



SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

currentnews

SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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FROM THE MANAGER

10 Things You Might Not Know About Power Restoration

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

As the General Manager/CEO of Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, I'm accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

This month, I'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help our

members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

1 WE NEED YOU. When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out by calling 316-542-3131 or 866-542-4732 to report your outage.

2 OUR EMPLOYEES MIGHT BE AFFECTED TOO. Because Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is a local electric cooperative owned by



Scott Ayres

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KIPPES PROMOTED TO FIRST YEAR APPRENTICE LINEMAN

On May 20, 2024, **TAGEN KIPPES** accepted the position of first year apprentice lineman. Kippes began his career with Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative in May 2023 as a summer intern. After completing Pratt Community College's Electrical Power Technology program, Kippes was hired as an equipment operator/groundsman in November 2023.

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative would like to congratulate Tagen on his promotion and thank him for all his hard work.



Tagen Kippes

Best Practices for Distributed Energy Resources

Distributed energy resources are small-scale systems that typically generate or store energy — the connecting factor for these systems is the ability to interconnect to the electric grid.

Distributed energy resources, also known as DER, span a variety of technologies, like rooftop solar panels, battery storage systems, electric vehicles, smart thermostats, and grid-connected HVAC systems.

These technologies provide a range of benefits, including cost savings and improved power reliability. But to maximize the benefits of DER, it's important to follow best practices for installation, operation and maintenance. Because DER refers to an array of technologies, this article will focus specifically on best practices for rooftop solar systems — an increasingly popular DER choice for many homes and businesses.

CONDUCT A SITE ASSESSMENT

Before installing solar panels, it's important to conduct a site assessment to determine the project's feasibility. A site assessment should include an evaluation of the solar panels' potential, shading and orientation, as well as an analysis of the site's energy use patterns. This information can be used to determine the optimal size and placement of the solar array. Additionally, you should consider the age, condition and materials of your roof.

WORK WITH A QUALIFIED INSTALLER

To ensure that any DER system (like solar panels) is installed correctly and safely, you should work with a qualified installer who has the knowledge and experience to install the system. A qualified installer can provide guidance on equipment options and system design. When choosing a solar provider, research the company's history, bankability and references.

Solar systems typically have a 25-year lifespan, so you need a reliable energy partner throughout your investment. You can research installers via the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners' list at www.directories.nabcep.org.

CHOOSE HIGH-QUALITY EQUIPMENT

When selecting equipment for solar systems, choose high-quality products that are designed to last. Quality equipment such as panels, inverters and racking may be more expensive upfront but will provide enhanced performance, efficiency and reliability over the years.

MONITOR PERFORMANCE

To ensure solar systems are operating as expected, be sure to regularly monitor their performance. Keeping track of performance can help identify issues before they become major problems. Performance monitoring can be conducted using a variety of tools, including applications, energy management systems and smart meters.

MAINTAIN REGULARLY

Regular maintenance is essential for ensuring the long-term performance and reliability of DER systems. If you manage a solar system yourself, maintenance tasks will include cleaning the solar panels, replacing inverters and inspecting equipment for signs of wear and tear. Regular maintenance can help prevent breakdowns and extend the life of your equipment.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The best practices noted above apply to DER systems. Before signing up and getting started with a solar company, contact Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's I.T. Manager Andy Riggs at 316-542-3131 with any questions that may come up in the process. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative will be able to offer you information on how our solar process works to help determine the appropriately sized system installation to help meet some or all your electrical needs, along with DER rates such as Net Metering and Parallel Generations. If you are looking to install an EV charger, please let us know so we are able to determine if we can meet the capacity needs and the best times to charge your vehicle. With so many considerations for DER, it's important to find a partner you can rely on to make informed decisions. The Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is ready to help you throughout the process.



10 Things You Might Not Know About Power Restoration

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the members we serve, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be too.

3 IT'S A TEAM EFFORT. Every one of Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our office staff are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.

4 WE ASSESS THE SITUATION FIRST. Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.

5 RESTORATION IS NORMALLY PRIORITIZED BY THE LARGEST NUMBER OF MEMBERS WE CAN GET BACK ON IN THE SHORTEST AMOUNT OF TIME. Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest number of people first.

6 OUR EMPLOYEES FACE MANY DANGERS. Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)

7 FLICKERING LIGHTS ARE A GOOD THING. Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important because they indicate our

equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.

8 YOU NEED A BACKUP PLAN. We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan — remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take.

9 OUR EMPLOYEES HAVE TO PLAN, AND EAT. If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.

10 SOMETIMES IT'S A WAITING GAME. Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. If you experience an outage, please let us know by calling 316-542-3131 or 866-542-4732.

When Thunderstorms Appear

LIGHTNING IS NEAR

Every thunderstorm produces lightning, according to the National Weather Service. A storm with the presence of lightning is sometimes called an electrical storm.

WHEN THUNDERSTORMS ARE IMMINENT OR YOU GET CAUGHT IN AN ELECTRICAL STORM, REMEMBER:

- ▶ Do not stand near tall objects, such as trees or poles.
- ▶ Do not stand on a hilltop or in an open field.
- ▶ Take shelter inside a house, large building or hard-topped vehicle.
- ▶ If your hair stands on end, lightning is about to strike you.
- ▶ If you feel hair strands rising, drop to your knee and bend forward.
- ▶ If you are swimming or near water, get out of the water and away from it.
- ▶ Do not use an umbrella and stay away from metallic objects such as metal fences.
- ▶ Stay away from appliances, heating ducts, radiators and plumbing.
- ▶ Do not use electrical equipment such as hair dryers or appliances.

A person whose heart stops after being struck by lightning can often be revived.

TAKE LIGHTNING SERIOUSLY. IT CAN BE DEADLY.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Listen for Peak Alerts and Save

We are asking members to participate in Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's Peak Control program. This voluntary program helps you save on your summer energy bills and can also help the cooperative hold down wholesale power costs during the eight months of our off-peak period.

A major portion of our annual wholesale power bill is based on our demand between the 3-6 p.m. time frame during the summer months. The price of electricity is at a premium during that three-hour window due to the "high demand" for energy production during those hot, summer hours.

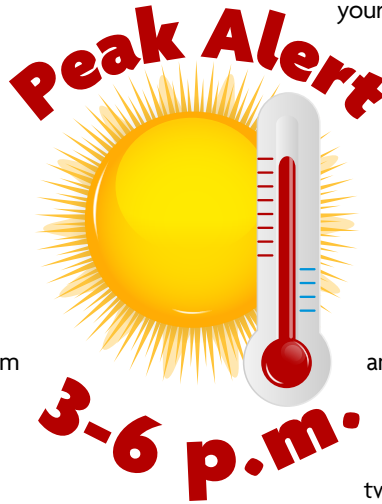
WHAT IS PEAK CONTROL?

Peak control is a voluntary program in which our members can participate to hold down electricity costs.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN PEAK CONTROL?

You can participate by monitoring your use of electric appliances and equipment that require larger amounts of electricity during peak hours. Any steps you can take to lower

your energy use from 3-6 p.m., Monday through Friday will help control costs.



WHEN SHOULD I PARTICIPATE IN PEAK CONTROL?

Participate when "peak alerts" are issued, typically during the hours of 3-6 p.m. weekdays from June 1 through Sept. 30. Like us on Facebook and follow us on X (formerly Twitter) to receive peak alerts.

The actual peak demand for June, July, August and September is the billing demand for each respective month. Special emphasis is placed during July and August, as the peak electricity demand registered by the co-op during those two months drives the demand billing for the following "off peak" eight months. Be aware of days when temperatures are forecast to be above 95 degrees. These are the type of days when peak demand can occur.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PEAK CONTROL?

Reducing electric usage between 3 and 6 p.m. will help reduce our peak load. Each kilowatt shaved or shifted during peak load is a cost savings for all cooperative members.

CO-OP SPONSORS PEDAL TRACTOR PULL

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative will host the Pedal Tractor Pull at the Sedgwick County Fairgrounds on Saturday, July 13. Registration begins at 9 a.m. just east of the open-air arena, and the pull begins at 10 a.m.

Children from ages 4 to 12 are eligible to participate. There is no entry fee. Participants are required to wear shoes and must have a parent or legal guardian present to register. Top finishers will advance to the tractor pull event at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson.



Ways to Prepare Your Home for Summer Vacation

ONCE YOU HAVE PACKED YOUR BAGS, GET YOUR HOUSE READY FOR VACATION TOO.

1. Set or program your thermostat to 85 degrees.
2. Unplug small appliances and electronics.
3. Turn your natural gas water heater to low.
4. Turn off your electric hot water heater.
5. Use light timers or smart lighting.
6. Ensure your sump pump is operational.
7. Clean out your refrigerator.
8. Pause your mail.
9. Make sure doors and windows are locked.
10. Let a neighbor know your plans.

