



[Rural Life]

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT: CORNERSTONES OF OUR SERVICE TO YOU

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

We find ourselves at the beginning of yet another new year. I defer to you the abundance of clichés about this annual transition, but I will always embrace the potential it optimistically offers. I sincerely hope 2018 has begun your best year ever and will live up to that plateau for its entirety.

Communication is the key to all successful relationships, and the most important of our connection to member-owners. There are many mediums by which we do interact, such as this newsletter, the telephone, onsite crew visits, bill messaging, email and our website.

However, the means in which we communicate evolved in our contemporary lives via numerous mobile apps. As such, we launched SmartHub in 2014, enabling

members to check the status of their electric service. Members are now using the app to conduct routine business with us, like making online bill payments and viewing daily usage updates. There are 3,787 [more than one-third] of our members who downloaded the app and, as a result, are managing their energy costs better than ever before.

Engagement is also crucial to developing strong and lasting relationships. That's why we still enjoy face time with our members, so we can hear your thoughts, desires and ideas. We proudly rotate our annual meeting between communities in our service territory, with this year to be hosted in



Jack Johnston

La Junta. We hope you and your family will put a placeholder on your calendar to join us at this great event on April 5 at Inspiration Field. We will conduct the necessary business, feature 2017 highlights, have a nice meal and give out fun prizes. Look for reminders and more details in the coming months' editions.

As with every time we turn the page to a new calendar, Southeast Colorado Power will strive to enhance our service to you. This is the same spirit by which many of us try to serve our community, society and family each and every day — the cooperative way.

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.

SAVE THE DATE!

You're Invited to SECPA's Annual Meeting

**Southeast Colorado Power Association
will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, April 5, 2018.**

"Serving Southeast Colorado for over 80 years."

*****Cash prize drawings throughout the day.*****

Please join us at Inspiration Field, 612 Adams Ave., La Junta, CO 81050

BOARD ELECTIONS

Registration 5 p.m. | Dinner 6 p.m. | Meeting 6:45 p.m.

WHEN WINTER WINDS HOWL, POWER LINES CAN GALLOP

Severe weather with strong winds can cause damage to trees, buildings and electrical equipment. While power lines can sway in high winds, add freezing rain or icy conditions and the result can be “galloping” power lines.

Galloping is the bouncing or bucking movement of overhead lines and can cause several problems, such as temporary power

interruptions, equipment damage, the collapse of power poles and downed lines.

Galloping lines often result from ice buildup on one side of the power line due to strong winds. The buildup of ice creates an airfoil, which changes the flow of air around the line, causing bouncing, or galloping, power lines.

There isn't much utility workers can

do until the wind dies down. That's why many power lines have objects like twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These help reduce galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

If you see galloping power lines, keep your distance. Ice can break off or power lines can break loose. Contact your utility to make them aware of the potential damage as soon as possible.

If you see a downed line, stay far away and warn others to stay away, too. Remember, a downed line can remain energized even if it is not sparking or arcing. Always report the location of a downed power line and damaged electrical equipment.

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, a first aid kit and medications, flashlights, a radio, extra batteries and toiletries. (*WIN Andrew Gonzales Acct.# 705840000)

To learn more about storm and outage safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



P.O. Box 521 La Junta, CO 81050 (719) 384-2551

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Jack Johnston, Chief Executive Officer

CO-OPS PUSH FOR COMMONSENSE REPLACEMENT OF CLEAN POWER PLAN

BY DAN RIEDINGER

In October, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced plans to repeal the Clean Power Plan, a regulation that would have increased costs and impacted many electric cooperatives across the nation. Now the EPA, informed by public comment, must work to develop a commonsense replacement plan.

We at Southeast Colorado Power are glad to see the rule go. We're working with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, our national trade association, to encourage the EPA to replace the rule with a plan that focuses on individual power plants. We hope the agency will craft a replacement rule to address power plant emissions legally, provide co-ops with the certainty and flexibility they need to meet their members' needs, and support co-ops in their mission to provide affordable and reliable electricity.

The nation's 900 electric co-ops depend on a diverse fuel mix to meet the energy needs of 42 million members across the nation, protect reliability of the energy system and ensure affordable power. The fact is that no two electric co-ops are exactly alike. Each one makes strategic long-term investments in energy sources that make the most sense for them. Any new regula-



tion needs to account for this reality.

This flexibility to pursue a diverse fuel mix allows co-ops to respond to local and regional factors and member preferences while ensuring affordable and reliable power. Past federal policy pushed cooperatives away from natural gas use for electricity to developing coal-based electric generation. In many cases, co-op members are still paying for those facilities and the roughly \$12 billion in pollution control measures that were added to them since the early 1990s.

But as it turns out, electric co-ops and other utilities are already making significant changes in how they generate power. Co-ops and their members value a healthy environment and vibrant rural communi-

ties. Market forces and members' interests are driving co-ops to further diversify their electric generation portfolios. As a result, co-op-owned coal-fired generation dropped 9 percent since 2014, and co-op solar capacity increased five times in just the past two years.

We live in a carbon constrained world and electric co-ops are reducing their carbon footprint. In fact, since 2005, co-ops increased electric generation by 15 million megawatt-hours while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 10 percent.

Given the progress happening without the Clean Power Plan, you may ask why we want the EPA to go back to the drawing board to come up with a replacement rule. The main reason is certainty. A workable, commonsense rule that adheres to the law clarifies the rules of the road for co-ops, which will enable us to make smart, long-term investments in electric generation. Regulatory certainty is an essential ingredient in ensuring a reliable supply of affordable power.

Co-ops are looking forward to working with the EPA on a plan that gets it right this time around.

Dan Riedinger writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



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SECPA \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Southeast Colorado Power Association is once again making a series of scholarships available to area high school seniors.

SECPA is offering three \$1,000 scholarships. Eligible applicants must be high school seniors graduating in 2018 who plan to attend a two- or four-year college. Students' parents must be members of Southeast Colorado Power Association.

Students interested in applying for the scholarships are asked to submit the completed SECPA application form (available on the SECPA website at secpa.com/our-community/scholarships) along with a school transcript, letters of recommendation and a short letter addressing why they deserve the scholarship and what their major will be in school. Applicants are also asked to submit a current digital photo to Debbie Howard at debbieh@secpa.com with their application.

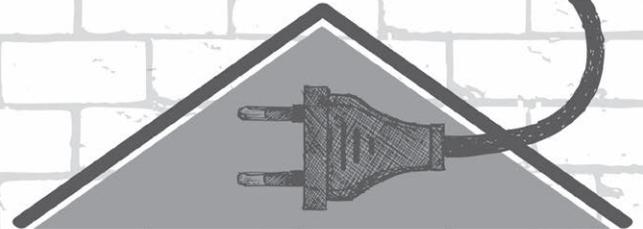
Additionally, the SECPA website has information regarding other scholarships SECPA administers through Tri-State Generation and Transmission, as well as Basin Electric. Local students are also eligible to apply for both of those scholarships. Tri-State offers one \$1,000 scholarship and Basin Electric provides one \$1,000 scholarship.

Applications for the SECPA scholarships are due no later than February 5, 2018.

For additional information, visit the SECPA website or contact Telly Stanger at 719-383-1341.

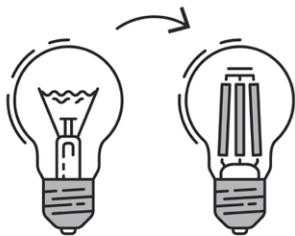


Top 10 Home Electrical Safety Tips



use a qualified electrician for repair work	repair loose outlets; replace cracked, worn electric cords	watch for hot or discolored switch plates, flickering lights, or buzzing sounds.
get regular check-ups for older homes	use bulbs with correct wattage for the fixtures	if children are present install tamper resistant outlets to protect against shock
use extension cords temporarily, not as permanent wiring	unplug electrics if you smell something burning	keep cords out of walkways and high traffic areas
educate the household on electrical safety		

Learn more about home electrical safety at



SWITCH BULBS FOR ENERGY SAVINGS

If all our nation's households swapped just one incandescent lightbulb with an Energy Star-certified LED bulb, we would save enough energy to light more than 2 million homes for a year. Energy Star-qualified LEDs last at least 35 times longer than incandescent lights and use at least 75 percent less energy.

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For all the ways you live.

