



SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

currentnews

SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Director

STAFF

Scott Ayres
General Manager/CEO

Lora Alloway
Office Manager

Kyle Pipkin
Line Superintendent

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HEADQUARTERS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Coordinating Power Across the Grid

When you flip a switch, electricity is there — instant, reliable and ready to power your day. But behind that simple moment is a carefully coordinated system made up of many “grid power players,” all working together to keep the lights on.

At Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, we think it's important for our members to understand how this system works and who's involved in delivering the electricity you depend on every day.

It all starts with generation owners and operators. These are the facilities that produce electricity. Power plants convert energy from a variety of sources — such as natural gas, coal, nuclear energy and renewables like wind or solar — into electricity. These facilities may be owned by electric utilities, government entities or private

companies. In most regions, a diverse mix of generation sources helps ensure reliability while also supporting affordability and sustainability goals.



Scott Ayres

Once electricity is generated, it needs to travel — often across long distances — to reach local communities. That's where transmission owners and operators come in. Using high-voltage transmission lines strung along massive towers, they move bulk electricity from power plants to local areas. You've likely seen these lines along highways or across open land. Because electricity can't easily be stored in large quantities,

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4TH OF JULY
HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office will be closed on Friday, July 3, for the holiday.

Growing Together: Caring for Trees and Keeping the Power On

There's something timeless about trees. They ground us. They remind us of where we've been, and they stretch toward what's ahead. Here in our community, we take pride in the natural beauty that surrounds us — the shade on a summer afternoon, the colors that mark the changing seasons, the quiet strength of something that grows slowly but endures.

At the same time, we share another responsibility — one that's just as essential to our daily lives. The responsibility to keep the lights on, to power our homes and businesses, to make sure that when you flip a switch, the energy you depend on is there.

That's why Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative works every day to strike a careful balance between preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect.

One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming.

Now, it may not always be obvious, but keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when severe weather rolls in — strong winds, heavy ice or sudden storms can bring down branches and, with them, power lines and poles. In fact, nearly half of all power outages can be traced to trees and vegetation coming into contact with electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may notice Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative crews, along with Davis Tree Service, working in neighborhoods throughout the year. Our crews are highly

experienced at right-of-way clearing. Their work might seem routine, but it's anything but — it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.

And it's not just good practice — it's required. Electric utilities across the country are obligated to manage vegetation near power lines. Scheduled trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards. It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events.

But beyond reliability and efficiency, there's another reason this work matters: safety.

Electricity is a powerful force, and when trees grow too close to power lines, that power can become dangerous. Branches that touch lines — or even come close — can carry electrical current. Children climbing trees in their own yards may not realize the risk. And during storms, fallen trees can create hazardous conditions not only for families but also for our lineworkers restoring service.

There's also a financial reality we can't ignore. Preventative maintenance — like tree trimming — is far more cost-effective than repairing widespread damage after an outage. Left

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PLANT TREES SAFELY BEFORE YOU DIG CALL 811 TO LOCATE BURIED UTILITY LINES.

LOW TREE ZONE	MEDIUM TREE ZONE	LARGE TREE ZONE
Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 feet or less.	Plant medium trees (under 40 feet when mature) at least 25 feet away from power lines. 40 FEET HIGH OR LESS MATURE HEIGHT	Plant large trees (over 40 feet when mature) at least 50 feet away from power lines. OVER 40 FEET MATURE HEIGHT

Keep shrubs at least 10 feet away from transformer doors and 4 feet away from the sides.

15 FEET MATURE HEIGHT

4 FEET 10 FEET 0 10 feet 20 feet 30 feet 40 feet 50 feet 60 feet 70 feet

88th Annual Meeting Highlights

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative held its 88th annual meeting on April 7, 2026. There were 279 members present. A meal was served to just over 525 members and guests prior to the business meeting.

Board President Clint DeVore called the meeting to order and thanked the member-owners who took time out of their busy schedules to attend the night's activities.

After nominees for the board of directors were announced and ballots were tallied, the following directors were reelected:

- ▶ **CINDY FOSTER** — Territory 1
- ▶ **ALAN SMARSH** — Territory 2
- ▶ **REX SMITH** — Territory 3

General Manager/CEO Scott Ayres provided members with updates and information regarding the cooperative's financial standings for 2025 and informed the members the cooperative finished 2025 with margins totaling \$1,844,993. This was above the \$576,063 margins in 2024 and enough to meet our mortgage requirements. The board of directors approved the general retirement of 100% of capital credits from the 2008 patronage totaling approximately \$326,186. He also updated members on the approved work plan, which calls for more than \$4 million in infrastructure upgrades in the next three years. Members were briefed on the completion of the 2025 project to replace our metering technology. Upgraded meters are more accurate at detecting issues more quickly, so linemen can locate outages more precisely and allow the co-op to restore power more efficiently.

2025 Youth Tour winners **EMERIE VAN VOORHIS**,



Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative held its 88th annual meeting on April 7, 2026, with more than 525 members and guests present.

of Sedgwick High School and **MAXIMUS MILLER**, of Cheney High School provided the membership with a brief report of their trips.

2026 YOUTH TOUR WINNERS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

- ▶ **ABIGAIL BLUNDELL**, daughter of Bryan and Andrea Blundell; junior at Cheney High School

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP YOUTH TOUR

- ▶ **ISAAC DIETZ**, son of Steve and Lydia Dietz; sophomore at Cheney High School

THE \$500 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

- ▶ **COY DUGAN**, son of Rocky and Kari Dugan; sophomore at Cheney High School
- ▶ **VICTORIA TRUMBLE**, daughter of Grady and Amy Trumble; junior at Garden Plain High School

2026 SERVICE AWARDS

- ▶ **CLINT DEVORE**, director — 11 years of service
- ▶ **TIM ROSENHAGEN**, staking engineer — 20 years of service

- ▶ **TOMMY HILL**, foreman — 10 years of service

The evening finished with drawings for prizes provided by Sedgwick County Electric Co-op, Border States Electric, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo) and KSI, a subsidiary of KEPCo.



Emerie Van Voorhis
2025 Youth
Tour Winner



Maximus Miller
2025 Camp Winner



Abigail Blundell
2026 Youth
Tour Winner



Isaac Dietz
2026 Camp Winner

Growing Together: Caring for Trees and Keeping the Power On *Continued from page 12B ▶*

unchecked, overgrown vegetation can lead to more frequent disruptions and higher costs for everyone. A thoughtful, strategic vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members.

You can help, too. When planting new trees, consider their mature height and distance from nearby power lines. Trees that grow up to 40 feet should be planted at least 25 feet away from overhead lines. Larger trees — those that exceed 40 feet — should be planted at least 50 feet away. If you're landscaping near pad-mounted transformers, keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the front and 4 feet from the sides to allow safe access.

If your neighborhood has underground lines, don't forget to call 811 before digging. It's a simple step that can prevent serious accidents.

At the end of the day, we all want the same thing: a community that's safe, resilient and beautiful. At Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, we're proud to be part of that effort. Our roots run deep here, just like the trees we work to care for.

REMINDER: PEAK SUMMER HOURS

Avoid energy-intensive activities like using the clothes dryer or oven during peak energy hours, generally between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. on weekdays.



Coordinating Power Across the Grid

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this system must constantly move power from where it's produced to where it's needed, all in real time.

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is a member of Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (KEPCo), our local generation and transmission partners. KEPCo is a private, not-for-profit wholesale power provider that generates and transmits electricity to Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative and other electric cooperatives in our state.

Coordinating the flow of large amounts of power is a complex job, especially across multiple states or regions. In many parts of the country, organized wholesale markets, managed by Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) or Independent System Operators (ISOs), handle this responsibility. These entities don't typically own power plants or transmission lines. Instead, they act as traffic controllers for the grid — balancing supply and demand every second of the day and directing which power plants should generate electricity at any given moment. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative works with the Southwest Power Pool to help ensure reliable service and cost-effective energy for our members.

Then there's the part of the grid most people are familiar with — your local electric utility. That's where Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative comes in. We take electricity from the high-voltage transmission system and deliver it directly to your home, farm or business through lower-voltage distribution lines. We also maintain utility poles, power lines, electric substations and other essential equipment in our community.

When storms roll through or outages occur, our crews are the ones working to restore power safely and as quickly as possible. At Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, we're proud

to serve our member-owners and we're committed to providing safe, reliable, innovative energy solutions for our members.

Finally, there's you — the end user. Homes, businesses and industries all play a critical role in the grid. Your energy use directly influences how much electricity needs to be generated and delivered at any given time. During periods of high demand — like hot summer afternoons or cold winter mornings — the grid must work harder to meet increased usage. Simple steps, like adjusting your thermostat or running appliances during off-peak hours, can make a meaningful difference.

Beyond these key power players, there are additional organizations working behind the scenes to ensure our grid remains reliable and secure.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) develops and enforces reliability standards through a collaborative stakeholder process that includes utilities, regulators and industry experts. NERC also monitors the grid, trains personnel and assesses risks to help maintain a strong and resilient electric system across North America.

Meanwhile, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) provides federal oversight. FERC regulates interstate transmission of electricity and oversees wholesale energy markets to ensure they operate fairly and efficiently. It also plays a role in hydroelectric licensing and energy infrastructure development, helping ensure safe and reliable energy delivery nationwide.

From generation to transmission to your local utility, it takes a coordinated effort to power your everyday life. At Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, we're proud to be your trusted energy partner — and to play our part in keeping the grid strong for the communities we serve.