

K.C. ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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Our mission is to provide our members with safe, reliable service at the lowest cost, while maintaining an environmentally responsible, accountable and sustainable operation now and in the future.

2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

BY DAVID CHURCHWELL GENERAL MANAGER

There were many changes at K.C. Electric Association in 2018, but be assured, one thing that will never change is our goal to provide our members with safe and reliable service at the lowest cost while maintaining a sustainable operation.

In 2018, we said goodbye to one long-term employee. After working at K.C. Electric for 39 years, apparatus technician Ron Wolfrum retired in July.

During 2018, K.C. crews completed the voltage conversion project in Cheyenne Wells and upgraded circuits in and around Hugo. These upgrades will not only improve system reliability, but will also increase switching capabilities in emergency situations.

In June, our 2018 Annual Meeting was held in Stratton and we had an outstanding turnout. Jim Michal and Terry Tagtmeyer of Kit Carson County and Luanna Naugle of Cheyenne County ran unopposed and were deemed re-elected to the board of directors for a three-year term. The 2019 annual meeting will be June 6 in Hugo. Be sure to put it on your calendar and plan to attend K.C. Electric's 73rd annual meeting.

In July, K.C. Electric was once again recognized by the Colorado Rural Electric Association for another year of no lost-time injuries. This is a great accomplishment for the employees of K.C. Electric considering the dangerous and varying work conditions they must endure throughout the year.

In September, our power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, announced that it would not be raising the rate that it charges K.C. for the power we purchase. K.C. is governed by democratic principles and you, our consumer-members, elect our board of directors to guide and govern the cooperative. Along with approving rates and our annual budget, the board of directors also monitors K.C.'s equity, debt, capital credits



and overall financial health. At a recent board meeting, the board of directors deemed K.C.'s financial status healthy and supported no rate increase for 2019. The K.C. Electric Association Board of Directors and staff continually focus on controlling costs by managing debt, making investments to improve operating efficiencies and implementing technologies to improve internal processes.

Financially, 2018 was another good year for K.C. Electric. As I'm writing this, year-end financials are not complete, but we project that we will finish the year with adequate margins to meet our lender-required financial ratios. In November, the board of directors approved a general capital credits retirement of \$1 million to you, our consumer-members. In addition to this, over \$206,000 in capital credits were paid to estates throughout the year for a total 2018 capital credits retirement of over \$1.2 million. Checks were mailed to consumer-members in December.

Legislative, regulatory and environmental changes will continue to keep the electric industry changing at a rapid pace. With assistance from our statewide organization, the Colorado Rural Electric Association, and our national organization, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, we continue to monitor legislative activity on local, state and federal levels to determine how it will affect K.C. Electric and you, our members.

The year ahead will bring new challenges both financially and operationally for us, but the board of directors and employees of K.C. Electric will continue to do everything in our control to keep expenses down, and customer service and reliability high.

Mills receives NRECA top director **Gold Credential**

Danny Mills, K.C. Electric Association vice president, was awarded the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's top Director Gold credential. According to NRECA, the Director Gold credential is geared toward directors who are committed to continuing their education beyond the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate and the Board Leadership certificate, and who desire a tangible credential that reinforces their stature as part of an elite group of experienced and educated directors. The credential will also demonstrate to cooperative members and other stakeholders those directors' ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.



▲ K.C. Board President Kevin Penny presents board vice president Danny Mills with the NRECA Director Gold credential certificate.

Employee Profile

Jason Brandon, Journeyman Lineman



K.C. Electric's Stratton employee Jason Brandon recently completed K.C.'s apprentice lineman program and was promoted to journeyman lineman.

To be eligible to become a journeyman lineman, Jason had to complete the Merchant Powerline Job Training and Safety Program and complete 8,000 hours of on-the-job training. Throughout this training, Jason's test scores and skill level were closely monitored by K.C. Electric's apprenticeship committee. Upon completion of this rigorous apprenticeship program, K.C. Electric's apprenticeship committee recommended to promote Jason to the status of journeyman lineman.

Jason will now utilize the skills he learned during his apprenticeship to safely complete daily tasks and will begin assisting in the training of current and future K.C. Electric apprentices.

Congratulations and good job, Jason.

Claim Your Savings

Each month, members have a chance to claim a \$10 credit on their next electric bill. All you must do is find your account number, call the Hugo office at 719-743-2431 and ask for your credit. The account numbers are listed below. How simple is that?

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine (check the date on the front cover).

- Gary Kindred, Stratton — 1160300000**
- Frank Crites, Bethune — 304450000**
- Terry Graham, Hugo — 634300001**
- Laurel Nieman, Flagler — 506400000**

In December 2018, two consumers called to claim their savings: Theo Borden of Stratton and James Emmerling of Hugo.



Livestock Watering Systems

◀ Livestock watering systems can be insulated to keep them from freezing in the winter to provide frost-free water for the animals.

A dependable supply of drinking water is essential in any livestock production facility. During the winter it is important to keep the water from freezing.

Most of the energy used by a livestock water fountain is used to keep the water from freezing. Insulation around an automatic waterer or water tank and protection from the wind

will help curb heat loss and thereby reduce the energy needed.

Keeping float valves in good condition so they don't stick open or leak will reduce water losses and save energy by reducing the amount of water that must be pumped or heated. If leaks are eliminated, there will be less ice and mud around waterers.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Are you using a water fountain with a covered water surface?
2. Do water bowl covers fit snugly, while still opened easily by livestock?
3. In northern climates is the thermostat set so that the water does not freeze but not so high that the heater turns on when livestock drink (32 to 34 degrees Fahrenheit)?
4. Is the thermostat working properly?
5. Is there good wind protection around the water fountain?
6. Do float valves leak?
7. Would extra insulation be beneficial? Can it be installed?
8. Is the waterer the right size for the number of animals?

FACTS AND ACTIONS: LIVESTOCK WATERING SYSTEMS

- Make sure that water fountains don't overflow. Pumping the excess water or purchasing the water from a rural water supplier can be costly.
- Improperly working thermostats are a common problem. Test to make sure the thermostat is functioning correctly.
- Adjust thermostats to maintain frost-free water. Groundwater temperatures are generally between 42 and 52 degrees Fahrenheit. Make sure the setting is below that level, so the heater does not turn on when animals drink. Thermostat settings from 32 to 34 degrees will provide frost-free water.
- Energy-free or frost-free water fountains are available and can be operated without the need for a heater even in areas where winters are harsh. These types of water fountains cover the water surface with balls, lids or small openings to reduce heat losses. They don't need supplemental energy but require a minimum number of animals drinking from the fountain and/or direct contact with the ground to keep the water from freezing. They can save \$60 to several hundred dollars per year depending on the type of fountain.
- Insulate the concrete surface inside fountains and add additional insulation inside the fountain body and inside the top three feet of the riser pipe.
- When installing the fountain, use 12-inch diameter (minimum) heat well for riser pipe.
- Make sure to protect the water fountain from the wind.



Attention Members Notice of pole testing possibly in your area

K.C. Electric Association secured the services of the Sundance Pole Position, Inc., to perform pole testing on its facilities. Sundance will work in the Cheyenne Wells urban and rural area from the substation out on all routes. Crews will be in these areas until the end of April 2019. You will recognize them by their trucks or they will most likely be on four-wheelers traveling the designated pole routes in those respective areas. Please contact K.C. Electric Association with any questions.

Insulating Your Attic Is Like a Stocking Cap for Your Home

As you add a fuzzy hat, scarf and gloves to your wardrobe to help keep you warm this winter, remember your home needs to weather colder temperatures as well. Proper home insulation is an important step in saving money on your energy bill and making you comfortable in your home as the temperatures dip into the single digits or below this winter.

If your home feels drafty and could use more insulation, always start at the top since the majority of heat loss in a home is through the roof. Start with the attic or ceiling and work your way down through the walls toward the basement or crawl space. If you start adding insulation at the lowest level (basement or crawl space) and work your way up, upper floors could feel cool or drafty in the winter months since extra insulation below will cause the cool air to rise.

While addressing your home's insulation is one of the more costly expenditures you can make to save on your utility bill, it's the biggest bang for your energy buck, paying for itself in the long run.

Many utilities, including K.C. Electric, offer energy audits to assess your home's overall efficiency — not just insulation. Walk-through evaluations are usually free and blower door tests may or may not be complimentary. In addition, many utilities offer online interactive home energy efficiency tools and a bill calculator to project energy costs.

Start with the attic or ceiling and work your way down through the walls toward the basement or crawl space.

SAFE ELECTRICITY OFFERS OTHER WAYS TO HELP REDUCE ENERGY COSTS THIS WINTER SEASON:

Tip 1

If you don't have one, consider installing a programmable or smart thermostat. Both are programmable, but a smart thermostat allows you to monitor temperatures from your cell phone, even if you're not home. The smart version includes other features, such as adaptive technology, which adjusts the temperature based on your heating and cooling history.

Tip 2

Caulk windows and door frames that leak air. Also replace or update door seals if they are old or ineffective.

Tip 3

Bundle up and turn down your thermostat. For every degree you turn it down, you can save up to 3 percent on your energy bill.

Tip 4

If you do use a portable space heater, use it judiciously and safely. Using one for long lengths of time can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws so much power to run. If you use it continuously, it can add \$100 or more to your monthly energy bill. Space heaters touted as energy efficient aren't necessarily so; they may just cycle off more often.

Tip 5

If you can, turn down your water heater a few degrees; 120 degrees or less is recommended, especially with small children, to prevent accidental scalds.

For more energy-saving tips, go to SafeElectricity.org.



February 2019 Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

LAUNDRY TIP

Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy.

Source: energy.gov

Precaution for Pipes

During extreme cold snaps, prevent water pipes from freezing by keeping faucets turned on slightly so water drips from the tap. Know how to shut off water valves just in case a pipe bursts.

Eyewitness Protection

If electric wires in your neighborhood are sagging or a tree limb is pushing the line out of place, keep your neighborhood safe by alerting K.C. Electric.