagvik College where several of the meetings were held.

Barrow Utilities and the North Slope Borough provided meeting sponsorships along with many other organizations that support the mission of Alaska Power Association to assist its members in accomplishing their goals of delivering electric energy and other services at the best value to their consumers.

Some of the annual meeting [presentations](#) are available for

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viewing on the APA web site.

Until next time,
Marilyn Leland
Executive Director



Barrow pictures provided by Jaime Matthews and Sharon Crisp of Copper Valley Electric Association.

Kohler career honored with APA's highest level award

Meera Kohler, Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Inc. President and CEO, received the Mason Lazelle Achievement Award at the Alaska Power Association 57th annual membership meeting August 14 in Barrow, Alaska. The award is presented to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to electrification efforts in Alaska.



The award was presented to Kohler by Brad Reeve, President of the APA Board of Directors, and Marilyn Leland, APA Executive Director, at the trade association's awards banquet.

Reeve said, "After coming to work for Cordova Electric in 1979, Meera Kohler has worked hard to advance the issues of importance to Alaska electric consumers. Her unique combination of experience of holding utility management positions in rural Alaska and the Railbelt gives her a keen

statewide perspective. She is a sought-after expert by lawmakers, regulators and the media on a wide range of utility issues, especially the Power Cost Equalization program that helps keep the lights on in Bush Alaska."

Reeve added, "She is well regarded as a tireless advocate for rural energy issues. Her effective lobbying efforts have channeled state and federal dollars to improving the quality of life for AVEC members in 53 Alaska villages and for the many other communities that are part of the Power Cost Equalization program."

Originally from India, Kohler immigrated to the United States in 1976. She lived in Cordova until 1990, which is where she began her career in the electric utility industry. She joined Cordova Electric Cooperative in 1979 and was appointed Manager of Administration and Finance in 1983.

In 1990, Kohler became General Manager of Naknek Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative serving the communities of Naknek, King Salmon and South Naknek in Southwest Alaska. In late 1997, she was appointed by the Mayor of Anchorage to the position of General Manager of Municipal Light & Power, the largest municipal electric utility in Alaska.

Since May 2000, Kohler has been the President & CEO of Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Anchorage. The cooperative serves more than 7,000 consumers in 53 villages scattered throughout Alaska, encompassing one third of Alaska's rural population.

Speaker Harris receives public service award from industry

Representative John Harris (R-Valdez), Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives, received the David P. Hutchens Public Service Award from Alaska Power Association in recognition of his leadership on behalf of Alaska's electric consumers and their utilities. The trade association announced the award at its 57th annual membership meeting in Barrow, Alaska on August 14.

The David P. Hutchens Public Service Award is presented to individuals outside the utility industry who have provided exceptional public service in the interests of electric consumers in Alaska.



The award was announced by Brad Reeve, APA Board President, at the association's awards banquet. Reeve said, "Tonight, we honor a policymaker who has worked hard to ensure that Alaskans will have access to affordable, reliable electric power from a variety of resources. He has consistently been accessible to our industry and he has taken our recommendations into consideration when developing legislation to benefit electric consumers."

"A Teamster who has called Valdez his home since 1957, Speaker John Harris has proven himself to be an advocate for electric consumers in the Copper Valley Electric Association service area and throughout the state," Reeve said. "His commitment to affordable energy includes co-sponsoring House Bill 152 that established a renewable energy grant recommendation program and a renewable energy fund."

The award is named after Alaska Power Association's first executive director, David P. Hutchens, who worked with utility leaders and public officials for 18 years to improve the affordability and reliability of electric service for consumers in Alaska.

HEA retiree lauded for exceptional service

The Alaska Power Association membership recognized the contributions of **Rick Porter** with the Hatcher-Williams-Turkington Employee Award for exemplary service to his electric cooperative and his community. Porter recently retired from a 30-year career with Homer Electric Association, Inc. He was nominated by nearly 50 of his fellow employees at the member-owned electric cooperative.



The award was announced by Brad Reeve, Alaska Power Association Board President, at the association's 57th Annual Membership Meeting in Barrow, Alaska August 14.

Reeve said, "For the past 30 years, Rick Porter guided the development of Homer Electric's information services department as the cooperative grew from 10,000 meters to nearly 30,000. While Rick's expertise and knowledge in the information services field is extensive, personal attributes certainly set him apart as an outstanding

employee. Everyone who worked with him at HEA will attest to his unwavering patience and dedication. Rick has been a leader in his church for many years, taking on various duties that resulted in a better community."

The APA award is named after Robert Hatcher, former board member of Kodiak Electric Association; Fred Williams, board member of Copper Valley Electric Association; and Robert Turkington, former board member of Homer Electric Association, Inc. All are past recipients of the prestigious Mason Lazelle Achievement Award, the highest level award presented by the electric industry trade association.

Safety success records spotlighted at annual meeting

Nine Alaska electric utilities were honored by Alaska Power Association for having excellent safety records in 2007. The awards were presented August 14 at the trade association's 57th annual membership meeting in Barrow, Alaska.

Five utilities received Alaska Power Association Safety Awards for demonstrating the best safety records during 2007 in their respective categories. The criteria for APA Safety Awards includes a calculation that combines the cost of workers compensation claims with the rate that such claims occur per hours worked at the utility.

- Category 1: **Golden Valley Electric Association, Inc.**
- Category 2: **Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
- Category 3: *(Tie)* **Kotzebue Electric Association**
and **Naknek Electric Association, Inc.**
- Category 4: **Yakutat Power, Inc.**

The following seven utilities were recognized with Alaska Power Association Safety Achievement Awards for having exceptional records in preventing worker injuries and reducing lost-time injuries. The following utilities experienced zero lost days due to injuries or illnesses:

City of Galena Electric Utility
Cordova Electric Cooperative, Inc.
INN Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Inside Passage Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Kotzebue Electric Association
Naknek Electric Association, Inc.
Yakutat Power, Inc.

APA reelects board officers



The Alaska Power Association membership reelected board officers at its 57th annual membership meeting August 14 in Barrow, Alaska.

Officers serve two-year terms.

President: **Brad Reeve**, General Manager, Kotzebue Electric Association

Vice President: **Robert Wilkinson**, Director, Four Dam Pool Power Agency

Secretary: **Fred Williams**, Director, Copper Valley Electric Association

Treasurer: **Meera Kohler**, President & CEO, Alaska Village Electric Cooperative

The following individuals hold director positions on the Alaska Power Association Board:

Hugh Chumley, Alaska Electric & Energy Cooperative

James Posey, Anchorage Municipal Light & Power and Alaska Railbelt Energy Authority Joint Action Agency

Ben Frantz, Barrow Utilities & Electric Cooperative

Walt Wilcox, City of Galena

Tim Barnum, City of Seward

Dan Winters, City of Unalaska

Jim Nordlund, Chugach Electric Association

Joe Cook, Cordova Electric Cooperative

Dan Osborne, Golden Valley Electric Association

David Carey, Homer Electric Association

Tinny Hedlund, INN Electric Cooperative

Jodi Mitchell, Inside Passage Electric Cooperative

Gordon Gould, Kodiak Electric Association

David Jedlicka, Naknek Electric Association

John Handeland, Nome Joint Utility System

Jerry Cogdill, North Slope Borough Power & Light

Henry Strub, Nushagak Cooperative

Jim Nelson, Thomas Bay Power Authority

Robert Foote, Unalakleet Valley Electric Cooperative

Scott Newlun, Yakutat Power

Meetings & events calendar

NRECA Region IX Meeting: September 15-17, 2008, St. George, Utah

2008 Rural Energy Conference: September 16-18, 2008, Alyeska Prince Hotel, Girdwood, Alaska

APA/AIE December Meetings: December 5, 2008, Embassy Suites, Anchorage, Alaska

NRECA Annual Meeting: February 11-18, 2009, New Orleans, Louisiana

APA Legislative Conference: March 10-11, 2009, Baranof Hotel, Juneau, Alaska

APA/AIE Annual Meeting: August 5-7, 2009, Kenai-Soldotna, Alaska

[▶ APA Meetings and Events](#)

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