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RURAL ELECTRIC MAGAZINE

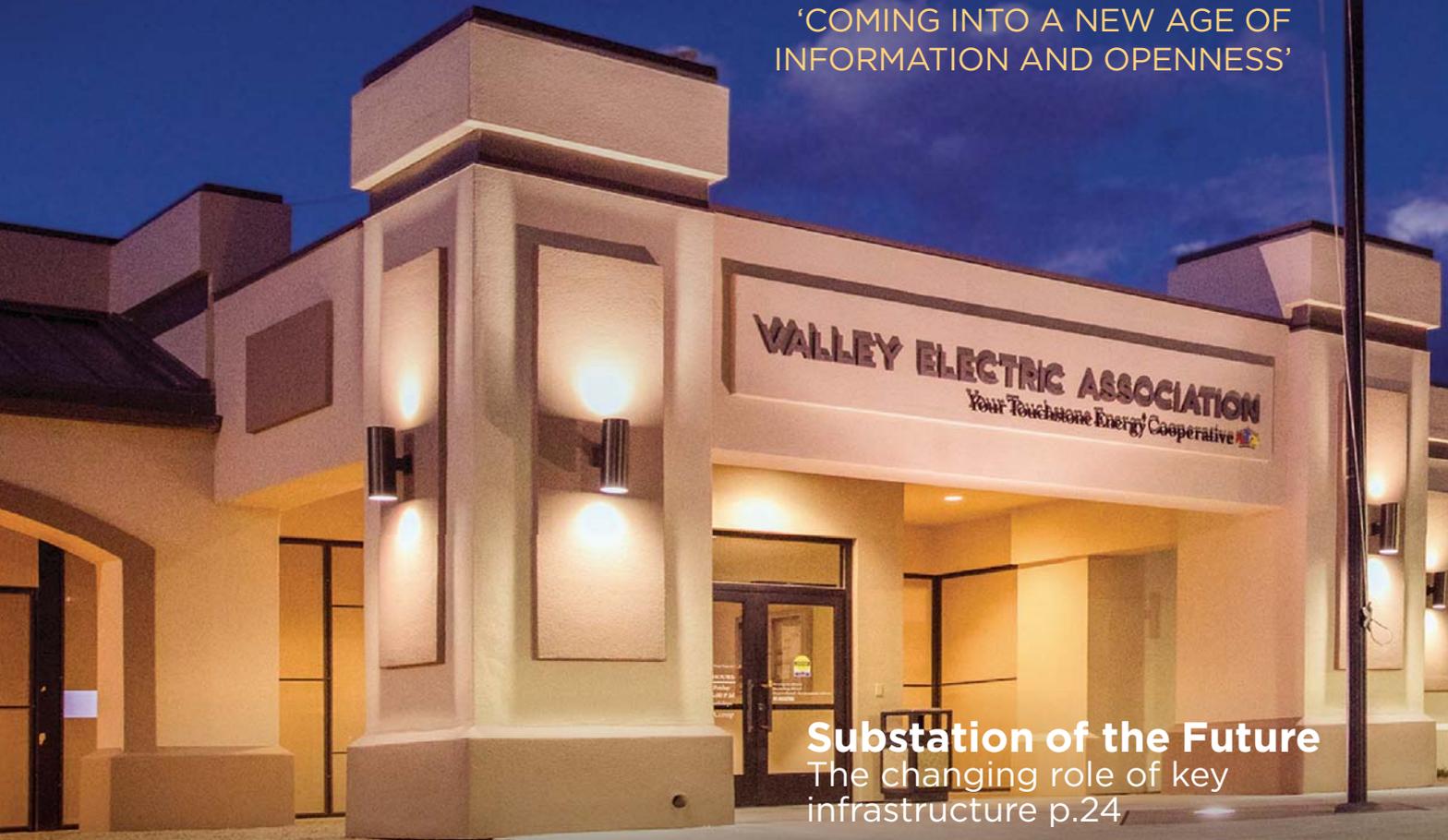


JANUARY 2020
AN NRECA PUBLICATION



REBUILDING TRUST

'COMING INTO A NEW AGE OF
INFORMATION AND OPENNESS'



Substation of the Future

The changing role of key
infrastructure p.24

Battling Opioids

For Rex Butler, it's personal p.28



Photo courtesy ARCOS LLC

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative based in Bastrop, Texas, is upgrading its outage response and restoration system.

BY TODD H. CUNNINGHAM

BLUEBONNET BOLSTERS POST-STORM CAPABILITIES

Sharp growth in Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's customer base—rising about 500 meters monthly, up from 1,500 annually six years ago—has required the Texas co-op to enhance its outage response and restoration capabilities.

Bluebonnet's existing system depends on manual callouts, with control center operations staff juggling an online calendar system, phone calls, and lists to find available workers to respond to after-hours outages, a process that can take as much as an hour.

But the co-op is switching over to the Callout and Scheduling Suite from ARCOS LLC (arcos-inc.com) to automatically bring in journeymen, substation technicians and helpers, and eventually contractors during after-hours events.

Control center operators can launch a callout from a keyboard or mobile device, then return to preparing crews for what they can expect on site.

"We believe the ARCOS software will have time-saving advantages for us from the get-go," says Paul Herzog, the co-op's operations superintendent.

Contact: Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Will Holford, 512-289-5982; ARCOS, Bill Perry, 716-652-1762.

NEW MEXICO CO-OP PLANS FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Kit Carson Electric Cooperative's construction of three new solar energy projects will add 6 MW of distributed energy resources to its renewable portfolio by year's end. This will allow the New Mexico co-op to reach 50 percent of its daytime solar energy goals and close in on its aim of achieving 100 percent daytime solar energy by 2022.

Working with Guzman Energy (guzmanenergy.com), Kit Carson has already developed several solar projects that aggregate about 10 MW on its system, accounting for one-third of daytime summer peak load.

"Kit Carson is continuing to meet our commitment to members for a more affordable, reliable, renewable, and resilient future," CEO Luis Reyes Jr says. "These projects will push the co-op to 50 percent renewables on our system while integrating the inclusion and partnership of all of our members."

The co-op continued its renewables drive by requesting proposals for additional solar projects that integrate battery storage, which sets up the next phase of the Kit Carson-Guzman Energy effort to begin in 2020 and expected to be completed the following year.

Contact: Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Michael Santistevan, 575-758-2258; Guzman Energy, Kathleen Staks, 720-778-2009, ext. 109.