

POST INDEPENDENT

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Garfield Clean Energy continues to evolve

Local government partnerships key

John Stroud
Post Independent Staff

Add economic development

and jobs creation to Garfield Clean Energy's ongoing mission to help make area residences, small businesses, schools and local government facilities more energy efficient.

One focus of the organization's work over the past three years has been the economic benefits

it can bring. But it's a major reason the newly revamped Garfield Clean Energy (GCE) Authority, a collaborative effort among local governments in Garfield County, continues today.

The Garfield Board of County Commissioners last week joined five local municipalities and the

Garfield County Public Library District in signing an intergovernmental agreement to keep the organization going.

"Small business, in particular, is a large sector in Garfield County, and has sought our help in many instances for energy audits and retrofits," said Greg Russi, a

New Castle town trustee and current chairman of the GCE board. "We can help both individuals and businesses make huge strides in lowering their energy bills, which is fundamentally a bottom line decision," he said.

ENERGY A3

Share your New Year's resolution

See it in the Post Independent Jan. 1

Heather McGregor
Post Independent Editor

The Glenwood Springs Post Independent is asking Garfield County residents — past and present — to share their New Year's resolutions.

We will publish as many readers' resolutions as possible in the Sunday, Jan. 1, 2012, edition of the Post Independent.

"The new year is a time when we can start fresh on a goal in our life," said Jenna Weathered, Post Independent publisher. "Sometimes that means an improvement in our own life, such as losing weight or getting more exercise. It can also mean a commitment to volunteer or participate more in the life of our community."

"Whatever your resolution is, we want to hear about it and share it with the readers of the Post Independent," she said.

The deadline for submitting resolutions is 5 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 26.

We need your first and last name, age, community of residence, occupation and a daytime phone number, followed by your New Year's resolution in 50 words or less.

We won't publish your phone number, but we might call you about taking your photo.

Resolutions can be submitted through the Post Independent website, by email, or by mailing or bringing a hard copy to our office.

Here are the details for submitting:

Website: Visit www.postindependent.com/newyears to reach a landing page. Click on the word "Submission" in the upper right bar to get to the online form.

Email: Write an email that includes your first and last name, age, community of residence, occupation and a daytime phone number, followed by your New Year's resolution in 50 words or less. Send it to news@postindependent.com.

Mail: Write a letter that includes your first and last name, age, community of residence, occupation and a daytime phone number, followed by your New Year's resolution in 50 words or less. Mail it to: New Year's, Post Independent, 824 Grand Ave., Glenwood Springs, CO 81601.

In-person delivery: Write a letter that includes your first and last name, age, community of residence, occupation and a daytime phone number, followed by your New Year's resolution in 50 words or less. Bring it to the Post Independent office at 824 Grand Ave., Glenwood Springs. The office is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, but will be closed on Monday, Dec. 26.

HIGH-SPEED HEIDI



Jeff Caspersen Post Independent

Heidi Vosbeck runs Sunday's Day of Infamy Snowshoe Race at Babbish Gulch. Vosbeck finished second among the women at the race, which turned 20 years old with this year's competition. See sports on A16 for a story on the race and visit the staff photo galleries at www.postindependent.com for more images.



EDUCATION

WELDING

The welding program at Rifle High School teaches students the basics of arc welding and mig welding and serves as a dual enrollment class through CMC. **PAGE A7**

INSIDE BUSINESS

BANKER'S HOURS

Pat Dalrymple says if you think the real estate finance landscape is bad now, it was even worse in 1979. **PAGE A8**

SPORTS

BRONCOS

Matt Prater's 51-yard field goal 6½ minutes into overtime gave the Broncos a 13-10 victory over the stunned Chicago Bears on Sunday. **PAGE A17**

LOCAL

PIPELINE PROPOSAL

The Bargath LLC pipeline company has proposed a 22-mile gas pipeline that would run from the Divide Creek area under the Colorado River to processing facilities near Parachute. **PAGE A3**

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Gas pipeline would bore beneath Colorado River

BLM seeks public comment on plan by Bargath, Williams

John Colson
Post Independent Staff

RIFLE — The Bargath LLC pipeline company has proposed a 22-mile gas pipeline that would run from the Divide Creek area under the Colorado River to processing facilities near Parachute.

Bargath, also known as

Williams Midstream, is being split off from Williams Production RMT in a deal that will take effect in early January, according to Williams spokeswoman Donna Gray.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is seeking public comments on the pipeline proposal, according to BLM spokesman Dave Boyd. Comments are due Jan. 20, 2012.

The Kokopelli Phase II pipeline is to be a buried 16-inch line that would run from a compressor station in Dry Hollow, south of Silt, to a compressor in Rulison, near Anvil Points on the

north side of the river, according to the BLM.

The pipeline would cross 7.6 miles of BLM-managed lands, less than a mile of Forest Service land, and nearly 14 miles of private property.

"The pipeline would be bored under the Colorado River to avoid impacts to the riverbed, aquatic wildlife and the adjacent riparian ecosystem," stated the BLM release.

Boyd, contacted by email, told the Post Independent that "boring the river has been done before in this area multiple times." He said Encana Oil & Gas

(USA) was the most recent energy company to do so, under the Una Bridge near Parachute, on private property.

Williams is also proposing to install two six-inch water lines along a 4.1-mile section of the proposed Kokopelli trench to reduce water truck traffic in the areas involved, according to the BLM release.

Gray said the company hopes to begin construction of the pipeline next spring, if the necessary permits are issued.

She wrote in an email that the pipeline is primarily intended to carry gas gathered from Williams

wells in the Kokopelli Field south of Silt. The pipeline could also carry gas from other operators' wells.

The proposal and an explanatory map are available online at <http://tinyurl.com/BLMpipeline> (case-sensitive shortened web address).

Written comments to the BLM are to be sent to the Colorado River Valley Field Office, 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO, 81652.

Electronic comments also will be accepted via the BLM website.

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Painkillers, sedatives stolen from Basalt Fire Department

Alleged theft was by someone with access to secured drug vault

Scott Condon
The Aspen Times

A "significant amount" of pain killers and sedatives was stolen from the Basalt Fire Department's main station in El Jebel between Nov. 10 and Nov. 27, department officials said Friday.

The department discovered on Nov. 27 that the drugs, which included morphine and Valium, were taken from an electronic vault. The drugs are stored at the station because the fire department also provides the midvalley emergency medical response and ambulance service.

Officials launched an internal investigation immediately after the discovery to make sure there wasn't a paperwork error or some other discrepancy, according to Fire Chief Scott Thompson. When no type

of discrepancy was found, the Eagle County Sheriff's Office was notified the next day, on Nov. 28.

The majority of the drugs that were stolen had expired and were being stored until they could be properly disposed, Thompson said. There are strict federal regulations on disposal procedures. A small amount of drugs that could be used by the department on ambulance calls were also taken.

Thompson said no patient was placed in danger or given an inadequate amount of drugs because of the theft.

The incident has stung the department because it appears to be an inside job. "There's somebody that I can't trust," Thompson said. "I have to resign myself to that fact."

Each employee with access to the drugs has an individual code for the electronic drug vault. Each use of a code is recorded. There was no sign of forced entry into the safe, so a valid code was used.

"Due to the facts, it is reasonable to believe that it is someone with specific knowledge of policies and procedures of the department," said a statement pre-

pared by the fire department.

It is unknown if there was one theft or multiple thefts. The department has taken steps to prevent additional thefts. The electronic vault was the only place that was "compromised," according to Thompson.

Everyone with access to the drug vault voluntarily took an urinalysis as part of the investigation. No one tested positive for the drugs that were stolen, Thompson said.

The Drug Enforcement Administration and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation are assisting Eagle County in the case. Eagle County Crime Stoppers is offering \$1,000 for information that leads to a conviction in the case. The Basalt and Rural Fire Protection District's board of directors approved adding \$4,000 to the reward, board chairman Bob Guion said.

Eagle County Crime Stoppers can be called at 1-800-962-8477 or contacted online at www.tipsubmit.com.

"We're not trying to keep this from the public," Guion said. In fact, the department wants to enlist the public's help find-

ing the person or persons responsible for the theft.

Thompson said this is the first time he knows of that drugs have been stolen from the department in his 28 years affiliated with it as a volunteer and fire chief. He said the department depends on the trust of the public. "We can't have a thief among us," he said.

The fire district employs 13 paid staff and scores of volunteers. The number of employees with access to the drug vault wasn't released.

Thompson said the theft was disclosed in a monthly meeting for volunteers on Tuesday. One attendee noted it was probably the quietest meeting ever held because of the bad news.

The theft from the Basalt Fire Department was the second time this fall that a public agency had drugs stolen. Aspen Valley Hospital's Clinic in Snowmass Village was burglarized in October and 1,000 pills in a secure box were taken, according to police. That theft is unsolved.

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ENERGY FROM AI

That translates to jobs, not only for the contractors doing the work, but through the money saved by businesses, which can then afford to expand and hire more employees, Russi said.

A more recent effort by GCE involves working with energy companies, local governments and others to develop and promote compressed natural gas as a cleaner-burning transportation fuel.

Garfield County can be "ground zero," Russi said, in the development and utilization of compressed natural gas as an alternative fuel for government vehicle fleets and public transportation systems, as well as private vehicles.

Garfield Clean Energy grew out of the former Garfield New Energy Communities Initiative, an organization formed when Garfield County received one of 14 Colorado Department of Local Affairs grants in 2008 for local clean energy projects.

Since that time, numerous community based solar electric installations and other projects have been carried out, from Carbondale to Parachute. Energy audits were also done on many local government and public school buildings, resulting in efficiency improvements being made through the use of grant

money and local matching funds.

Working with the Carbondale-based nonprofit Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER), the partnership continues to provide education, technical assistance, program development, marketing and financing to take advantage of energy-saving opportunities.

This fall, GCE has been working to line up support among its partner governments through the intergovernmental agreement, which will help bolster support for various grants and other funding opportunities to continue the work.

The agreement itself does not include a funding share from the partner governments, though individual governments can contribute.

And, where Garfield County previously served as the fiscal agent for grants, the new "authority" status for GCE allows it to act as its own fiscal agent.

"I do feel that this effort supports economic development," Garfield County Commissioner Tom Jankovsky said at the Dec. 5 BOCC meeting when commissioners unanimously approved the IGA.

"Not just for the potential with compressed natural gas, but there are a number of small businesses



Kelley Cox Citizen Telegram

This solar "flower" project was overseen by the Garfield New Energy Communities Initiative, the forerunner to Garfield Clean Energy. The solar flowers will generate electricity to power the lights and heat at the Parachute Interstate 70 rest area restroom facility.

that employ people related to energy efficiency and renewable energy," Jankovsky said. "Energy efficiency puts more money in people's pockets locally, instead of big utility corporations. For those reasons, I support it."

Clean energy is a fairly new application of the inter-governmental model, Russi said.

"Garfield County is easily the

leader among rural counties in Colorado," he said. "We have been recognized by many of the larger counties and cities, who are now looking to us as a model."

In addition to the county commissioners, the Glenwood Springs and Rifle city councils, and town boards in Carbondale, New Castle and Parachute have signed on with GCE.

The town of Silt is still to be approached, Russi said, and GCE is awaiting a Jan. 12 vote by the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority board to join as a partner.

"Transportation is a very important element of clean energy, and the regional collaborative effort," Russi said.

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