



[Rural Life]

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

BY JACK JOHNSTON || CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER || JACKJ@SECPA.COM

Did you know every cooperative is required to conduct an annual meeting of the membership? The purpose is to hold the election for the board of directors, share important financial information, occasionally vote on other matters, such as bylaw changes, and, of course, give away great door prizes.

Southeast Colorado Power Association's annual meeting is a community gathering where neighbors can meet new neighbors and catch up with old acquaintances. As our lives get busier with errands and more of our interactions with others are on social media, we must renew the value of face-to-face human connections. Few organizations are uniquely positioned like SECPA to bring together all members of our local communities.

While rural Americans probably do a better job of staying connected to our neighbors — in part because we need to — it is not something we should take for granted. The simple act of smiling, saying hello and shaking someone's hand truly lifts both parties.

Our country and communities face many challenges. Overcoming these challenges will only happen if we come together.

SECPA's annual meeting is designed to take care of the important business of your co-op and the equally important business of building a real sense of community. All co-operatives serve both an economic and social



Jack Johnston

purpose. While safe, reliable and affordable electric power is crucial to our mission, improving the quality of life for all members is at the core of what we do every day.

If you have not attended the annual meeting in the past or if it has been a few years, we urge you to take the time to be with your fellow co-op members this coming April 6.

We get out of life what we put into it. SECPA is connected to you by more than just power lines. We are your neighbors and we look forward to seeing you at your annual meeting.



AVOID TOXIC FUMES

During a power outage, never use a charcoal grill to cook with or to provide heat inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.

SAVE THE DATE!

YOU'RE INVITED TO SECPA'S ANNUAL MEETING

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION WILL HOLD ITS ANNUAL MEETING ON THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017.

****Cash prizes given away throughout the meeting****

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE
 Kiowa County Community Building
 15103 Highway 287, Eads, CO 81036

BOARD ELECTIONS
 Registration — 5 p.m. | Dinner—6 p.m. | Meeting—6:45 p.m.

LOOK OUT FOR GALLOPING LINES

High winds and ice can affect power lines in a way that makes them gallop. Strong winter winds can cause ice to build up on one side of a power line. When this disproportionate buildup occurs it changes the flow of air around the line, which can then cause it to bounce, potentially damaging the lines, causing power outages and even making lines fall to the ground.

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 like twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These devices are placed on power lines to help reduce the galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

Channel KTXS-12 reported on a winter storm that left 12,000 without power in Texas during December 2015. Outages were reportedly due to wind gusts that caused power lines to gallop and fall to the ground, as well as damage to more than 300 distribution poles and 20 transmission structures.



Stay away from galloping lines. If you see galloping or downed lines, contact Southeast Colorado Power as soon as possible. It is important to keep your distance from downed power lines, as it is impossible to visually assess if a line is energized. (*WIN Carol L. Jones, Acct.# 1001630200)

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get your family through a power outage. This kit

should include bottled water, nonperishable food, blankets, warm clothing, first aid kit and medicine, flashlight, radio, extra batteries and toiletries.

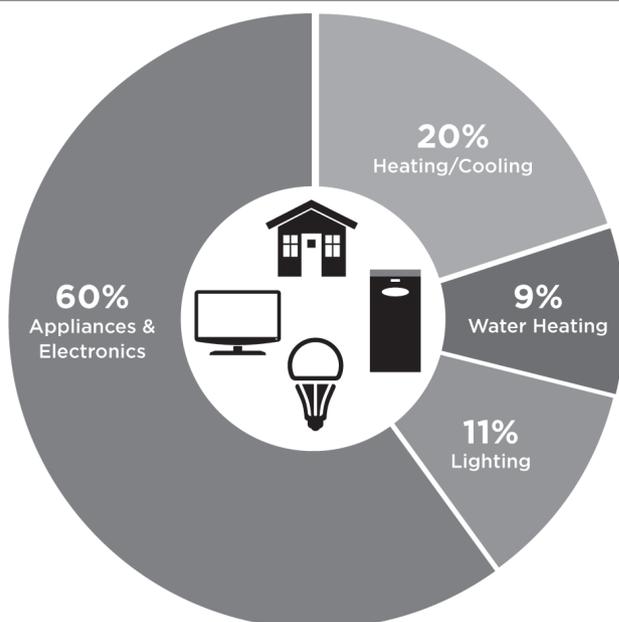
Safe Electricity offers additional tips on how to stay warm during a winter power outage:

- Stay inside and dress warmly.
- Close off unneeded rooms and place draft blocks at the bottom of doors to minimize cold air entering the house.
- Cover windows at night.
- Be aware of the temperature in your home. Infants and elderly people are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.
- When the power is restored, there will be a power surge. To protect your circuits and appliances, switch off lights and unplug appliances. Leave one light switched so you will know when power is restored.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that appliances and electronics account for the largest amount of electricity consumption in American homes.



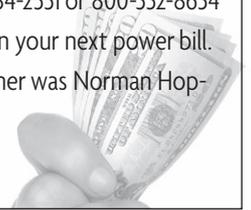
AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2015 Annual Energy Outlook. *U.S. residential sector electricity by major end uses.

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 Norman Hopkins from Ordway.

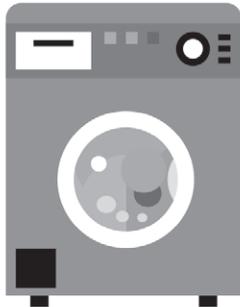




ENERGY STAR

Buyers Guide

Purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified appliances and electronics is a great way to save energy in your home. But how do you choose the right product? It depends on your energy-saving goals *and* how you use energy in your home.



Do you wash multiple loads of laundry each week? Investing in an ENERGY STAR-certified washer could save you around \$45 on your utility bill each year. Some of the top-rated ENERGY STAR-certified large washers come from LG and Samsung. Visit ENERGY STAR's "Most Efficient 2016" page to learn more.



Home computers can use a shocking amount of energy each year. If all computers in the U.S. were ENERGY STAR certified, we would save more than \$1 billion in energy costs per year. If you can't buy an ENERGY STAR-certified computer, consider updating the power management setting on your computer. Visit energystar.gov/products/office_equipment/computers.



The larger TVs get, the more energy they use. But ENERGY STAR-certified TVs are, on average, 25% more efficient than conventional models. LG, Samsung and Vizio make the list of ENERGY STAR's most efficient 2016 TVs.

There are many different types of ENERGY STAR-certified products, including:

- Air purifiers
- Roof products
- Set-top boxes and cable boxes
- Decorative light strands
- Data center storage
- Pool pumps
- Vending machines
- Dehumidifiers

Learn more about **ENERGY STAR** products.
Visit energystar.gov/products



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES

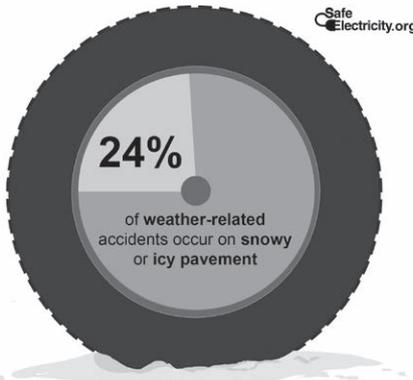
STAY SAFE ON WINTER ROADS

Winter months bring snow, ice and windy conditions, which create additional hazards for drivers. Should an accident occur, it is important to be prepared. Automobile crashes always present danger, but when electricity is involved, the decisions made in the moments after the accident are especially crucial. Safe Electricity provides tips to help prepare drivers to stay safe on winter roads.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, 24 percent of weather-related vehicle crashes occur on snowy or icy pavement.

In case of an emergency, pack a kit that includes blankets, flares, a flashlight and a window scraper. If you are stranded in your car after an accident, watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia. Do not stay in one position for too long, stay awake and do not overexert yourself as this could strain your heart.

Due to the potential for a winter storm to bring down power lines, individuals should only venture outside if absolutely necessary. Slow down when driving in icy conditions and always keep your eyes on the road to look out for hazardous conditions or downed power lines. Also, watch for debris near downed poles and lines, as it may be energized as well.



research collected from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

The *Northwest Indiana Times* reported that treacherous driving conditions resulted in numerous vehicles sliding off roads, downing electrical equipment in December 2015. Although utility employees worked through the night to repair electrical damage, outages affected more than 25,000 customers in the reported area.

If you see a car in an accident with a power pole, your first instinct may be to rush toward the vehicle to offer help. Always remember to keep your distance from the vehicle and all electrical equipment that is damaged. Instruct those in the car to stay inside until power is shut off.

Keep in mind that a downed line does not need to be sparking to be energized. It is best to assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous.

Never drive over a downed line because that could pull down the pole and other equipment, causing additional hazards. If you see a downed line, do not get out of your car. The safest place is inside the vehicle. Contact 911 immediately.

For more electrical safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don't let it heat up your electric bill. Caulk around the fireplace hearth and keep the damper closed when a fire is not burning.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



BE ALERT WITH LIGHTS

Be careful when approaching intersections where traffic or crossing lights may be out, especially during or after a winter storm.



QUICKLY IMPROVE YOUR NEW YEAR WITH FASTER INTERNET

Speeding up your internet is an easy resolution to achieve, especially with this New Year's deal. Plus, it may help with your other resolutions — reduce stress by getting rid of too-slow internet, and have more fun with a better streaming experience.

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