

ENCHANTMENT

THE VOICE OF NEW MEXICO'S RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

JULY 2026

Powering Rural New Mexico Together

Member cooperatives gather at NMRECA's 82nd Annual Meeting to celebrate achievements, strengthen partnerships and prepare for the future


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Socorro Electric CEO Manny Gonzales leads a safety demonstration with rural NM electric lineworkers. PHOTO BY LONNIE TUCKER



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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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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.

WATTS UP?

You don't have to sacrifice comfort for savings in the summer

The dog days of summer are here. While July may bring more daylight, fun and time with family, it can also bring a surprising uptick in your electric bill.

There's something about summer that nudges energy use higher. It isn't always obvious, but the culprit often lies in how we live when the days are long and our schedules feel relaxed.

When children are home more often, electronics stay on longer. Televisions hum in the background all day. Gaming consoles are left in standby mode. Teens stay up late streaming movies, and the fridge works overtime supplying cold drinks and snacks. Even when your thermostat isn't the issue, this subtle shift in household activity can lead to increased energy use.

You don't have to give up convenience or comfort to be more efficient. Even small adjustments can have a noticeable impact on your energy use.

- **Cool Efficiently:** Swamp coolers are a great match for the region's dry climate, but they only work efficiently when airflow is managed properly. Crack open a few windows in rooms farthest from the cooler to help circulate the air. Check for gaps or leaks around the cooler unit, and use foam insulation or weatherstripping to seal off air leaks when the cooler is off.

Remember to replace cooler pads regularly. Dirty pads make the unit work harder and use more water.

When temperatures drop in the evening, turn off the unit. Use fans to draw in the cool night air instead.

- **Beat the Peak:** With more people at home

during the day, appliances such as dishwashers, laundry machines and water heaters get more action. To beat the peak, run major appliances early in the morning or late in the evening, when the cooler air helps ease strain on your appliances and the power grid.

Wash laundry in cold water and line-dry towels and swimsuits when possible.

To avoid adding excess heat to your home, use the microwave, slow cooker, air fryer or outdoor grill instead of the oven. Doing so will lower your air conditioning and overall energy use.

- **Put Your Home in Vacay Mode:** Summer is prime time for road trips, family reunions and extended weekends away. Before you leave, take a few minutes to prep your home while you're gone.

Unplug electronics and appliances—such as TVs, gaming consoles, coffee makers and chargers—to avoid phantom power use while you're away.

- Set your water heater to vacation mode, or turn it off at the breaker if you'll be gone more than a few days.

Likewise, turn off or raise the thermostat on your swamp cooler or unplug it entirely if no one will be home for an extended period of time. Close blinds and curtains to keep the sun from heating up your house and running the air conditioning while it's empty.

If you have outdoor lighting for security, consider using motion-sensor or timer-based lights instead of leaving them on continuously.

A few small steps prior to vacation can mean lower bills and fewer surprises when you return, and it's one less thing to worry about while away. ■

Sorry, we're
CLOSED

Otero County Electric Cooperative offices are closed Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.

■ OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. ■

2026 ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS



AUGUST 1, 2026

REGISTRATION - 8:30 AM
BUSINESS MEETING - 10:00 AM

CLOUDCROFT HIGH SCHOOL GYM



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