



enchantment

The Voice of New Mexico's
Rural Electric Cooperatives

**OTERO COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

MARCH 2025

Untangling Power Line Myths

We see power lines everywhere, so it can be easy to forget they can be dangerous **Page 18**

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Power lines distribute electricity
across New Mexico. ADOBE
STOCK PHOTO BY SHELL

Otero County Electric Cooperative



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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800-548-4660
Fax: 575-682-3109
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 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 SCHOLARSHIPS

Don't miss out on the chance to fund your future with the help of your local electric cooperative

Since 1989, the Otero County Electric Cooperative Education Foundation has awarded more than \$1.97 million to area 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, the student must be the dependent of an active member receiving electric service from Otero County Electric Cooperative. Applications are available at OCEC offices, at www.ocec-inc.com or from your school counselor.

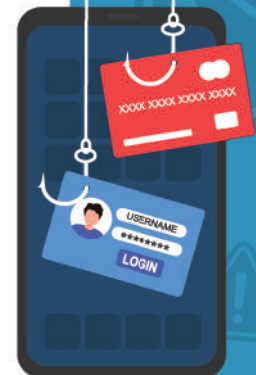
The deadline to apply is March 15. ■

TIPS TO AVOID

ENERGY SCAMS



Be cautious of fraudulent websites pretending to be an electric utility. Scammers often create look-alike sites to steal your personal or payment information. Always type your utility's official web address directly into your browser instead of clicking email or text links. Watch for signs of a secure website, such as "https://" in the address bar and a padlock icon. If you're ever unsure, call your utility company using the official phone number listed on your bill to verify payment or account details. Stay vigilant to protect yourself from utility fraud.



ADOBE STOCK PHOTO BY RAWPIXEL.COM

Be Ready for Storm Season

Spring is at our doorsteps, and many people look forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather. Springtime brings time spent cooking outside with family and friends, working in the garden or riding a bike.

Unfortunately, this season can also create the perfect conditions for severe storms.

Otero County Electric Cooperative crews are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, OCEC line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

We encourage members to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the tips below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness. Visit www.ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as

canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).

- Confirm you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.

- Ensure your first aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.

- Set aside needed basic household items, such as flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.

- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges and will also help prevent circuits from overloading during power restoration. Leave one light on so you know when power is restored.

If you use a portable generator, make sure it is rated to handle the amount of power

you will need, and review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check OCEC's Facebook page for restoration updates.

Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Advanced planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather and lessen the impact of the storm's effects.

Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and follow us on Facebook for power restoration updates. If you experience an outage, call 800-548-4660—this is the fastest way to let us know your power is out.

We can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At OCEC, we recommend you make a plan today—because storm preparedness is always your best defense. ■



ARE YOU STORM READY?

Follow these safety and preparation tips during spring and summer storm season.

Be Prepared.

- Create an emergency kit with power outage essentials: batteries, power banks, flashlights, non-perishable foods, water, medical supplies and prescriptions.
- Develop an emergency family plan with meeting points, communication methods and evacuation routes. Share your plan with all family members.
- Monitor weather for important updates that could impact your emergency plan.

Stay Safe.

- Ensure a safe shelter. Stay away from windows and doors. In tornadoes, move to a basement or an interior room without windows.
- Use portable generators safely: operate outdoors in well-ventilated areas, place on a flat, dry surface, do not overload and always read the operating manual before use.
- Severe storms can bring down tree limbs and power lines. If you encounter a downed line, stay back. Always assume a downed line is live and dangerous.

