The 353-megawatt Gadsby Plant is named for George M. Gadsby, a former president of Utah Power & Light Co., now Rocky Mountain Power. Units 1, 2 and 3 were commissioned between 1951 and 1955 on a 2,500-acre site in Salt Lake City. Units 4, 5 and 6 – simple-cycle natural gas turbine units – were added in 2002. PacifiCorp owns and operates the plant.

The original three steam units were built to burn coal, oil, natural gas or pitch, a waste product from nearby 1950s oil refineries. Prior to 1987 when the plant was furloughed for economic reasons, Gadsby was fueled primarily by coal. We retooled Unit 3 for natural gas exclusively and put it back into operation in 1991, followed by Units 1 and 2 in 1994. Together, the three units are capable of generating 231 MW.

The natural gas in Units 1, 2 and 3 boils water to create steam that is 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit and has 1,500 pounds of pressure per square inch. Pipes carry that steam to the turbine to turn its blades to engage the generator to produce electricity.
The spent steam is sent to the condenser, where cool water tubes transform the steam back into water. That water is returned to the boiler to again be heated into steam to repeat the cycle. Excess heat is sent to large cooling towers where the heat is transferred to the atmosphere, creating white plumes often seen rising above the plant.

Our three newer, simple-cycle natural gas turbine generators are designated Units 4, 5 and 6. Together, they are capable of generating 120 MW.

Based on aircraft jet engine technology, each gas turbine unit consists of a gas compressor, fuel combustor and a gas expansion turbine. Air is compressed in the gas compressor and energy is added to the compressed air by burning gas in the combustor. The hot, compressed air is expanded through the gas turbine, which drives both the compressor and an electric power generator.

PaciﬁCorp is one of the lowest-cost electricity producers in the United States, providing approximately 1.7 million customers in the West with reliable, efficient energy. We operate as Rocky Mountain Power in Utah, Wyoming and Idaho, and as PaciﬁCorp Energy in Oregon, Washington and California. PaciﬁCorp’s electric generation, commercial and energy trading, and mining functions are operated as PaciﬁCorp Energy.

We are serious about our commitment to the communities in which we do business. So are our 35 Gadsby Plant employees. They are active in their communities and – as a group – contribute to the health of those communities through local initiatives and through our Community Giving Campaign, which includes the United Way and other human services organizations.