OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

POWERGRAM

A monthly newsletter for OCEC Members

IS YOUR HOME READY FOR COOLER WEATHER?

Autumn is here. The days are getting shorter and the nights a little cooler. Now is the perfect time to make sure your home is ready for the cold weather to come.

Follow this checklist of home maintenance items to optimize energy savings while ensuring that your household is safe and comfortable all winter long.

- Check your heating system. Hire a qualified professional to inspect and clean your heating system. This will help ensure efficient performance and alert you to any potential maintenance or repair issues.
- Change your HVAC filter. Dirty filters restrict airflow, making your heating system work harder to keep you comfortable. Change your air filter regularly according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Clean your chimney. If you have a chimney, hire a qualified professional to clean it. A cleaning typically includes an inspection for soot buildup, obstructions, cracks in the chimney liner and signs of water damage.
- Air seal your basement. Check for air leaks around pipe or wiring holes on outside walls. Seal any leaks you find with expandable spray foam. Also, check for gaps where the wall meets the ceiling. Fill smaller gaps with caulk; fill larger gaps by stuffing in pieces of insulation.
- Test detectors. Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and test them to ensure that they work. Wired detectors should also have fresh battery backups. Replace any detectors that are 10 years old or older.
- Seal windows and doors. Check windows and exterior doors for gaps that can let warm air escape. Seal any you find with caulk or weatherstripping.
- Look at outdoor lighting. With nights getting longer, check outdoor security lights and switch out bulbs at or near the end of their life. LEDs are highly efficient, last longer longer than conventional bulbs and work well in cold temperatures.
- Clear gutters and downspouts. Blocked gutters can keep water from melting snow from draining. This can lead to the buildup of ice dams. Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and other debris.
- Trim trees away from your house. Heavy ice and snow can cause tree branches to fall. If they are hanging over your roof, they can cause serious damage.
- Maintain backup power. Make sure your generator or energy storage system is ready to go. Follow manufacturer's guidelines regarding testing, maintenance and safe operation.
- Sustain your snow blower. Inspect and test your snow blower to ensure that it's running and in good condition. If your unit is older or in need of repair, upgrade to an electric battery-powered model. Cordless electric blowers provide plenty of power for most needs. They also start easier than conventional units and operate quieter.
- Stock up. Make sure you have everything you need to maintain your property during extreme weather, such as snow shovels, rock salt and other deicers

With a little extra effort now, your home will be cozy and comfortable, and energy efficient during those cold winter days and nights to come



NOVEMBER CALENDAR PHOTO
submitted by James Vigil

NOVEMBER 2026

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

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120˚F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: Dept. of Energy

YOUTH TOUR 2027

Every generation leaves behind a legacy, footprints that shape the future. The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is your chance to do the same. For over 60 years, electric cooperatives have sent high school students to Washington, D.C., to discover their voice, step into history, and begin writing the story only they can tell.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience isn't just about seeing the nation's capital. It's about preparing students to lead, to grow, and to make their mark on the world.

The best part? All expenses—travel, lodging, meals, and program costs—are covered by Otero County Electric. The program is coordinated by the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Don't Let This Opportunity Pass By
Applications for Youth Tour will be accepted until January 20, 2027. If you know a high school sophomore, junior, or senior who is ready to grow as a leader and take the next step in their journey, encourage them to apply today.

The application may be downloaded at **www.ocec-inc.com**, picked up from your school counselor, or at your local OCEC office.

This is more than a trip—it's a chance to leave your mark.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT UPDATE

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

- West Side Road
- Cleanup for recent wind storm at multiple locations across the territory

Your cooperation is very much appreciated when you see crews working to keep these areas clear. This task plays a vital role in reducing fire hazards and ensuring consistent power delivery to members.

TRUSTEE FOR NE DISTRICT APPOINTED

The OCEC Board interviewed five capable candidates for the open Northeast District position during its September Board Meeting. Jim Cooper, a lifelong resident of Lincoln County, was selected to fill the position. We thank all of the candidates for their interest and willingness to serve OCEC.



DON'T BECOME A VICTIM

BEWARE Stay alert for fraudulent utility calls. Scammers can spoof caller ID to make a phone call appear to come from your electric utility—even when it doesn't. They may threaten disconnection, demand immediate payment or ask for personal information. Don't rely on caller ID alone to verify a caller's identity. If you receive a suspicious call, hang up and contact OCEC by calling 1-800-548-4660.

SCAM ALERT

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

1-855-940-3957