

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

JULY 2022



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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

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 Gary Aughenbaugh.



KNOW THE SIGNS OF A SCAM

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO
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KEVIN BRANDON

It's no secret that consumers with water, gas or electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the COVID-19 pandemic. Consumers became more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce. Scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who "works for the power company," in today's more-connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device via email, phone or text.

COMMON TYPES OF SCAMS

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in person or by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call us at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, secpa.com. If the scam is by email or text, do not respond and delete it immediately. If you're unsure, you can always contact us at info@secpa.com, or use SmartHub to check the status of your account. Remember, Southeast Colorado Power Association (SECOPA), will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a Social

Security number for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it and, if possible, block the sender. If you do overpay on your energy bill, SECOPA will automatically apply the credit to your next billing cycle. When in doubt, contact us.

DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST SCAMS

Be wary of calls or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

Never let anyone into your home that you don't know unless you have a scheduled appointment or have reported a problem. SECOPA employees wear shirts with logos and carry ID badges. If you have any question about the identity of someone claiming to be from SECOPA, please call the office at 719-384-2551, or 800-332-8634 to confirm identity. When we perform work on our members' property or come into their homes, our employees are professionals and will always identify themselves.

We want to help protect our community against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim. WIN* Carl Taylor acct 135601



THE SECOPA OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 4TH FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

2021 SECPA ANNUAL MEETING RECAP FROM THE CEO

On April 28, we were excited to meet in Springfield for our first in-person annual meeting since Covid-19 struck. Some highlights from the evening were special guest speakers Kent Singer, executive director of the Colorado Rural Electric Association and Duane Highley, CEO of Tri-State Generation and Transmission, along with awesome entertainment from Baca County's own Clare Dunn.

Elections were held for Districts 1 and 3 with incumbents Truman Wright and Brad Buck retaining their board seats. A big thank you to Kent Homsher for the time and effort he put in to running for the District 1 seat.

I would also like to thank the Baca County 4-H Council for the great meal and Baca County for the use of the Minnick building. And finally, a huge thank you to all the employees who helped in the planning, setting up and working the meeting itself. It takes a lot of effort to put on a meeting like this and I am proud of my team who helped make this meeting such a success!



Board President Randy Phillips.



CEO Kevin Brandon and directors address the members.



Baca County 4-H Council serves members a meal at the annual meeting.



Clare Dunn and scholarship winners (see page 10 for more details).



Clare Dunn performs.

All photos by Lexi Brooks-Plainsman Herald.



SECPA members enjoy a meal at the annual meeting.



SECPA members enjoy the entertainment and information presented at the annual meeting.



SECPA's 2022 Annual Meeting was a success. The co-op appreciates all the members who attended.



CONGRATULATIONS 2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



▲ Clare Dunn (center) with scholarship winners. All photos by Lexi Brooks—*Plainsman Herald*.

Congratulations to this year's scholarship winners. SECPA Board President Randy Phillips presented awards to the students who were in attendance at the 2022 Annual Meeting.



▲ Alea Wittler, Vilas High School.
Parents — John & Trina Wittler



▲ Anna Beckett, McClave High School.
Parents — Shaun & Terri Beckett



▲ Jami Quick, Pritchett High School.
Parents — J.J. & Bobbi Quick



▲ Justin Wright, Walsh High School.
Parents — Truman & Angie Wright



▲ Kadence Kunselman, Walsh High School.
Parents — Cameron & Kristi Kunselman



▲ Kyra Sheridan, Eads High School.
Parents — Casey & Lindsey Sheridan



▲ Maggie Chase, McClave High School.
Parents — Del & Lori Chase



▲ Rhealie Rittgers, Eads High School.
Parents — Robert & Jackie Rittgers



▲ Rochelle Casey, Walsh High School.
Parents — Donnie & Maegen Casey



▲ Ty Wilson, Eads High School.
Parents — Jay & Sharon Wilson