

# SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

MAY 2019

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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



Touchstone Energy®



## SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU

BY JACK JOHNSTON CEO



JACK JOHNSTON

**E**lectricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running heating and cooling systems and appliances. It's no wonder we're so comfortable with this instant availability: When we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job correctly.

Safe, reliable and affordable electricity is always our mission. May highlights the first goal as we celebrate National Electrical Safety Month. Therefore, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards to ensure your electric products are working properly.

Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

### Ground fault circuit interrupters

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations, such as a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room, often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed

electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

### Loose or damaged outlets or switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

### Surge protectors

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules and surge protectors are rated for the number of joules they can effectively absorb. That

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Offices will be closed  
**Monday, May 27**  
in observance of  
Memorial Day.

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2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

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**BASIN \$1,000 Scholarship**

**Levi Collins**

Senior Swink High School

Parents – Gary & Jacqueline Collins



**TRI-STATE \$1,000 Scholarship**

**Kaitlyn Smith**

Fowler High School

Parents – Darren & Shamay Smith



**SECPA \$1,000 Scholarship**

**Jacob Wright**

Walsh High School

Parents – Truman & Angie Wright



**SECPA \$1,000 Scholarship**

**Chelsea Alton**

Walsh High School

Parents – Bret & Janiese Alton



**SECPA \$1,000 Scholarship**

**Jeffrey Henderson**

Lamar High School

Parents – Chris & Karen Henderson

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**STORM WATCH**

Keep an eye on the forecast and make sure you are inside when a thunderstorm approaches. Lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the area in which it is raining. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder or lightning before returning outdoors.

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**WORK SAFELY**

If you are on equipment that makes contact with a power line, stay put. Do not attempt to climb off the equipment because you do not want to become the path to ground for the electricity. Call for help and warn others in the area to stay back until help arrives and the line is de-energized.

**SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU** *continued from page 7*

means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops and you're left with a basic power strip.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they stop working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

**Extension cords**

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in a home that needs wiring revisions. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to our electricity, having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. Always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use. If they show any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, they should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

Electricity is a vital necessity for modern living and we are committed to continuously providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all consumer-members. WIN\* Howard Toole Acct# 2001540000

# How Low Can You Go?

Most people know that a surge of too much electricity running through a home or building is a bad thing — equipment can be damaged, could catch fire or cause shock. However, many of us don't stop to think about what too little voltage, or not enough electrical power, can do.

Anemic or low voltage is often caused by an overloaded power grid during high-demand times, such as weekday afternoons or during the dog days of summer when air conditioners are running high. Regional energy shortages and other extreme weather events can cause brownouts as well. Problems can also originate from faulty electrical circuits in a home.

## WHAT IS CONSIDERED LOW CURRENT?

Low current is defined as 90% or less of normal capacity for one minute or more to a device. Evidence of a power supply dip includes poor appliance performance, dim or flickering lights (aka brown-outs) and intermittent outages.

It's important to know equipment may malfunction or even over-heat simply because it's not getting an adequate supply of the power it needs to operate. This could be due to a limiting source in your home or a low supply from your electric provider, causing brownouts.

Unfortunately, there is not a lot homeowners or renters can do to protect themselves against the "ebb" in the ebb and flow of power that sometimes happens, but here are a few options to consider:

1. Look into appliance-specific protective devices, like a brownout surge protector for your refrigerator.

2. Consider the bigger and stronger brother of surge-protector strips, known as uninterruptable power supply devices. They plug in to an outlet but also contain battery backup to keep your devices running smoothly during surges, power reductions or brief outages.
3. If you can, limit major appliance use during peak energy usage times, usually weekday afternoons and on hot days.
4. Turn off any appliances you're not using.
5. If you suspect your home has faulty wiring, consult a qualified electrician.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## District 7 Board Director Vacancy

The Board of Directors is seeking interested members in good standing within District 7 for

an appointment to an open vacancy, which represents service territory in Crowley County along with parts of El Paso and Lincoln Counties.

Please email resume and personal statement to Kevin Karney, Board President, at [karneykattlekompany@gmail.com](mailto:karneykattlekompany@gmail.com).

**Deadline for submissions is May 13 with interviews to be conducted May 21.**



SECOM wishes a Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers (and mother figures) in our community.

We understand how full your schedules are with helping others, and we're pleased to provide the fast internet required to stay connected to the people and resources you value most.

**Southeast Colorado Power Consumers,  
Call 800-657-7149 for a FREE INSTALL\*  
Mention Promo Code: POWER**



27850 Harris Rd  
La Junta, CO 81050  
800-657-7149  
[www.secom.net](http://www.secom.net)

\*Service availability and internet speed will depend on location. Offer is good through May 31, 2019. Additional terms and conditions apply. Contact us for complete details.

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## La Junta Primary School Career Day, April 3, 2019

On Wednesday, April 3, La Junta Primary School held its annual Career Day for students. All students, kindergarten through second grade, listened to presenters from various local businesses as they told about their careers. The Career Day was a culmination of a weeklong unit of lessons focused on career exploration in the Character Education class.

SECOM's Matt Rouleau, fiber manager, and Elijah Ridgwell, wireless manager, brought their trailer of equipment and showed the students the different wires they work with. A demonstration on how to splice the fiber optic wires was given. Matt and Elijah also explained various reasons why they would have to repair lines, such as when bad weather occurs or someone hits a line.

Journeyman linemen Jace Noe and Kyle Maier and human resource and safety officer Angela Bamber from SECPA dazzled the students with their neon yellow safety gear and the big truck with the bucket. They let students wear safety goggles and a hard hat. They also showed some of the tools they use in their work.

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## 2019 WASHINGTON D.C. YOUTH TOUR WINNERS

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**Alex Higbee**  
Lamar High School  
Parents: Donald & Angela Higbee



**Dylan Renquist**  
Walsh High School  
Parents: Ryan & Alissa Renquist

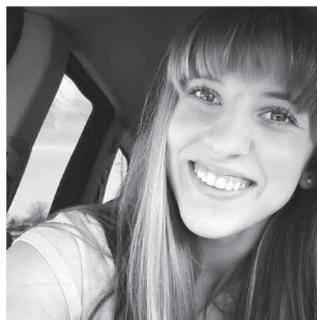


**Sophia Russell**  
La Junta High School  
Parents: Jim & Anne Matern-Russell

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## 2019 YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP WINNER

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**Molly Tate**  
Crowley County High School  
Parents: Kurt & Kelli Tate

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## 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 David Martinez.**

