

K.C. ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2022

K.C. ELECTRIC STAFF

David Churchwell
General Manager

dchurchwell@kcelectric.coop

Bo Randolph

Office Manager and CFO
brandolph@kcelectric.coop

Paul Norris

Operations Manager
pnorris@kcelectric.coop

George Ehlers

Member Services Specialist and
IT Manager
gehlers@kcelectric.coop



ph 719-743-2431
tf 800-700-3123
fax 719-743-2396
web kcelectric.coop

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.

CELEBRATING MEMBERSHIP

October is National Co-op Month

BY DAVID CHURCHWELL GENERAL MANAGER



DAVID CHURCHWELL

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities and fall harvest in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When I say K.C. Electric Association celebrates co-op month, it really means we are celebrating *you!* After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members-owners.

Our core business purpose is to safely serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Just how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions — because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

K.C. Electric works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's

comprised of neighbors who live right here

in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Leadership Camp, scholarship programs, and donations to school and 4-H programs.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together toward a common goal — mutually benefiting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which we live and serve.

As a co-op, we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. That's why we have numerous programs in place to help, including appliance, water heater, heat



K.C. ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL
CO-OP MONTH**

YOUR CO-OP NEWS

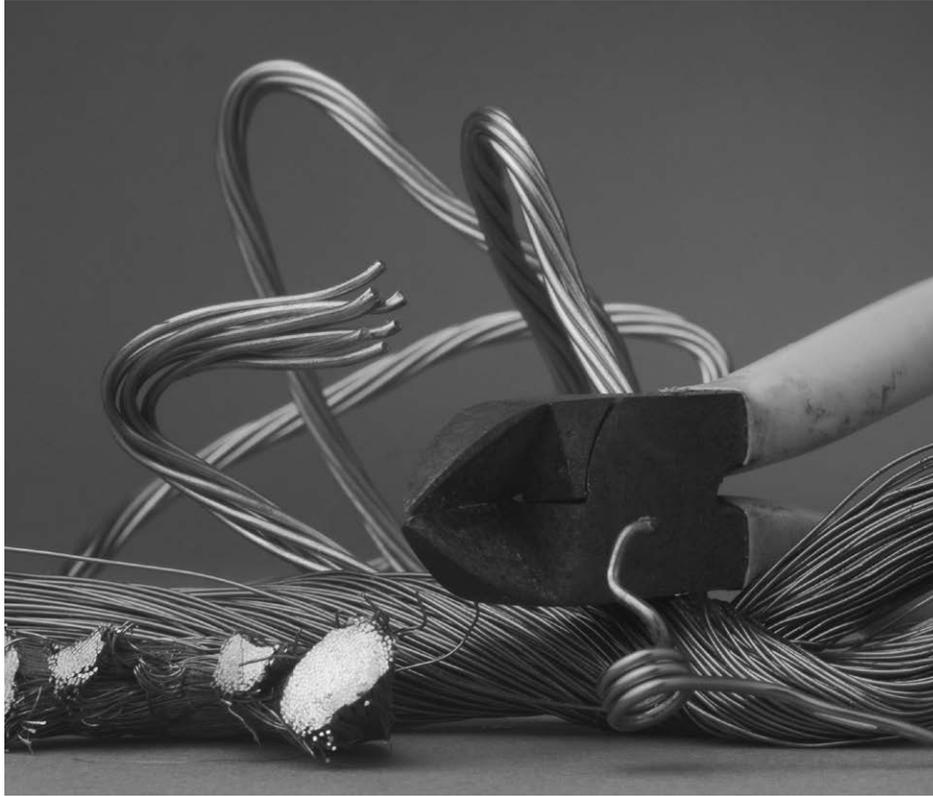
pump, LED and electric motor rebates, along with energy audits.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you take a moment and download our SmartHub app. Through the app,

you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And of course, we're here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

K.C. Electric is continuously looking for ways to operate more efficiently while

continuing to provide the highest level of safe and reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.



Report Suspicious Substation Activity

K.C. Electric Association and our neighboring electric cooperatives have been experiencing copper theft and vandalism in our substations. Copper theft and equipment vandalism is a crime and poses great danger not only to those stealing, but also to K.C. employees and the general public.

We are asking you to report any suspicious activity near our substations or other electrical equipment. Only authorized personnel are allowed within our facilities. If you see suspicious activity or unmarked vehicles lurking around any of K.C.'s substations, please contact local law enforcement.

K.C. Electric will pay a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons committing acts of vandalism that cause substantial damage to K.C. Electric's property and/or electrical equipment.

Thank you for helping K.C. Electric continue our mission of providing safe and reliable electricity to our membership.



Claim Your Savings

Each month, K.C. Electric consumer-members have a chance to claim a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. All you must do is find your account number and 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).

- **Gale Huff, Hugo** — 619500019
- **Jesse McConnell, Stratton** — 936000004
- **Shawn Gilliliand, Flagler** — 540650005
- **Jim Paintin, Burlington** — 1109780001

In August, two consumer-members called to claim their savings: John Crowell, Cheyenne Wells and Sammi Jo Chadwick, Cheyenne Wells.

Value of Insulation

Making sure your home is properly insulated can go a long way toward making your home more energy efficient and comfortable. Before you attempt to replace insulation, however, there are some tasks of the job to consider, including its location and your comfort

level with starting and completing the job correctly. If installing batt insulation, check to see if it is labeled with an R-value. Find recommended R-values at tinyurl.com/CSU-EXT-R-values.



When dressing your little ones (or yourself), keep these safety tips in mind:

-  Always wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
-  Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape to improve visibility.
-  Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eye care professional.
-  Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
-  Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy.

In addition, inspect any plug-in decorations for signs of wear and tear (fraying or bare wires or broken plugs) and replace them if damaged.

Make Safety a Halloween Tradition

Halloween is a time for candy, costumes and, in some cases, outdoor lighting or inflatable decorations. While preparing for and enjoying the holiday, follow these safety precautions:

Outdoor lighting

- Inspect each electrical decoration. Check cords for cracking, fraying or bare wires, as they may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Also, inspect for damaged plugs.
- Replace any damaged decorations.
- Make sure any lights, animated displays or other electrical outdoor products are safety-tested by a reputable laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratory and approved for outdoor use.
- Do not overload extension cords or allow them to run through water on the ground.
- Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into ground fault circuit interrupter protected outlets.
- When decorating outside, always make sure to look up and check that you and any equipment, such as ladders, are at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Always carry a ladder or other long object or tool in a horizontal position.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Consumer Product Safety Division and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offer these tips:

Costume safety

- Wear costumes that are labeled “flame resistant.”
- Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape for added visibility.
- Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless an eye care professional provides you with a proper fitting and instructions on how to use them.
- Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
- Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy by putting a small amount on your arm.

Food safety

- Do not let your little ones (or anyone) eat candy or other treats until they have been inspected at home.
- Check all labels for potential food allergens.
- If you have very young trick-or-treaters, remove any choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys from the goody pile.
- Inspect commercially wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as tiny pinholes, tears in wrappers or anything unusual.
- Limit your risk of questionable candy by ringing doorbells only at homes you know.

Get more electrical safety tips at SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit www.energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: energy.gov



FOUR WAYS TO BOOST YOUR CYBER HYGIENE

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

BY ABBY BERRY

In today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new. Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber" because we all have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

Enable multi-factor authentication. Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account. This second step could include an extra PIN; answering an extra security question; a code received via email; or a secure token. Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account. Not every account offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be used when available.

Use strong passwords and a password manager. Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal online home. Your passwords should always be long, unique and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters; never reuse passwords for multiple accounts; and use a combination of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters. Consider using a password manager to store them easily and securely in one place.

Update software. It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update. If you're not

receiving automatic software updates, set a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

Recognize and report phishing attacks. Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to thoroughly inspect emails. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings and poorly crafted language, ambiguous greetings, strange requests or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Cyber criminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all. Visit staysafeonline.org for additional cybersecurity tips.

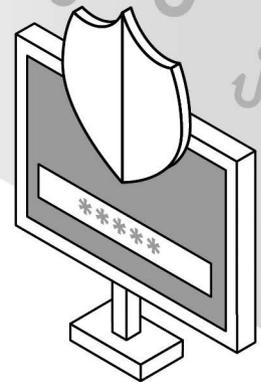
Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

See Yourself in Cyber.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Improve your cyber hygiene by doing these four things:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication
2. Use strong passwords and a password manager
3. Update software regularly
4. Recognize and report phishing attacks



Note to First Responders: Don't Take Chances

It is difficult to wait in an emergency situation, but approaching an energized area puts you and fellow first responders at risk of electrocution. Always wait for the utility to confirm that the lines are de-energized.