

The Voice of New Mexico's
Rural Electric Cooperatives

Enchantment

OTERO COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE


JANUARY 2025

Explore Leadership and History

New Mexico's Rural Electric Cooperatives are committed to their communities, offering programs including Youth Tour **Page 16**

Each year, Youth Tour delegates spend a week in Washington, D.C., visiting historic sites, meeting representatives and building leadership skills. PHOTO BY LONNIE TUCKER



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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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 at 8:30 a.m. the third Friday of the month at the cooperative.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Apply Now for 2025 Scholarships



Since 1989, the Otero County Electric Cooperative Education Foundation has awarded more than \$1.7 million to students attending university, college or technical school.

The scholarship is \$1,500 per semester for the first two semesters. If the required GPA is maintained and the student continues enrollment, it increases to \$2,000 per semester for six additional semesters.

To be eligible, a student must be the dependent of an active members receiving electric service from OCEC. Applications are available at OCEC offices, at www.ocec-inc.com or from your school counselor.

The deadline to apply is March 15.

Another opportunity for OCEC members is through Basin Electric Power Cooperative. The cooperative awards scholarships to upcoming high

school graduates who attend a post-secondary school during the fall of 2025. Students must be dependents of active OCEC members.

This scholarship program is designed to recognize and encourage the achievements of children of member-cooperative consumers. BEPC administers the scholarship in conjunction with OCEC.

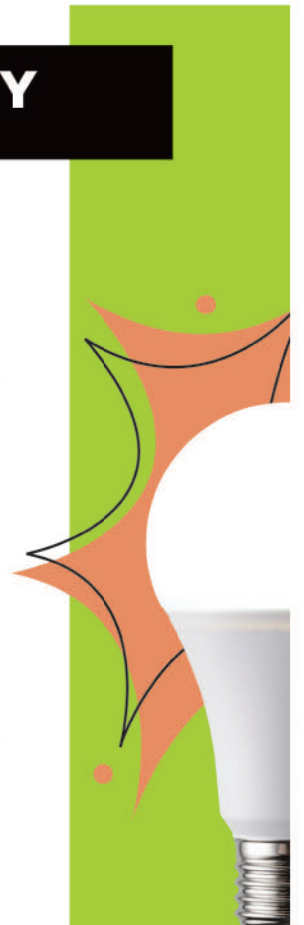
Scholarship applicants must be United States citizens who plan to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

Applications are available at OCEC offices, from your school guidance counselor, or at www.ocec-inc.com. Applications are due to OCEC by Feb. 10. ■

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Taking steps to help your home heating system run more efficiently can reduce energy use and lower your winter bills. Check to see if any air vents around your home are blocked by furniture, curtains or other items. Obstructed vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and can increase pressure in the ductwork, causing cracks and leaks to form. If necessary, consider purchasing a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture or other obstructions.

Source: energy.gov



16 Tips to Start the New Year Saving Energy and Money

These days, nearly everyone is looking for ways to save money and use energy more efficiently. As we start the new year, work to decrease your energy footprint. Simple changes can make a big difference over the life of a home—and there is no better time to take steps toward a healthier utility bill and a cleaner environment.

1. Unplug items from the wall, and turn off power strips.

Many devices use electricity even when turned off, including TVs, printers, chargers, copiers, coffee makers, microwaves and lamps.

2. Switch off lights when leaving the room. It's an easy way for every member of your household to contribute to energy savings.

3. Plug electronics into a smart power strip. Replace standard power strips with smart power strips that can detect when a device is in standby mode and cut power off to save energy. A standard power strip must be physically turned off when not in use.

4. Use a programmable thermostat. Set your thermostat at a comfortable temperature, but program it to lower the temperature when you are away from home or sleeping and raise it when you're there and awake to save on heating and cooling costs.

5. Use dimmer switches. Dimmer switches reduce the flow of electricity, saving you energy and money.

6. Lower your water heater temperature. For safety and efficiency, set your water heater thermostat to 120 F.

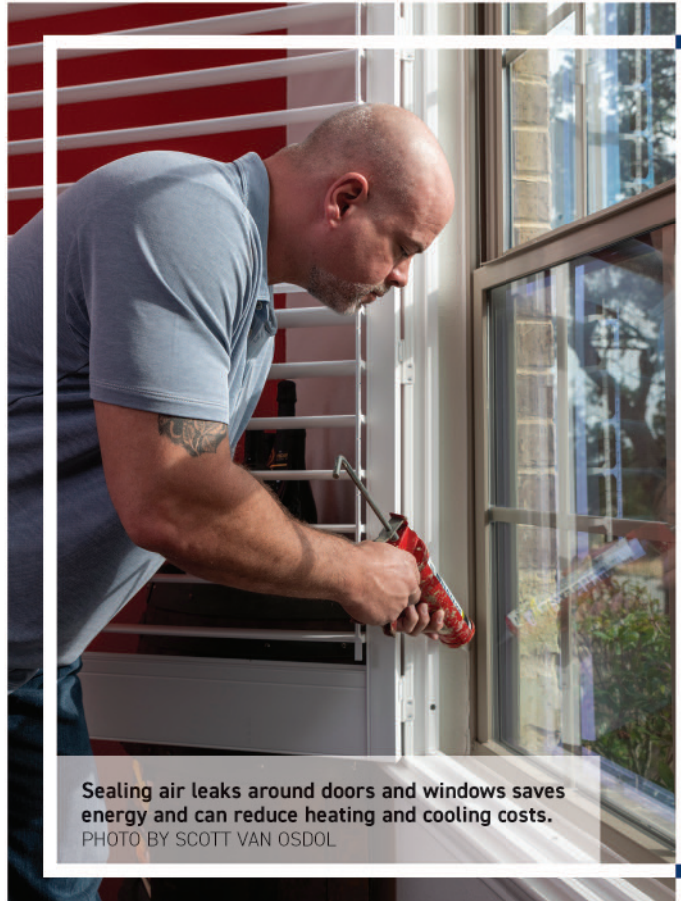
7. Weatherstrip exterior doors and windows. Sealing air leaks around doors and windows saves energy and can reduce heating and cooling costs by 10% to 30%.

8. Check the settings on your refrigerator. The fridge should be between 38 and 42 F, and the freezer should be between 0 and 5 F. Check the seals for cracks and dried-on food. Keep the condenser coils underneath the fridge clean.

9. Turn off the heat dry on your dishwasher. Allow dishes to air dry to save energy and money on your electricity bill.

10. Use ceiling fans, but only when you are in the room. Fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a windchill effect. If the room is unoccupied, turn off the ceiling fan to save energy.

11. Keep your refrigerator and freezer stocked. A full fridge and freezer cuts electricity use by acting as insulation.



Sealing air leaks around doors and windows saves energy and can reduce heating and cooling costs.
PHOTO BY SCOTT VAN OSDOL

12. Use LED lighting. Residential LEDs use at least 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting.

13. Wash laundry in cold water. Today's washing machines are designed to work efficiently with cold water. You can save up to \$60 a year by selecting the cold water setting when you wash.

14. Upgrade outdated appliances with Energy Star appliances. Look for newer, more energy-efficient models. The energy savings and tax rebates available are worth the initial cost.

15. Use wool or rubber dryer balls. This helps reduce drying time and cuts down on static. Wool dryer balls also absorb extra moisture and are an alternative to dryer sheets.

16. Keep your computer in sleep mode. You may be done using it, but if it's not set on sleep mode, the computer still uses electricity. ■