



DSO
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**DSO ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

HEADLINER

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Kenneth Berry
Minneapolis, Director

Bruce Spare
Assaria, Director

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Timothy J. Power
CEO

Marla Marshall
CFO

Mike Olberding
Operations Manager

Derrick Rutherford
Communications Manager

Office Hours

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday
Open over the lunch hour

Payment Locations

**CENTRAL NATIONAL BANK IN
WALMART SUPERCENTER**

521 E. Chestnut St., Junction City, KS 66441

FARMERS STATE BANK


447 Harrison, Lindsborg, KS 67456

Outage Information

**IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE, CALL
800-376-3533.** After-hours calls will be
answered by dispatch and forwarded to
standby personnel.

Find Out More

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On the Line BY MIKE OLBERDING, OPERATIONS MANAGER

This month, I will share my experience investigating my DSO electric bill for December usage. I was curious how the cold weather in December would affect my bill, as my house is very well insulated and air sealed. To my surprise, the bill was about \$70 higher than last year. I was suspicious that the cold stretch of weather in December had that much of an effect on my house, so I decided to look into the matter.

I first looked at my usage on SmartHub. (In addition to hourly usage, SmartHub also tracks the high, low and average temperatures. SmartHub is available on www.dsoelectric.com to every DSO member.) I found that we used two to three kilowatt-hours (kWh) more than normal each hour, and it appeared we were still using the higher amounts. With the higher usage amounts in mind, I set out to see if I could find the cause. Using a voltmeter, I started reviewing the breakers in the

breakers box. I ultimately determined a switch on a well we only use in the summer was never shut off and, as a result, the well motor ran constantly. The math on the oversight was sobering; it was costing us \$5.76 per day! I quickly got the issue fixed so it doesn't happen again.

I know there are a lot of members who have high bills, but don't have the experience to find the problem. Over the years, I have helped a lot of members find where power was being used beyond the meter, so I am sharing the following list of things that I typically look for:

- ▶ Overhead triplex that has been damaged by trees or debris may have a bad spot on the wire and water and contaminants will normally buildup, and eventually cause an outage, but in the meantime, it is losing electricity.
- ▶ Underground wires that have a bad

Continued on page 12B ▶



SOLAR Update

Construction on DSO's solar farm south of Solomon is progressing on schedule and should be operational for summer. This is DSO's third solar farm.

2023 Board of Directors Candidates

All directors below are deemed elected, as there were no other members seeking the positions.

Director nominees are **NOT** listed on the ballot per **BYLAWS SECTION 3.05 VOTING** — *If the number of qualified candidates nominated by petition for election as a director in each district or at large is less than or equal to the number of vacancies in each district or at-large, then the election of directors shall automatically be dispensed with and the nominees shall be deemed elected.*

Ken Berry, West District



Ken Berry

KEN BERRY is a lifelong resident of northwest Ottawa County, where he, his wife, Tina, and their three sons (and their families) operate a grain

and livestock operation and small seed business.

He thinks that stable, reliable and affordable electric power is vital to the well-being of the small communities and rural areas that DSO serves. He observes that the cooperative is facing a changing electric power landscape and would like to continue to help guide the cooperative in the

implementation of new power sources and generation methods, as well as the distribution of that power as unique needs and technologies arise.

David Mueller, East District



David Mueller

DAVID MUELLER

is a grain farmer and runs a cow/calf operation between Tampa and Ramona. He graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in

agricultural economics. Previously, he has served on the board of the local rural water district and Agri-Producers Grain Cooperative. He currently serves as chairman of the Marion County Commission, treasurer for St. John's Lutheran Church, and chairman for Tampa Trail Stop, a community-owned volunteer grocery store.

Mueller has been a DSO director for more than 10 years and has earned the Board Leadership Certificate and Credential Cooperative Director Certificate through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) training program.

“Safe, reliable, and affordable utilities are vital to our rural community,” Mueller said. “As a member of DSO, you should be proud of the commitment

to safety and the quality of people working for your cooperative. The best I can do as a director is ask questions and discuss issues that concern you, my neighbors, and fellow member-owners, and look for long-term solutions.”

Bruce Spare, Central District



Bruce Spare

BRUCE SPARE

and his wife, Cheryl, live in Assaria. They are the parents of two adult children. Spare is a graduate of Kansas State University with

a bachelor's degree in agriculture. He is a rancher and currently manages three rural water districts in Saline County. Spare is an active member of the Lindsborg Evangelical Covenant Church. He enjoys singing in the Kansas Mennonite Men's Choir and the Smoky Valley Men's Chorus. One of his hobbies was building a sawmill, which he enjoys using to saw a variety of trees.

Spare has served as a DSO director for the past 18 years. He earned his Board Leadership certificate and the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate administered by NRECA. He has experience in all officer positions and has fulfilled committee responsibilities on the DSO board.

On the Line Continued from page 12A

spot where soil has a high resistance may increase electrical usage instead of tripping a breaker like you would expect from a short. Carbon will build around the wire and leak energy into the earth.

- ▶ Tank heaters and vehicle block heaters use a substantial amount of power even when they are working properly and may use even more if they are not working correctly.
- ▶ Upright refrigerators and freezers can be big users, especially if the weather stripping around the door is bad.
- ▶ Electric space heaters are often advertised as an economical way to warm your home, but they use a

substantial amount of electricity if used for several hours a day.

If you notice your electric usage has increased and you can't figure out what has caused it, first consider the temperatures during the billing period and whether you've changed anything.

If you're still concerned, it's best to find a reputable electrician to help determine where the usage is going. There are some good energy management consultants out there that can help, and you may benefit from an energy audit.

Finally, call the DSO office if you need help setting up a SmartHub online account so you can see your electric usage.



10 Do's and Don'ts When Using Portable Generators

Storm season is upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. So if you're planning to use a portable generator during an outage, DSO reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are misused, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- 1 DO:** Install backup CO alarms on every floor of your home and outside bedrooms.
- 2 DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- 3 DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows, and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- 4 DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- 5 DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords rated to handle the generator's load. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays, or other damage before use.

6 DON'T: Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.

7 DON'T: Open windows or doors while the generator is running.

8 DON'T: Rely on generators as a full-time power source. They should only be used temporarily or in emergencies to power essential equipment or appliances.

9 DON'T: Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Ensure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.

10 DON'T: Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. So before you use a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 800-376-3533.

Cold Weather Rule Ends this Month

With the Cold Weather Rule ending March 31, this is a good time to review how DSO handles delinquent accounts. Payments for electric service mailed to DSO shall be deemed delinquent if the envelope is postmarked on or after the due date stated on the bill. All other forms of payment for electric service shall be deemed delinquent if payment is not received by DSO or its authorized agent on or before the due date stated on the bill. For residential members, the due date shall be the last day of the month after the date of billing. For all other members, the due date shall be the 25th day after the date of billing.

When a bill becomes delinquent, a late payment fee, as specified in the schedule of fees, shall be added to the member's bill, and collection efforts by DSO shall be initiated.

Suppose the last calendar day for remittance falls when DSO is not open to the general public. In that case, payments in DSO's after-hours depository or received in the mail on the first business day after the due date shall be considered on time.

Prepaid accounts become delinquent immediately upon failure to maintain a credit balance. DSO may discontinue service for such delinquency immediately, with no notice to the member.

DSO will send one written notice mailed first class at least 10 days prior to termination of service.

DSO may notify, as a courtesy, members by telephone at least 24 hours before they are to be disconnected.

Some members may qualify for the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). LIEAP is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy cost by providing a one-time per-year benefit. To learn more, call 800-432-0043.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

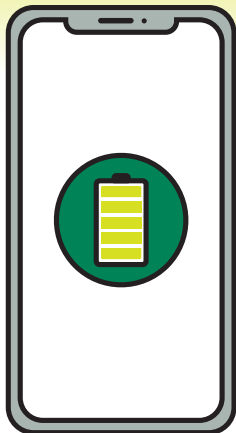
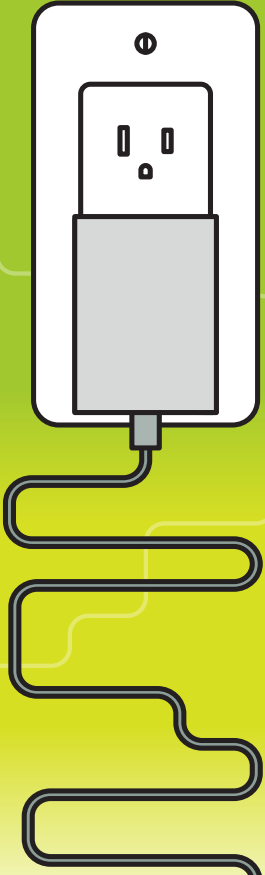
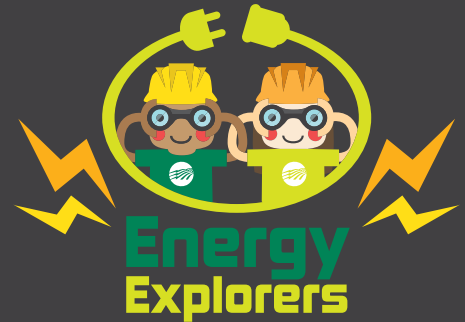
Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



ELECTRONICS EFFICIENCY WORD SEARCH

Did you know there are ways you can reduce your electronics energy use?

Read the energy-saving tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.



- ▶ Use a **power strip** with an on/off switch when powering multiple electronics to easily manage energy use.
- ▶ For devices that require **batteries**, use **rechargeable** ones, which are more cost-effective and environmentally friendly.
- ▶ **Unplug** electronic products that consume energy even when they're not in use, like **phone chargers**.
- ▶ Use the sleep or **power management** mode on your **computer** to save on energy costs.

