



Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative

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**SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

currentnews

FROM THE MANAGER

Sustaining a Reliable Electric System



Scott Ayres

We've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." This popular adage is often used in conversation or a story when someone is

about to do something foolish or risky. If they heed this advice, it means they did not commit to "one basket," but instead hedged their bets with multiple options.

This strategy is how I describe Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's common sense approach to the current energy transition. We know that consumer interest in renewable energy continues to grow. We've seen this trend here in Kansas.

Recent innovations and advances in

renewable energy technologies have led to sharp decreases in costs, making renewables more feasible, accessible, and scalable. Over the last few years, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative has adjusted our fuel mix by utilizing more renewables. Today our fuel mix is comprised of an average of 64.4% renewable energy.

Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources at the same time that we're seeing fossil fuel plants taken off-line, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, there is more pressure on the electric grid due to the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events and rising electricity demand.

Competing Pressures

So how do we reconcile these challenges of grid pressure and a

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 6 degrees. To block heat from the sun, plant deciduous trees around the south side of your home. Deciduous trees provide excellent shade during the summer and lose their leaves in the fall and winter months, allowing sunlight to warm your home. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



WHAT'S THE ORANGE SIGN FOR?

IT'S NOT A SUGGESTION. IT'S THE LAW.

Life is fast paced, but speeding or multitasking in a work zone is not worth losing your life or taking someone else's.

To help save lives and reduce injuries, follow orange sign directives every time you approach a work zone.

2020 Work Zone Statistics*

CRASHES AND INJURIES

102,000 Estimated total crashes

44,000 Estimated injuries

FATALITIES

857 Total fatalities

244 Fatalities involving commercial motor vehicles

PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES IN WORK ZONES

105 Pedestrians (non-workers)

51 Pedestrian workers

Do your part to help everyone return home safely. **THE ORANGE SIGN IS MEANT FOR EVERYONE.**

*MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE

SOURCES: NATIONAL WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK (NWZAW.ORG), NATIONAL WORK ZONE SAFETY INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE, AMERICAN TRAFFIC SAFETY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Lineworker Appreciation Day April 10

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission, and distribution utilities.

Safety Comes First

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, Electric Power Line Installers and Repairers Typically:

- ▶ Install, maintain, or repair the power lines that move electricity.



Sedgwick County Electric Co-op line crew.

- ▶ Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers, and switches.
- ▶ Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- ▶ String (install) power lines between poles, towers, and buildings.
- ▶ Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.
- ▶ Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers, and lines.
- ▶ Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

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changing fuel mix? Solar and wind energy are certainly beneficial for the environment, but they are limited resources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7 to you and our community. To do this, we need reliable sources of power that will meet all the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world.

So where are we netting out? That's where our familiar adage comes into play. While utilization of renewables is increasing, we still need to incorporate other forms of energy in the mix to ensure reliable service. Remember, solar and wind are intermittent power sources. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its own challenges.

That's why we spread our eggs into multiple baskets. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources — fossil fuels and renewables work together to ensure reliability and resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

Reliability also means repairing and replacing utility

equipment to prevent wear-and-tear, ensuring our equipment can withstand severe weather. We are laser-focused on providing our Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative members with reliable, affordable energy. That's why fuel diversity — or placing our eggs in multiple baskets — is essential to reliability.

The Bottom Line

Lowering the overall carbon footprint in this country means we're going to electrify more and more of our economy. Solar and wind power are an important part of a broader energy portfolio, but they are not available 24/7. In today's ever-connected world, people need power around the clock.

As our nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the economy, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is working to anticipate, plan and respond to market trends and policy shifts. That's how we can power your home and our economy, while continuing to serve as your local energy provider.

Efficiency Upgrades to Help You Save This Summer

Spring and summer are opportune times for home upgrades and DIY projects. If you're planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency.

Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money — and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an Energy Star®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors, and brightness levels — and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule

outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas, including windows, doors, bathtubs and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation. Insulation is considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade; however, if your home is under-insulated, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The cost of new insulation depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, there are additional efficiency upgrades that can make a big impact on energy



Sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills.

use, like replacing old appliances with Energy Star® models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. But these upgrades can be a bit pricey.

If you're wanting to make your home more energy efficient but you're not sure where to start, your best bet is to enlist the help of an expert to conduct an energy audit of your home.

Join Us for
Sedgwick County Electric Co-op's
Annual Meeting
Tuesday, April 4, 2023

*The Cotillion
Ballroom*

11120 W. Kellogg, Wichita
Doors open at 6:15 p.m.
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Schedule

Co-op Updates
Director Elections
Door Prizes
Youth Tour Winners
Announced
Employee Awards and
Introductions

*Special
\$100
Cash Drawing*

Please bring the registration card
attached to the back of your annual
meeting notice you receive in the mail.

*Registration card is
needed for:*

*Cash
Drawing
Entry*

*Director
Elections*

Dinner

Director Candidates

TERRITORY 1

Cindy Foster, Incumbent

TERRITORY 2

Alan Smarsh, Incumbent

TERRITORY 3

Rex Smith, Incumbent