

# ENCHANTMENT

THE VOICE OF NEW MEXICO'S RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

**OTERO COUNTY  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

APRIL 2026



## 84 Years Since Bataan Fell

A tribute to the New Mexico National Guard's Bataan veterans and the rural co-op counties they called home

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Louis G. Romero, center, wearing hat, was one of the many New Mexicans captured after the fall of Bataan. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW MEXICO MILITARY MUSEUM





A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Chief Executive Officer

Mario Romero

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## Emergency and Outages

800-548-4660

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Website: [ocec-inc.com](http://ocec-inc.com)

## Office Hours

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Monday-Friday)

## Board of Trustees

### President

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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.

# Tap Into Energy Savings

If your home is like most, you and your family use about 64 gallons of water each day. If your water heater is electric, that probably accounts for about 18% of your power bill.

That makes your water heater the second-largest energy expense in your home. Why not use less electricity to heat it?

Today's high-efficiency water heaters use much less energy than older models, so you don't need to give up comfort for energy savings. That's good news for your power bill.

There is a newer option to consider: an electric heat pump water heater. These units give you the hot water you need by pulling heat from the surrounding air to heat the water—like a refrigerator in reverse. Because they do not directly produce heat, electric heat pump water heaters are two to three times more energy efficient than standard units.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, a family of four can save about \$550 a year on water heating costs, which adds up to \$5,610 over the lifetime of the unit.

A heat pump water heater may cost more upfront than other models. However, according to the DOE, most people see a payback in less than three years due to the unit's lower operating

costs and energy savings. Look for the Energy Star label when shopping for a water heater.

Visit [ocec-inc.com](http://ocec-inc.com) and navigate to Energy Efficiency Program to see what is available. You may find it is more affordable than you think to install a water heater, add insulation, change out windows or make another qualifying upgrade.

Tankless electric water heaters are another option, but carefully weigh the benefits and drawbacks. These smaller units quickly heat water to provide it when called upon, but can use eight times more electricity than a standard water heater.

This high demand increases your utility's cost of purchased power, which plays an important role in how much you pay for electricity. In some cases, people who use electric tankless water heaters must upgrade their home's wiring to support the greater demand for electricity.

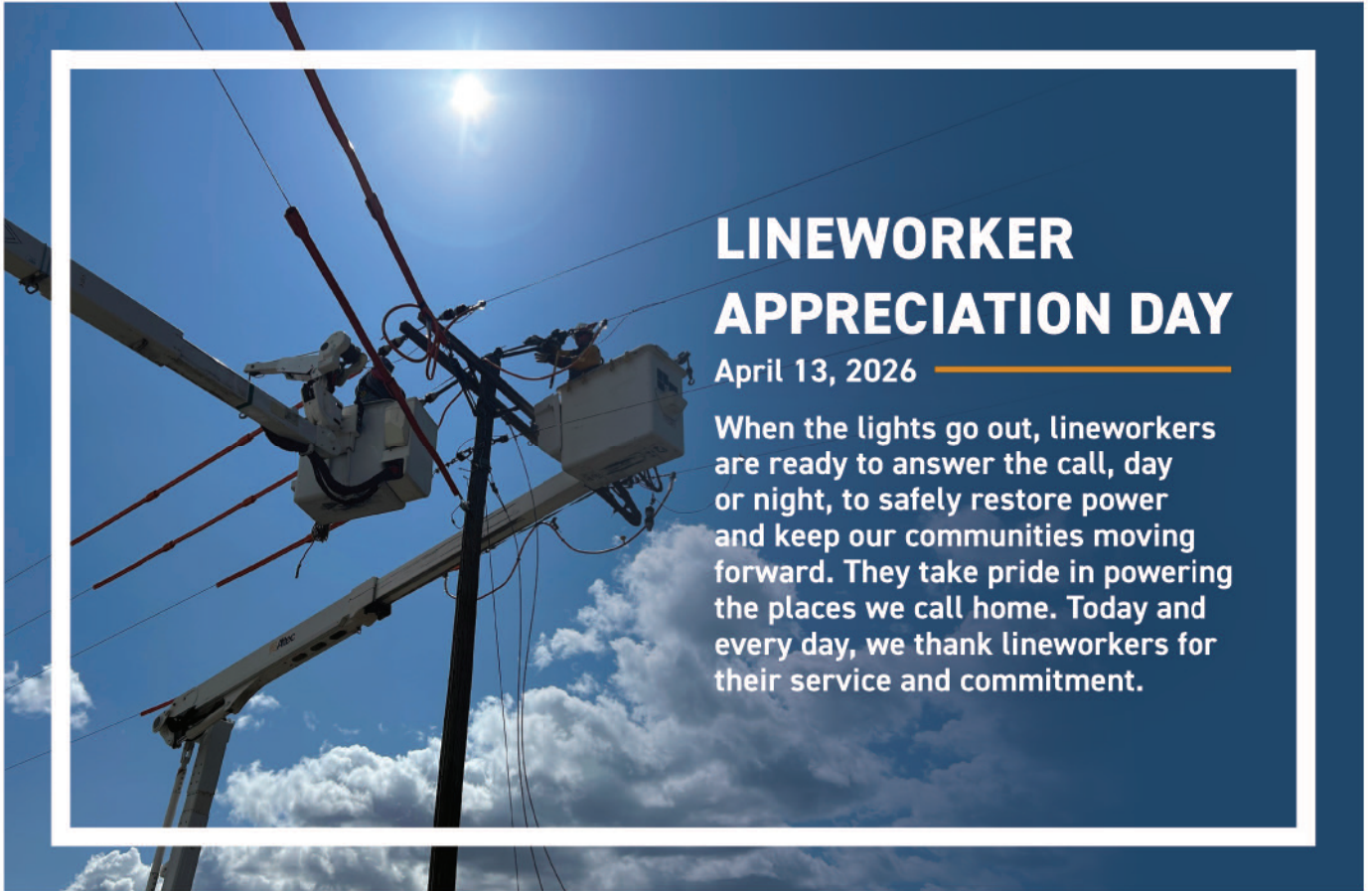
Other ways to lower your energy costs include setting your water heater's thermostat to no higher than 120 degrees, fixing leaks, installing low-flow fixtures, and using energy-efficient dishwashers and washing machines.

Helping you save energy and money is another way Otero County Electric Cooperative is always here for you. ■

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As we prepare for the seasonal shift, remember to set your ceiling fan rotation accordingly. In winter months—or whenever your home heating system is running—fan blades should rotate clockwise, which produces an updraft that pushes warm air down. In summer months—or whenever your home cooling system is running—blades should rotate counterclockwise, which produces a downdraft or windchill effect that makes you feel cooler. When used correctly, ceiling fans can boost comfort and allow you to adjust the thermostat a few degrees for energy savings.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



## LINeworker APPRECIATION DAY

April 13, 2026

When the lights go out, lineworkers are ready to answer the call, day or night, to safely restore power and keep our communities moving forward. They take pride in powering the places we call home. Today and every day, we thank lineworkers for their service and commitment.

PHOTO COURTESY OF OCEC

## Be Prepared in Case of Outages

Keeping the lights on can be a delicate balancing act. While the Otero County Electric Cooperative team does everything possible to deliver your power through safe, reliable, cost-effective means, the co-op cannot guarantee 100% uninterrupted power.

There is no good time for a power outage. Outages leave you in the dark and can disrupt communications, businesses and services, cause food spoilage and even prevent the use of medical devices. For these reasons, it is critical for members to be prepared. Below are some basic tips to help you:

- Have flashlights ready in multiple, easily accessible locations around your home or business. LED flashlights are great because they last much longer.
- Have plenty of fresh, spare batteries for your flashlights and other devices.
- Have emergency candles and plenty of matches.
- Have a battery-operated or hand-crank radio available.
- Store foods that do not require refrigeration and require very little warming or cooking.
- Have other means to prepare food, such as a grill and grill supplies, a camping stove or an open fire.
- Have a manual can opener for opening cans of food. If you

are a coffee drinker, have a French press available.

- Keep your cellphones, laptops and other devices fully charged. Also, have battery chargers and car chargers ready and accessible.
- Keep your car's fuel tank at least half full.
- Know how long refrigerated medications can be stored at higher temperatures, and have a plan for alternate refrigeration for medications critical for life.
- Keep containers of ice in your freezer. This will help keep food cold longer if power goes out.
- Keep a supply of books, board games, playing cards and other items to stay entertained.
- Sign up for local alerts.
- Keep extra blankets or sleeping bags handy for warmth.
- Have OCEC's emergency contact information available.

In addition to these common preparations, some members—particularly those who use special health care equipment, such as oxygen generators or dialysis equipment that require power—should notify OCEC about any power-reliant medical needs. The co-op maintains a life support list that will flag your account in its system as critical in the event of an outage or emergency. ■