

SANGRE DE CRISTO ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Outlet

OCTOBER 2022



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Your community electric service provider.




SDCEA
Sangre de Cristo Electric Association
Your Community Electric Cooperative

CONGRATULATIONS TO SDCEA'S NEW JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN



SDCEA Chief Executive Officer Paul Erickson (right) presents a certificate to Colton Blankenbeckler commemorating his attainment of journeyman lineworker status after four years of work as an apprentice lineman.

SDCEA's Colton Blankenbeckler was recently recognized for earning journeyman status as an electrical lineworker. "Journeyman" means a worker who has attained a level of skill, abilities and competencies recognized within an industry as having mastered the skills and competencies required for the occupation.

To attain journeyman status, Blankenbeckler worked at SDCEA for four years as an apprentice. He logged nearly 7,000 hours of work in specific

areas, completed specific tasks outlined in apprenticeship coursework and passed 40 competency tests over the past four years.

Colton graduated from Buena Vista High School in 2017 and was an SDCEA scholarship recipient. He attended Western Colorado Community College in Grand Junction and earned a lineworker certificate in May 2018.

SDCEA is lucky to have such a dedicated and ambitious linecrew. Congratulations to Colton on his accomplishment.



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.

Safe
Electricity.org

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:

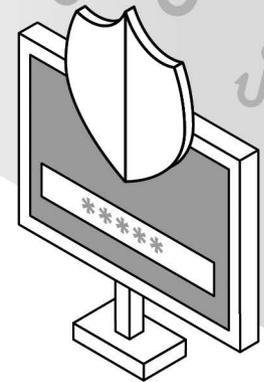
- 1. Enable multi-factor authentication.** Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account. This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, receiving a code 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.
- 2. 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 upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters. Consider using a password manager to store them easily and securely in one place.
- 3. 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.

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



- 4. 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 Apple 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.

Don't Become Electricity's PATH TO GROUND



When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, **the ground and objects can become energized.**

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire or padmount transformer (green box), **know what to do to save your life and the lives of others:**

CAR ACCIDENT

Stay inside your vehicle or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.



Call 911 and report that there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.

Wait for the utility crew to arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not exit until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

ONLY EXIT IF THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE

Cross your arms over your chest and **make a clean jump out.**

Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Make solid hops with your **feet together** as far away as you can.

Do not return to the vehicle.



IF YOU ARE A BYSTANDER

Do not approach the scene to try and help.

Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

What would you do if you came upon a downed power line?

While typically not an everyday occurrence, overhead power lines, pad-mount transformers (green boxes) or other electrical equipment can become damaged due to the effects of storms, fires, car accidents, animal interference or a car slipping off the road.

(Spoiler alert: Do NOT do any of these things.) If you were in an accident involving a downed overhead power line, would you get out of the car and run? If you saw a car accident involving a downed line or damaged green box, would you run to the scene to help? If you saw a downed line across a road, would you approach it or try to move it?

Any of these actions can cause serious injury or death by electrocution. Downed lines and other damaged equipment can energize the ground, nearby people and objects. Never go near a downed power line or try to move it with an object. Electricity can jump from a wire or object straight to you, its quickest path to ground.

The safest place to be after an accident involving a downed power line is inside your vehicle or cab. Unless your vehicle is on fire or giving off smoke, here is what you should do:

1. Stay inside your vehicle or cab.
2. Call 911 and report that there are downed or damaged power lines.
3. Try to remain calm.
4. Wait for the SDCEA crew to arrive and de-energize the power.
5. Do not get out until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

If you must get out of the vehicle because it is on fire, cross your arms over your chest and make a clean, solid jump out, then intentionally hop with your feet together as far away as you can. If you are unable to make solid hops, shuffle with your feet close together.

When you exit, do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time — you could become electricity's path to ground from "touch potential" (touching something energized and the ground at the same time).

Hopping helps avoid "step potential" (placing each foot at a different voltage). When electricity escapes into the ground, it is likened to ripples in a pond, with each ripple representing a different voltage.

To learn more about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Learn more at:

**Safe
Electricity.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



OUTAGES

Do you have an outage to report? Don't hesitate to call 719-395-2412 or toll-free 844-395-2412.

DO NOT email your outage information or post your outage information on social media. SDCEA cannot monitor that information effectively, especially after hours. The only way to be sure we know you have an outage is to phone it in.



SUPPLY CHAIN LEAD TIMES

SDCEA is alerting contractors, builders and members that lead time on materials is longer than normal. This may impact line extension, service upgrade projects and programs in 2021. SDCEA is working to maintain a healthy inventory of equipment to minimize potential delays, yet we encourage stakeholders to review their project estimates and timelines closely. To ensure realistic expectations, please reach out to our engineering department regarding any changes in your project timeline.



REBATES

SDCEA and our power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., have teamed up to bring you rebates for installing Energy Star-rated water heaters and Energy Star-rated appliances.

Want to learn more? Go to our website, myelectric.coop, click on Save Energy & Money and head to the rebates tab.



NEW PHONE/EMAIL

If you've changed your phone number or email address since you've taken service with SDCEA, please update your information with us.

Visit myelectric.coop and go to the login box. There you can create an account, or update information if you already have an account.

You may also email us at info@myelectric.coop or call us 8 a.m.–5 p.m. M-F at 719-395-2412 or toll-free at 844-395-2412.



SDCEA INFO

SDCEA posts board meeting information, annual reports, board contacts and more for members to access at any time. To view these items, create an account on our website at myelectric.coop. Sign in and find this information under our "Members Only" section, found on the left side of the landing page.

If you want to see rates and policies, that information can be found on the landing page for your account (SmartHub). Go to the My Profile menu item on the top and select Documents from the drop-down menu.