

enchantment

The Voice of New Mexico's
Rural Electric Cooperatives

**OTERO COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

MAY 2022

Gallup: A Way of Life

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This 12-foot bronze statue of an unidentified Navajo code talker in front of the Gallup Cultural Center is one of two statues a half-mile east of the Veterans Memorial. PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLUP CULTURAL CENTER

USMC

Otero County Electric Cooperative



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Chief Executive Officer

Mario Romero

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Emergency and Outages

800-548-4660

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Website: www.ocec-inc.com

Office Hours

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (M-F)

Board of Trustees

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Board Meeting

The board of trustees meets the third Friday of the month at 9 a.m. at the cooperative.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



ADOBE STOCK PHOTO BY DIMAKP

Otero County Electric Cooperative needs access to easements on member property. The co-op can provide a lock that protects privacy while allowing line crew access during power outages or emergencies.

The Importance of Easement Access

If you receive electric service from OCEC, chances are you have a utility easement on your property. These utility easements permit the cooperative to pass over or through your property as necessary to operate, repair, inspect and maintain cooperative facilities.

Otero County Electric respects its members' properties and right to privacy, and works with them to ensure their rights are respected while still allowing the co-op necessary access. We can place co-op locks on gates so the property owner and cooperative can gain entry to the property. The locks allow owners to protect their property while ensuring crews have access to rights-of-way and power lines, so they can do their jobs safely and efficiently.

Members who have electric gates can program a code specifically for utility companies to use. When notified of combinations by members, the code is safely stored within our account records where crews can obtain the information needed for entry while in the field. Combinations and keys are only provided to appropriate co-op personnel and are used exclusively to access co-op infrastructure. In some instances, members have asked that they be contacted prior to anyone going onto their property. While we try to honor that request when feasible, this is not standard practice.

With more than 2,800 miles of power lines serving more than 21,000 meters across four

counties, co-op crews and contractors are always in the field working to keep power flowing. With unpredictable weather being a top cause of outages, our crews need access to power lines all hours of the day and night, in all kinds of weather.

Having a co-op lock on a gate or a designated code for electric gates helps us restore power more quickly and safely. If members don't want one of our locks or don't want to provide us with a gate code, they can help us and their neighbors by ensuring we have their correct phone numbers or by opening their gates during outages.

To get an OCEC lock, provide a designated gate code or update contact information, members or property owners can call the co-op's member service representatives at 800-548-4660 or visit any OCEC office location in Cloudcroft, Alto and Carrizozo.

**OCEC offices are closed
May 30 in honor of
Memorial Day.**



Keep Outdoor Electrical Safety in Mind

By Pam Blair

The arrival of warmer weather signals the start of outdoor pursuits—everything from flying a kite to cutting the grass. While enjoying yourself outside, make sure you follow electrical safety rules.

- When overhead power lines are nearby, use wooden or fiberglass ladders—not metal. Look before you lift.
- Before digging into the ground, call and make sure you won't come in contact with underground power lines or any other utilities.
- Never fly kites, model airplanes or metallic balloons near power lines, or in stormy weather. Use only dry string.

Avoid using metal or wire on kites. If your kite or balloon gets caught on power lines, don't try to untangle it. Call your utility.

- Inspect power tools before each use for frayed cords, broken plugs, and cracked or broken housings. Make sure tools or extension cords used outdoors are marked for that use.
- Never remove the third prong of a three-pronged plug. If possible, convert two-pronged outlets to fit three-pronged plugs, using an adapter with a ground tab.
- Don't try to repair electric products yourself.
- Keep outdoor outlets and electrical products covered and dry between uses. Never use electrically operated power

tools in the rain or in wet conditions. Even morning dew can turn electricity into a serious shock hazard.

- Know the location of circuit breakers or fuses. Ensure you can easily reach them.
- Put a ground-fault circuit interrupter between your electric power source and your electric product.
- Don't plant tall-growing trees under lines. If a tree has lines running through it, don't climb it.
- Teach children to stay away from utility substation fences and pad-mounted transformers.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

Mark your calendars
and plan to attend the
2022 OCEC Annual Meeting
on Saturday, August 6!



ADOBE STOCK ILLUSTRATION BY MAKYZZ