



POWERGRAM

A monthly newsletter for OCEC Members

MANY IN ATTENDANCE AT THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

OCEC held its annual membership meeting on Saturday, August 3, 2024, at the Cloudcroft High School Gymnasium. Members attended the meeting well, and a quorum was met, with 317 members registering.

The 2024 Annual Meeting Report was passed out with registration gifts. It contained written officer reports for the President and Treasurer of the Board, as well as a report from the General Manager. The Annual Report is also available online at www.ocec-inc.com. You can pick up a copy at your local OCEC office if you are interested in reading the updates about your cooperative.

Treasurer Scott Shafer did a brief financial update during the annual meeting and reported that the co-op is in good financial condition. Operating margins for the year were strong, with net margins of \$1.3 million. However, it should be pointed out that we deferred \$1.5 million of operating revenue in 2023. This is the first time OCEC has used this financial tool. This deferred revenue can be used in the future for special projects or general operation expenses and may assist in delaying a rate increase for members. The strong net margins also allowed capital credit patronage in the amount of \$869,000 to be refunded to members, covering all of the unretired capital for 1998 and most of 1999. This exemplifies the cooperative principle of returning to the member's net revenue not needed for operations. We can do this without any negative effects on the financial health of our co-op. Members who attended the meeting could pick up their checks; others were mailed after the meeting.

Mario Romero, General Manager, spoke about the risk of wildfires, and how preventing a catastrophic wildfire is one of the co-ops highest priorities. Each year, OCEC spends over \$1 million on vegetation management and triple that amount on system maintenance. As you might imagine, preventing every tree, branch, or limb from coming in contact with almost 2,800 miles of power line in our service area is all but impossible, especially given 100+ foot tall trees, paired with easements that only allow us to maintain the right-of-way up to 15 feet from the centerline.

What we do in this arena has numerous impacts on our members. The expense of tree cutting, vegetation management, right-of-way maintenance, and line maintenance all increase expenses, which you pay in higher rates. As we are becoming more aggressive with these efforts, many members get angry or irritated, even threatening crews. Your cooperation is requested as the crews are simply trying to protect our communities and membership from the next outage, fire, or lawsuit.

OCEC Education Foundation scholarship recipients were recognized, and a brief overview of scholarship totals since the program's inception in 1989 was given. To date, there have been 392 students awarded \$1.72 million in funding for continuing education.

Elections were held for three positions on the Board of Trustees. Preston Stone (NW District), Scott Shafer (NW District), and Charlie Mulcock (SE District) ran unopposed so will maintain their positions on the Board.

The meeting was live streamed on our Facebook page. It is still available there for anyone who would like to watch it.

After the meeting was adjourned, the drawing for over 115 door prizes was held and a tasty barbeque lunch was provided by the Cloudcroft Culinary Arts Program. Be sure to mark your calendars now for next year's meeting to be held on Saturday, August 2, 2025.



President of the Board of Trustees, Charlie Mulcock, addresses the membership at the 85th Annual Meeting of Members held Saturday, August 3, 2024.



JULY CALENDAR PHOTO
submitted by Kelli Pruett

**AUGUST
2024**

**CLOUDCROFT
575-682-2521**

**ALTO
575-336-4550**

**CARRIZOZO
575-648-2352**

**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
1-855-940-3957**

WWW.OCEC-INC.COM

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers, or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight and drafts. Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system.

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.

- o Lakeshore Drive, Crown Ridge, Avalanche Trail, & Elk Run - Alto
- o Apple Valley Sugarloaf, Piney Woods, Chippeway Park, Section 13 Road & Elliot Ranch - Cloudcroft
- o Glencoe

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.

WHAT CAUSES POWER OUTAGES

There's never a good time for a power outage, but you might be surprised to learn disruptions can occur from a variety of causes beyond the weather. Vehicle accidents and excavation work, small critters and scheduled repairs are also common causes of power outages. Whatever the reason, OCEC crews are always ready to respond and get your power back on as quickly and safely as possible.

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY MONTH

When red lights flash, stop & stay back 20 ft.



Attendance was good at the 85th Annual Meeting. Members heard updates about the co-op's financial standing, vegetation management, scholarship funding, and learned other valuable information from Tri-State and NM Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Plus, a great tasting barbecue lunch was served and some fabulous door prizes were handed out. Make plans to attend next year!



Alto Lineman Garrett Hacker explains electrical safety to members at this year's Annual Meeting. Contact the Member Services Department if you would like an electrical safety demonstration at a function or meeting in your area.

TO MAKE A PAYMENT BY PHONE OR
OBTAIN YOUR BALANCE, PLEASE
CALL

1-855-940-3957