

Powering Stability

Energy Outreach Colorado advances energy advocacy and supports Coloradans in crisis statewide.

“**A**ccess to energy is a basic right, but in Colorado, 1 in 4 households struggle to meet their essential household energy needs,” states Jennifer Gremmert, executive director of Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC). “This energy insecurity can mean reducing or going without food or medications to pay utility bills—leaving homes at unhealthy temperatures or facing disconnection.”

Leading a wide-ranging network of industry, state, and local partners, EOC is the only statewide nonprofit that raises funds to help low-income Coloradans afford their home energy bills. To protect the economic health and physical well-being of all Coloradans, EOC partners with public, private, and government partners—as well as caring individuals—to ensure everyone can both afford and access energy to power their home. Since its founding in 1989, EOC has saved low-income community members millions of dollars through lowered energy use and has invested more than \$300 million in affordable energy programs.

“Our mission is to support, stabilize, and sustain Coloradans to afford their energy needs,” Gremmert explains. “Households can thrive when energy challenges are tackled through immediate and long-term relief strategies, which is why we’ve taken a multipronged approach to addressing the energy crisis throughout our 30-year history.”

Immediate and Long-Term Relief

“Many hardworking individuals are just one crisis away from falling behind on energy bills and being unable to catch up on backlog payments,” Gremmert explains. “They’re terrified their electricity will be cut off, and they don’t know where to turn for help.”

For these vulnerable individuals, EOC offers a variety of solutions ranging from immediate relief, like Bill Payment Assistance, to long-term solutions including solar-powered garden subscriptions. Simply by calling EOC’s dedicated helpline, individuals and organizations can connect with assistance resources administered through local partner agencies and statewide programs. “While EOC does not accept applications directly, we work closely with partners on the local level—such as churches and nonprofits—to process applications, determine eligibility, and authorize bill payments,” Gremmert explains.

Once referred by a local partner agency, income-qualified households can access both emergency Bill Payment Assistance for past-due energy bills and Colorado’s Affordable Residential Energy Care program—which provides energy-efficient upgrades at no cost to both homeowners and renters alike—in participating counties.

“One truly exciting innovation is our Community Solar program, which currently connects 1,300 income-qualified households to community solar garden subscriptions throughout the state, increasing energy savings by an average of 20% while helping Colorado communities lower energy costs and increase renewable energy production,” says Gremmert. By 2024, the program is projected to have over 10,000



participants and will be producing more than 50 megawatts of solar power—making it a model for transformation throughout the United States.

At local, state, and national levels, EOC advocates for sustainable solutions that empower energy consumers. Through advocacy with lawmakers, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, and utility companies, EOC ensures costs, rates, and energy decisions are fair.

“We act as a voice for the vulnerable and voiceless, making certain everyone has affordable access to vital resources,” Gremmert says. “Everyone deserves to affordably maintain their home and focus on living instead of merely surviving.”



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**1-866-HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435)
303-825-8750 | energyoutreach.org**