



POWER GRAM

December
2023

Cludcroft
575-682-2521
Alto
575-336-4550
Carrizozo
575-648-2352

www.ocec-inc.com

LOBBY HOURS
8 AM - 4 PM
Monday - Friday

**TO REPORT AN
OUTAGE, CALL
1-800-548-4660**

**FOR BALANCE
INFORMATION
OR TO PAY YOUR
BILL, CALL
1-844-846-2695**



A Monthly Newsletter for Members of

**OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Left: Photo by Joy Paulson

Reliable Power for Today—and Tomorrow

A message from Mario Romero

Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the general manager of Otero County Electric Cooperative (OCEC), for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at OCEC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So, how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Otero, Lincoln, Chavez, and Socorro Counties. You may not realize it, but OCEC doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Tri-State, and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resource mix is made up of 35% coal, 33% renewables, 18% natural gas/oil, and 14% market purchases.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, which holds down rates, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, OCEC is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps OCEC save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. Satellite imagery and drone inspections of lines and vegetation are available to help bolster reliability. When used, these technologies, aid us in monitoring the health and growth of trees and identify potential problem areas. As technology advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in New Mexico and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, OCEC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away. For maximum energy savings, look for smart thermostat models with the ENERGY STAR® label. Don't forget to apply for your energy efficiency rebate of \$100 when purchasing a smart thermostat

Source: energy.gov

Vegetation Management Update

Crews working to trim trees and vegetation in rights-of-way are currently in the following areas and are expected to remain there for the next few weeks.

- Hondo Valley
- Monjeau—Alto
- High Rolls
- Bent

OCEC reminds members that you may see vehicles, ATVs and crew members from Rogers Tree Service cutting trees near existing power lines. Vehicles will be marked with their company name and an OCEC contractor placard.

Apply to be a 2024 Youth Tour Delegate

OCEC is proud to sponsor delegates to attend the 2024 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors to visit Washington, D.C. for a week in June 2024.

OCEC began sponsoring students for the first time in 2017, but the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students from across the country to our nation's capital since 1950. And, this year, OCEC will sponsor up to four (4) students to go on this unique trip to watch history come alive as they explore museums, memorials and monuments, visit with U.S. Senators and make friendships that will last a lifetime.

Please encourage students you know to apply for this unique opportunity. Applications may be picked up at your local OCEC office, from your school guidance counselor or at www.ocec-inc.com.



OCEC Offices will be closed
January 1, 2024



OCEC crews participated in the 2023 Ruidoso Light Parade.