



# POWER-GRAM

December  
2022

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

[www.ocec-inc.com](http://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 Mario Romero

## Fight the Winter Chill and Save Energy

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Otero County Electric Cooperative (OCEC) is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

- **Think outside the box.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.
- **Mind the thermostat.** This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.
- **Button up your home.** The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.
- **Use window coverings wisely.** Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at 1-800-548-4660. OCEC's energy experts can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

## Scholarship Opportunity

Upcoming high school graduates who receive electric service from Otero County Electric Cooperative (OCEC) and will be attending a post-secondary school in the Fall 2023 semester are eligible to apply for a scholarship from Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC). This scholarship program is designed to recognize and encourage the achievements of children of member-cooperative consumers and is administered by BEPC in conjunction with OCEC.

Applicants must be a U. S. citizen who is planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year of four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Applications are available at your local OCEC office, from your school guidance counselor, or can be downloaded at [www.ocec-inc.com](http://www.ocec-inc.com).

The deadline to apply is February 15, 2023.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: [energy.gov](https://energy.gov)

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

From our co-op family to yours, we wish you a joyous holiday season!

OCEC offices will be closed on the following dates  
December 23, 2022, December 26, 2022 & January 2, 2023

## Apply to be a 2023 Youth Tour Delegate

OCEC is proud to sponsor delegates to attend the 2023 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 2023.

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. Deadline to apply is **January 10, 2023**. Applications may be picked up at your local OCEC office, from your school guidance counselor or at [www.ocec-inc.com](http://www.ocec-inc.com).



# ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

## 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.

- James Canyon
- Cox Canyon
- High Rolls
- Hwy. 380

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.

## December Employment Anniversary

JD Brown—Equipment Operator—4 years

Joe del Palacio—Meter Reader—4 years

Cheryl Gililland—IT Systems Administrator—4 years

Willie Ortega—Meter Reader—4 years

Jude Otero—Apprentice Lineman—4 years

Becky Wimsatt—Payroll Specialist—13 years

Lance Wright—Staking Supervisor—18 years

## Hacker Named Employee of the Quarter

Garrett Hacker was recently named as OCEC's Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2022. Garrett has worked for OCEC since October 2019. He is a journeyman lineman working out of the Alto office.

Garrett is a hard worker who is conscientious about his duties. He is always willing to step up when there is work to be done, and he volunteers for extra activities regularly.

Thanks for being an outstanding employee, Garrett!



Mark Martin (left) congratulates Garrett Hacker (right) for being named the Employee of the Third Quarter of 2022.