

# SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2024



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**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



# HOW EXTREME WINTER WEATHER IMPACTS RELIABILITY

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO | [KEVINB@SECPA.COM](mailto:KEVINB@SECPA.COM)



KEVIN BRANDON

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times — in the morning and early evenings — and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Southeast Colorado Power Association, (SECPA) we work closely with Tri-State Generation and Transmission in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch. But the electric grid is much larger than SECPA and Tri-State.

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens — which is quite rare in this area — the grid operator for our region of the country could call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid and SECPA would inform you about the situation.

SECPA and Tri-State take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather. These steps include regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts, and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family, and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down a few degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature.
- Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens, and dryers. For example, start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller counter top appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation. Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs. In addition to saving energy, setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can also reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy. Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also each contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

## 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 an additional two \$1,000 scholarships. Eligible applicants must be a high school Senior graduating in 2024 who plans to attend a two or four-year college, or trade, or other nontraditional 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](http://www.secpa.com/scholarships)) with a school transcript, a letter of recommendation, and a short essay on the benefits of cooperative membership.

**Applications for the SECPA scholarships are due no later than FEBRUARY 12, 2024. For additional information, please visit the SECPA website or contact Debbie Howard at (719) 383-1314.**

*Save the date!*

## SECPA's Annual Meeting

Southeast Colorado Power Association will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

*Please join us at Inspiration Field,  
612 Adams, La Junta, Colorado 81050*

Cash prizes are given away throughout the meeting!

### BOARD DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

*The following board positions are up for election:*

- District 2 – Bent County
- District 5 – Otero County
- District 6 – Prowers County

- 5 p.m. – Registration**
- 6 p.m. – Dinner**
- 6:45 p.m. – Meeting**



## 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 Keith Doak.**



■ SECPA Board President Truman Wright (left) presents Board Director Clint Anderson his Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate.

## SECPA Director Earns Board Certification

NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director program consists of five courses that focus on basic governance knowledge and the essential skills required of cooperative directors. Clint Anderson recently completed the program.

Normal power  
line

Lines weighed  
down by ice

Top line melted  
after bottom line

## ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



### ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

### ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

### WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

### OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages

**Safe  
Electricity.org**

Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



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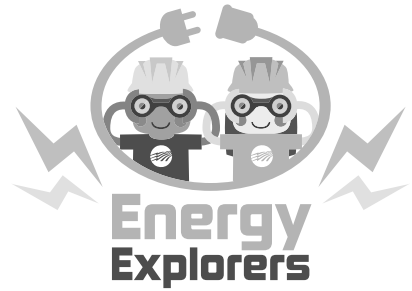
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# WINTER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Did you know most home fires happen during colder months? Play it safe this winter season.

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



A	P	I	R	P	A	J	G	F	W	D	C	Q	T	W
U	L	B	S	G	W	N	N	P	T	S	A	T	A	T
R	L	A	Y	P	J	I	U	Q	P	Q	N	G	E	O
C	T	W	R	Y	J	D	X	A	R	X	D	B	L	Z
J	F	T	P	M	K	G	C	I	B	T	L	T	C	F
X	B	K	Y	Z	S	E	M	B	Q	G	E	B	D	B
G	B	W	B	Z	H	K	T	Z	H	J	H	R	M	X
C	V	X	J	E	B	X	S	X	B	Q	C	K	V	A
V	I	M	A	B	O	K	A	T	C	S	I	K	F	E
X	Y	T	Q	Y	K	J	S	F	N	Q	V	T	J	W
L	E	V	J	A	N	V	U	W	C	B	A	P	A	W
R	T	R	E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	S	O
W	Z	B	K	R	Y	X	S	B	V	A	Q	O	U	E
S	D	R	O	C	N	O	I	S	N	E	T	X	E	P
I	F	J	R	W	K	J	B	Q	P	U	B	D	T	Z

Never overload electrical outlets with too many **electronics**.

Test smoke and carbon monoxide **alarms** every month.

Never leave a **candle** burning in an empty room.

Keep flammable items at least three feet away from a **space heater**.

**Extension cords** should only be used temporarily. Damaged or frayed cords should be thrown away.

*\*WIN Marion Atkins acct xxxxxx0005*