

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

MARCH 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



CLEARING THE PATH TO RELIABILITY

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO | KEVINB@SECPA.COM



KEVIN BRANDON

Trees are majestic, beautiful and good for the soul. But we also know that our members depend on us to deliver reliable power to their homes and businesses. That's why Southeast Colorado Power Association (SECPA) strives to balance maintaining the beautiful surroundings we all cherish with ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree trimming.

RELIABILITY

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. After all, we've seen the whims of Mother Nature during severe weather events with fallen tree limbs taking down power lines and utility poles. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about half of all outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you sometimes see SECPA crews or contractors out in the community trimming trees near power lines. Our trimming crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.

Plus, we all know it's more cost-effective to undertake preventative maintenance than it is to make repairs after the fact.

SAFETY

Working near power lines can be dangerous, and we care about your safety and that of our lineworkers. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can reach those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls across a power line creates a potentially dangerous situation. A proactive approach lessens the chances of fallen trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

AFFORDABILITY

As a co-op, SECPA always strives to keep costs down for our members. If trees and other vegetation are left unchecked, they can become overgrown and expensive to correct. A strategic vegetation management program helps keep costs down for everyone.

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help too. When planting new trees, make sure they're planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. Medium-height trees (40 ft. or smaller) should be planted at least 25 ft. from power lines. Taller trees (over 40 ft.) should be planted at least 50 ft. from power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. from the transformer door and 4 ft. from the sides. If your neighborhood has underground lines, remember to contact 811 before you begin any project that requires digging.

Additionally, if you spot an overgrown tree or branch that's dangerously close to overhead lines, please let us know by contacting us at 800-332-8634 or info@secpa.com.

We have deep roots in our community, and we love our beautiful surroundings. It takes a balanced approach, and our vegetation management program is a crucial tool in ensuring service reliability.

You're Invited

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

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

Cash prizes are given away throughout the meeting!



Board Director Elections

At the SECPA Annual Meeting on April 25, there will be an election for three board positions.

The following board positions are up for election:
District 2 – Bent County; District 5 – Otero County;
District 6 – Prowers County

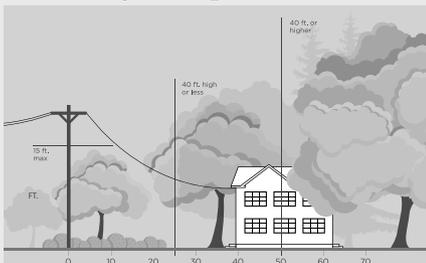
BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN APRIL 22 TO BE COUNTED.

Director candidates will be featured in the April edition of *CCL* magazine.

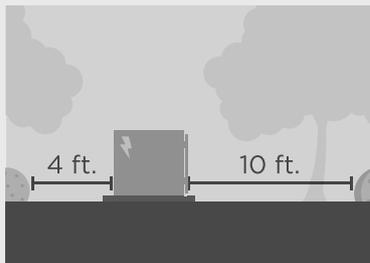
3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be less than 40 feet tall should be planted at least 25 ft. from power lines. Trees that grow to a height of more than 40 ft. should be planted at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



*WIN Leanna Brown, acct 21454xxxx

Take Cover When Colorado Spring Storms Hit

In Colorado, a springtime storm can pop up or change direction without any warning. Other times it is forecast days in advance and follows its predicted course. In either case, knowing what to do right before, during and after a storm can help to keep you safe.

When a Storm Hits

When stormy winds blow, follow these weather-related reminders from FEMA and the Red Cross:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower, or utility pole — lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas such as hills and mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!). (Approximately 5% of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the United States happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.)
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Pick a safe place in your home — away from windows and doors — for family members to gather during a thunderstorm.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning for extreme weather such as a tornado or severe thunderstorm. A watch means that the weather is possible in and near the area. A warning means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is more serious than a watch and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

After The Storm

Once the storm is over, follow these safety tips:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other standing water. The water could be covering electrical outlets, appliances, or cords. Never touch (or use) electrical appliances, cords, wires, or switches while you are wet or standing in water.
- After a storm, a downed power line could be covered by standing water or debris. Never go near a downed line and warn others to stay away. If you see a downed line, call 911, and a crew will be dispatched to de-energize the power and address the problem safely.
- The same safety know-how applies to a downed power line you might encounter while driving or after an auto accident. In either case, do not get out. Instead, call 911 to report the downed line (pull over first if you are driving). If you must exit your vehicle after an accident because of a fire or smoke, make a solid, clean jump out, landing with both feet together. Then make solid hops with your feet together, hopping as far away as you can.
- If your home has been damaged by a flood, turn off the power to your house if it is safe to do so. (Do not turn power off at the breaker box while standing in water or in damp conditions.)
- If the wiring, electrical system or appliances have been damaged by water, have your home inspected by an electrician; also, have appliances serviced by a qualified technician before using them.

HAPPY
St. Patrick's
DAY



YOU COULD BE A WINNER!

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 Marion Atkins.**

MARCH into discounted
installation for the month of March
for wireless internet & fiber, where available

mention promo
code: SECPA

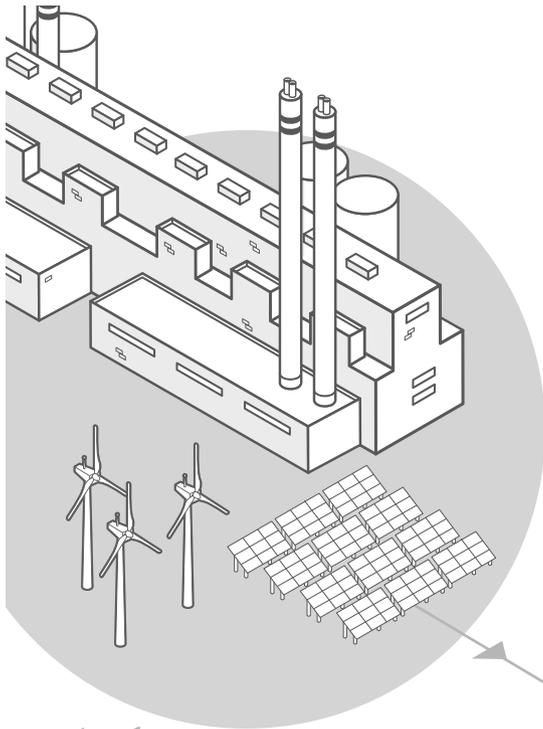
Promotion is for SECPA members
and good during the month of March



 800.657.7149

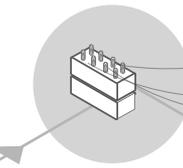
CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU

The electric grid is considered one of the most complex machines in the world, delivering the electricity we need for everyday life.



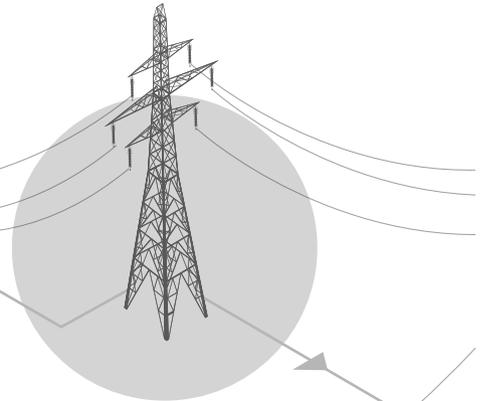
step 1
GENERATION

Power plants generate electricity using a variety of energy sources, like solar, natural gas, nuclear and wind energy.



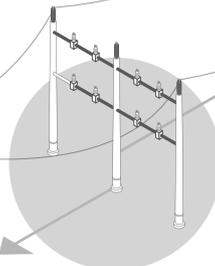
step 2
**STEP-UP
TRANSFORMER**

A step-up transformer increases the voltage to push the electricity over long distances.



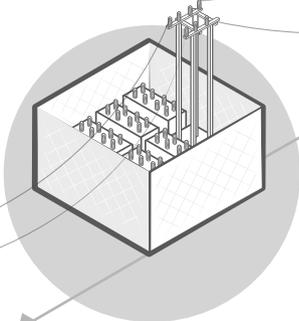
step 3
TRANSMISSION LINES

High-voltage electricity travels over long distances through these lines.



step 4
**TRANSMISSION
SUBSTATION**

Voltage is lowered at a transmission substation so electricity can travel across the local distribution system.

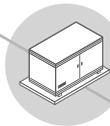
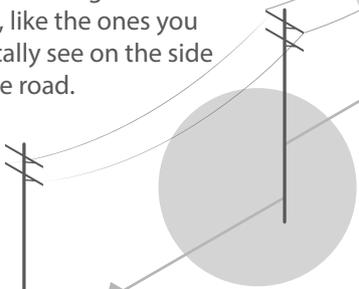


step 5
DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION

These substations lower the voltage again so the electricity is ready to travel on distribution lines.

step 6
DISTRIBUTION LINES

Lower-voltage electricity travels through distribution lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road.



step 7
FINAL STOP

A transformer located on the ground or a utility pole reduces the voltage a final time, then electricity is sent inside your home, school or business.

