

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.

PLAN TO ATTEND K.C. ELECTRIC'S 76TH ANNUAL MEETING

BY DAVID CHURCHWELL GENERAL MANAGER



DAVID CHURCHWELL

Once again, it's annual meeting time. On behalf of K.C. Electric Association, I want to personally invite you to join us on Thursday, June 2, at Kit Carson High School for our 76th annual meeting. Registration will start at 6 p.m. and the business meeting will begin at 6:30. I look forward to gathering with you, the consumer-members of our cooperative community, to catch up, hear what you have to say, and enjoy a tasty dessert and fellowship.

K.C. Electric's annual meeting is a community gathering where neighbors can meet new neighbors or catch up with old acquaintances. As our lives get busier with the "errands of life" and more interactions with each other are online, we must renew the value of face-to-face human connections. Very few organizations are uniquely positioned like K.C. Electric to bring together all members of our local communities.

While rural Americans probably do a better job of staying connected to our neighbors than other communities do, it's not something we should take for granted. The simple act of smiling, saying hello and shaking someone's hand truly lifts both parties.

Our country and community face many challenges, and overcoming these challenges will happen only if we come together.

This event is not only a chance to visit with members of our cooperative community, but it's also a great opportunity to hear about programs offered by K.C. Electric and get to know your cooperative staff. Our

annual meeting makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you.

K.C. Electric's annual meeting is designed to take care of the important business of your co-op and the equally important business of building a real sense of community. All cooperatives serve both an economic and social purpose. While safe, reliable and affordable electric power is crucial to our mission, improving the quality of life for all members is at the core of what we do every day.

K.C. Electric is not owned by faraway investors, and it is not run by an appointed board of directors. It is run by a democratically-elected board of directors — a board that has the privilege of serving because of your vote.

Our directors are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them too. And don't forget that consumer-members of K.C. Electric — including you — are eligible to run for the board.

If you have not attended K.C.'s annual meeting in the past, I urge you to take the time to attend, learn more about your electric cooperative, and catch up with your friends and neighbors. This is a great opportunity for you to grab your kids or grandkids and show them the value of being a consumer-member of an electric cooperative. Membership is ownership.

Member Advisory:

Beware of Scammers Pretending to be K.C. Electric Association

It's a trend that is becoming all too familiar — every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, websites or face-to-face communication. Scammers will try just about anything to get money or personal information. Sadly, pretending to work for or represent area utilities has become an increasingly common practice.

Beware of scams asking for personal information or immediate payment, and NEVER click on a suspicious link or attachment. If the knock at your door says they are partnered with or represent K.C. Electric Association, call us at 719-743-2431 to verify. We do not need to enter your home or need pictures of your billing information. Please send the person at your door away if you have any doubts.

Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important to stay on top of the latest scam trends. We want you to be aware of two scam tactics that have been reported by utility customers across the country.

One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam. If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, K.C. Electric will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle.

The second scam is an "oldie" with a modern twist: the phone call demanding immediate payment with a credit card, gift card, or confirmation of a wire transfer — but this time the phone call looks like it comes from K.C. Electric (even on caller ID). Don't fall for this tricky scam tactic! K.C. Electric will reach out to members to discuss payment arrangements if they fall behind, but we will not demand payment in the form of a gift card and we will not ask members to wire money to a specific person.

Here are a few ways to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.



- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.

- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent K.C. Electric, but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call us directly. Do not assume the name and number on your caller ID are legitimate. Caller IDs can be spoofed. You can reach us at 719-743-

2431 to verify the situation. We can provide you the status of your account, and you can alert us to the

fact that someone is trying to run a utility scam in our area.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting utility customers. Be vigilant and please report any utility scams to K.C. Electric so we can let others in our community know.



Claim Your Savings

Each month, K.C. Electric Association consumer-members have a chance to claim a \$20 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).

- **Matthew Thelen, Hugo — 603250005**
- **Hannah Hess, Arapahoe — 102200009**
- **Bobby Gray, Stratton — 934100009**
- **Eugene Erker, Burlington — 1110700000**

In March, three consumer-members called to claim their savings: Michael Sharp, Hugo; Herman Martin, Arapahoe; and Eleanor Herndon, Stratton.

A QUICK GUIDE TO GENERATORS

With proper use and maintenance, generators provide great convenience during a power outage. Before you purchase a generator, determine your backup power needs to select the right size. Make a list of essential appliances and devices you'll want to power during an outage, then total the required wattage.



RECOMMENDED IF YOU...

... rarely lose power.

Recreational Inverter

Up to 2,000 watts

Lightweight, about 60 pounds

Quiet; easy to store

Power: Fridge and a few smaller items (i.e. lamp, phone charger and home security system)

Midsized Inverter

Up to 3,500 watts

Weights up to 150 pounds

Power: Fridge, laptop, five to 10 lights, phone charger, home security system and 10K BTU air conditioner

... occasionally lose power.
Transfer switch required.

Portable Generators and Large Inverters

Up to 7,500 watts

Weights about 300 pounds

Power: Fridge, gas furnace, 10K BTU air conditioner, dishwasher, multiple lights, TV, laptop and more

Ability to connect to home's breaker panel

... frequently lose power.
Transfer switch required.

Home Standby

Up to 20,000 watts

Must be permanently installed; starts automatically during outage

Power: nearly all home appliances and electronics (simultaneously)

Can run indefinitely on natural gas or propane

Recommended if you frequently lose power.

SAFETY FIRST!

- Let us know if you purchase a generator that you plan to connect to an electric panel.
- Improperly installed generators can create back feed, which is dangerous to our crews and the community.
Before using the generator, disconnect the normal source of power coming into your home/business.
- Never operate a generator indoors or in an enclosed space.

Disclaimer: Safety requirements may differ based on the type of generator you purchase. Read the operator's manual thoroughly and know how to shut off the generator quickly.

Source: *Consumer Reports*

Q & A WITH THE BOARD: DAN MILLS



Dan Mills, board of directors representing Kit Carson County. This is the eighth of a series that will run here in Colorado Country

Life and is one way for consumer-members to become familiar with their K.C. Electric Association Board of Directors. This month's Q&A is with K.C. Electric Association Board Member Dan Mills.

1. Tell us about yourself and your family and its history in our community.

I have lived in Kit Carson County my entire life and have been a K.C. Electric consumer since 1973. My wife and two sons own and operate a farm and ranch south of Stratton. We have six grandchildren.

2. Why did you decide to run for a K.C. director position?

I was contacted by a member of the nominating committee and, after much consideration and discussion with my family, I decided to run.

3. What strengths have you brought to the K.C. board of directors

I would hope by being able to gather information and providing input to the board to help solve problems.

4. What are the major challenges you believe K.C. will face in the future?

Dealing with the new power suppliers and government regulations. The uncertainty of supply and government mandates will be a challenge.

5. What are your thoughts on the status of the electric industry in Colorado?

It's facing major challenges because of integrations of renewables. Going away from carbon free supply to all green

power supply; being heavily regulated by the state government.

6. What industry changes do you believe will affect the electric industry in the next 10 years?

Being able to build reliable battery storage and depending on reliable differences of solar and wind generations.

7. What do you feel you would like to accomplish as a director for K.C. Electric Association? Short term and long term?

Maintain a reliable and efficient power supply and dealing with urban legislators.

8. What is the greatest concern you have for the electric industry and how it will impact eastern Colorado?

Renewables and how they are integrated into our system. For our association, the focus on the retirement of irrigation wells in the Republican River Compact and how it will affect our loads and cost.

Restoring Power Safely and Efficiently

BY ABBY BERRY

We do our best to avoid them, but there's no way around it: Power outages occasionally happen.

For most K.C. Electric Association consumer-members, outages are rare and last only a few hours. But when major storms impact our area, extended outages are unavoidable.

When the power goes out, how do K.C. Electric crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We have answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines

that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. K.C. Electric keeps a supply of extra utility poles, transformers and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage. When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and we make it

easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is through our website kcelectric.coop; you can also call our outage reporting number at 719-743-2431.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a consumer-member of K.C. Electric, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.