

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 19, 2021

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PNM meter reader saves customer's life

Heightened senses and being in the right place at the right time prevented a dire outcome

(Albuquerque, N.M.) – Very few know the streets in town as well as a PNM meter reader. Each one walks an average of 8-10 miles per day and drives 20-40 miles per day, collectively, reading about 567,000 electric meters statewide per month. One particular PNM meter reader recently saved a life by being in the right place at the right time and by being aware of his surroundings.



Luis Apodaca, a PNM meter reader in the Silver City area, repeatedly encountered two large protective dogs at a customer's property with the gate locked, blocking access to an electric meter in her backyard. After speaking with the homeowner, she committed to putting the dogs away and unlocking the gate the day her meter was scheduled to be read each month.

Last month, when arriving at the homeowner's property to read the meter, something seemed off to the PNM meter reader. One of the dogs was out and seemed to be in distress. With his senses already heightened, the meter reader heard strange sounds coming from what sounded like a person in need of medical attention. At that moment, the meter reader observed the homeowner face down, with a severe facial injury, laying in a pool of blood, coherent but in need of immediate help.

The PNM meter reader observed the protective dog stepping aside, describing it as if the dog knew that help had arrived. The PNM meter reader immediately called 911, grabbed his first aid kit from his company vehicle, safely administered first aid at the direction of 911, reassured the woman she was not alone and that paramedics were on their way, holding her hand telling her he cared about her. Once first responders arrived on scene, she was transported to the hospital and the PNM meter reader continued his route.

The first week of January, when the same meter reader arrived at the woman's home, she came out asking if it was him that helped her. After the PNM meter reader confirmed it was him, she expressed profound

appreciation for him and explained that she had fallen that day, suffered a brain bleed, fractured two ribs, broke her lower jaw, fractured her eye socket, broke her nose, and was later airlifted to a different hospital.

“I care about my community, the people in it, and we help each other,” said Luis Apodaca, PNM meter reader. “I’m just glad I was in the right place at the right time and she survived this terrible incident.”

Protective dogs, watchful homeowners, locked gates, inattentive drivers, inquisitive customers, and inclement weather are just a handful of things meter readers encounter each and every day. To be a meter reader, you have got to have a hard-working spirit, a love for the outdoors, be fast and accurate with great knowledge of the community. PNM meter readers are essential workers in the face of COVID, they remain committed to serving customers by safely obtaining meter readings from New Mexico homes and businesses during the pandemic, producing accurate customer billing, and maintaining a current average reading accuracy of 99.84 percent. Their safety record remains strong as they continue to forge ahead while practicing COVID safety protocols.



About PNM

With headquarters in Albuquerque, PNM is the largest electricity provider in New Mexico, serving more than 530,000 customers in dozens of communities across the state. PNM is a subsidiary of PNM Resources, an energy holding company also headquartered in Albuquerque. For more information, visit PNM.com.

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