

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2023



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 521
La Junta, CO 81050-0521



STREET ADDRESS

27850 Harris Road
La Junta, CO 81050



ph 719-384-2551
tf 800-332-8634
fax 719-384-7320
web secpa.com



facebook.com/secpaonline

Our primary mission is to provide high-quality, reliable electric service at a reasonable cost to our members, improve their quality of life through new technologies and services, be a visible and active member of the community and serve our members with respect, courtesy and responsiveness.

SOUTHEAST COLORADO
POWER ASSOCIATION IS AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND
EMPLOYER



BEAT THE PEAK

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO
KEVINB@SECPA.COM



KEVIN BRANDON

If you look around your home, you likely have more devices and equipment that require electricity than ever before. Our connected lives are increasingly dependent on more electricity to function. At the same time, as demand for electricity rises, Southeast Colorado Power Association (SECPA) must deliver an uninterrupted 24/7 power supply — regardless of market conditions or other circumstances.

As you would expect, based on your family's habits, electricity use fluctuates throughout the day. SECPA must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy needs of all members during times of highest energy use or “peak hours.” These peak times are typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes.

What you may not know is that electric utilities, including SECPA, typically pay more for electricity — either from a power plant or from another utility with excess power — during those morning and evening “energy rush hours.” In addition, the demand for electricity is even higher when it's especially hot or cold outside and heating and cooling systems must run longer to warm or cool our homes.

If the “peak times” concept is a bit puzzling, here's an easy way to think about it, when a lot of people want the same thing, it's more expensive. When they don't, it's

cheaper — like a bargain matinee or an “early bird” special at a restaurant.

During peak periods when the cost to produce and purchase power is higher, we encourage you to take simple steps to save energy, such as turning down your thermostat a few notches, turning off unnecessary lights and waiting to use large appliances during off-peak times.

You can also save energy by replacing old, inefficient appliances and HVAC systems with new high efficiency models. Please visit our website at secpa.com to see all the rebates available to help with these major purchases. When we all work together to reduce energy use during periods of high electricity demand, we can relieve pressure on the grid and save a little money along the way.

Another benefit of this time-of-use approach to electricity use is reducing the peak power-supply costs that affect every SECPA member. This is particularly important as energy costs have risen across the U.S. Collectively, everyone conserving energy and making small changes can truly make a difference.

Remember that taking simple steps to save energy throughout the day and shifting energy-intensive chores to off-peak hours is a smart choice for you and our community.



YOU COULD BE A WINNER THIS MONTH

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill. **Last month's winner was Tim Beebe.**

Don't buy from strangers

BUY LOCAL



Put your money where your heart is — here at home. Call 800-657-7149 for details on our internet speeds up to 1000 Mbps and other services. ♥



27850 Harris Rd, La Junta, CO 81050
800-657-7149 • www.SECOM.net

Cormierstone Group © 2022

5 Ways to Save This Winter



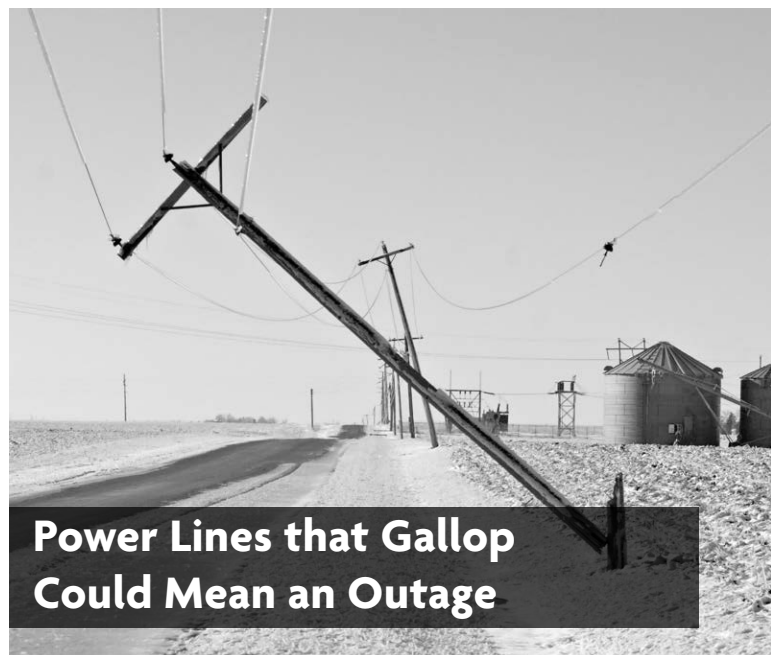
Mind the thermostat. If you have a traditional heating and cooling system, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. Consider a smart or programmable thermostat for additional savings.

Get cozy. Add layers of clothing for additional warmth, and snuggle up under your favorite heavyweight blanket.

Don't block the heat. If your air vents or heating elements (like radiators) are blocked by furniture or rugs, your home isn't being adequately heated.

Take advantage of sunlight. Open window coverings during the day to let natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to block the chilly night air.

Block air leaks. Seal windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping to improve indoor comfort and decrease the amount of energy used to heat your home.



Power Lines that Gallop Could Mean an Outage

Galloping power lines may sound ridiculous, but they really do occur and can be dangerous. These lines can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause blinking lights or a power outage, or even fall to the ground.

“When wet snow or ice builds up on power lines, it changes the shape of the normally round and aerodynamic line, giving it an uneven (asymmetric) profile,” CREA Director of Safety Jenna Hirsch explains. “High winds can then start to move the lines up and down in a bouncing motion which is called ‘galloping.’ If the lines swing together this can result in a fault or short that can cause an outage.”

Once galloping starts, there is not much a power company can do to alleviate it until winds die down. This is why many power lines have objects such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These devices are placed on power lines specifically to help reduce galloping and prevent potential danger.

If you encounter galloping lines, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact Southeast Colorado Power Association. In addition to the possibility of power outages, there is a danger of the lines or other electrical equipment breaking loose and falling, or of ice being dislodged from the lines and falling to the ground.

Hirsch adds, “Galloping lines aren't the only danger in a wind storm. Strong winds can break power lines or utility poles, damage equipment, and blow trees or their limbs into lines, which can cause power outages or interruptions. Damaged lines can also fall to the ground where they can energize nearby objects and risk accidental contact with people or vehicles.”

Storms at any time of the year can pack damaging winds. SECPA urges you to pay attention to and be aware of weather forecasts so that you can be prepared and not get caught off guard by a wind or ice storm.

Save the Date!

You're Invited to SECPA's
Annual Meeting

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

Eads Community Building
Eads, CO 81036

Registration 5 p.m.

Dinner 6 p.m.

Meeting 6:45 p.m.

BOARD DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

SECPA Board positions up for election in 2023 are:

- District 4: Western Baca County & Eastern Las Animas County
(incumbent is Director Randy Phillips)
- District 5: Otero County (incumbent is Director Kevin Karney)
- District 7: Crowley County (incumbent is Director Clint Anderson)

Cash prize drawings throughout the meeting!



SECPA \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS

Southeast Colorado Power Association (SECPA) is once again making scholarships available to area high school Seniors. Students' parents must be members of SECPA.

SECPA is offering ten \$1,000 scholarships and also administers, through Tri-State G&T, an additional two \$1,000 scholarships. Eligible applicants must be a high school Senior graduating in 2023 who plans to attend a two or four-year college, or trade or other non-traditional secondary educational institution.

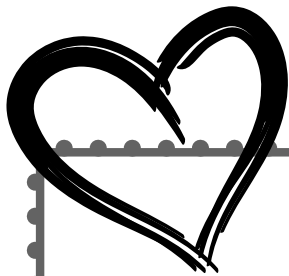
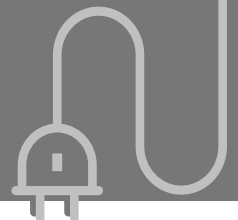
Students interested in applying for the scholarships are asked to submit the completed SECPA application form available on the SECPA website at www.secpa.com/scholarships. Applicants will be required to provide a school transcript, letter of recommendation and a short essay on the benefits of cooperative membership. (*WIN Tress Gadash acct.14036901030)

Applications for the SECPA scholarships are due no later than FEBRUARY 13, 2023. For additional information, please visit the SECPA website or contact Debbie Howard at 719-383-1314.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment such as printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.

Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting.

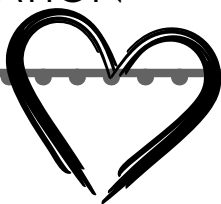


**WE LOVE
OUR CO-OP
MEMBERS!**

*Happy
Valentine's Day*

FROM

SOUTHEAST COLORADO
POWER ASSOCIATION



Know the Right Thing to Do Around Power Lines: Stay in the car or cab and call 911

Seventeen-year-old Mary Gehrig was driving home from a friend's house on a stormy June night in North Dakota. Although some cars had pulled over to wait out the rain and wind, Mary was close to home and thought she could make it.

Around 25 minutes into her 30-minute drive, Mary turned onto the county road that would take her home. Although there was near-zero visibility due to the storm, which had become much more severe than originally forecast, she noticed two white lines in the distance. As she got closer, she realized that those lines were across the road, in her path, and they were anything but small.

"I realized I was not going to (be able to) drive over it," Gehrig recalls. She slammed on the brakes and her car struck the first of the objects lying across the road, one of two high-voltage transmission power lines. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's electrical system was immediately damaged, and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

The next thing Mary did was pick up her phone and call her parents. When her dad heard that there was a downed power line involved, he told her to stay where she was, remain in the car, and call 911.

Fire Chief Rich Schock, who was part of the team at the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a pad-mount transformer or other related equipment, drivers should remember these safety tips:

- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility worker say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.
- Call 911 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.

Exiting the vehicle is the last resort and should be attempted only if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.

To watch Mary's full story or to learn more, visit bit.ly/3j5WmGX.

LOVE YOUR PETS? Keep them Safe Around Electricity

You do all you can to keep your pets healthy: You take them to the veterinarian for checkups, feed them well and ensure they are up to date on vaccinations. After all, for many people, pets are part of the family.

Two-thirds of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own at least one pet, according to the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey. The survey was conducted by the American Pet Products Association, and the numbers are up 11% from 1988.

There is something else you can do for your pets, and that is to keep them safe around electricity. Here are some tips:

- ♥ Puppies and other pets love to chew on electrical cords. Keep cords out of sight or hidden with a cord cover. Provide teething or play alternatives
- ♥ Watch your pet around dangling or sagging cords, including phone or tablet charging cables. Unplug charging cables once your devices are charged. Not only do they draw a small amount of energy when not in use, but the dangling

cords are just begging to be played with

- ♥ Watch where you place lamps and other plugged-in items. Lamps can be a fire hazard if they are knocked over, especially if they have halogen bulbs
- ♥ Do not leave your pet alone around items that get hot: curling irons and straighteners, an outdoor grill, a portable heater and other electric appliances, including cooktops.



Pet proof your home much like you would for a baby or toddler. If you suspect your pet has been shocked or burned, take it to the vet right away. Owners may not realize a pet has been shocked until a few hours later when it has trouble breathing. Other symptoms include ulcers in the mouth and lesions on the tongue and gums.