



**DSO ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

DSO
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

HEADLINER

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CEO

Judy Barten
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

 facebook.com/DSOElectricCooperative

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ON THE LINE

Co-op Inspection Program

BY MIKE J. OLBERDING, OPERATIONS MANAGER

As I sit in my office looking out at the fresh snow covering the grass, I think about all the things DSO will be doing in the coming months. The mild winter weather, with exception of a few tough weeks, has allowed us to get more work done in these winter months that we normally wait until spring to address.

Over the last several years, we have put together a proactive inspection program to help identify and eliminate potential issues so that we can be better prepared for whatever the unpredictable Kansas weather brings next.

Poles

In January, we started inspecting poles in the Marquette, Lindsborg and Milford areas. The crews have been checking

every DSO pole in these areas. They are testing poles at the ground line and visually inspecting poles above the ground line, checking hardware for tightness and damage, making sure grounds are in place, and looking for other damage, such as cracked or damaged insulators, cutouts and arrestors. Linemen are also checking for proper wire sag and frayed or otherwise damaged wire between poles. On average, we find around 3% of the poles need to be replaced/fixed for one reason or another.

Underground Wires and Connections

Crews will also be inspecting all underground installations in the Junction

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer. Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.

SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV



Cold Weather Rule ENDS MARCH 31

DSO will begin disconnection procedures as the weather allows. Some of our 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.

Payments for electric service that are 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 25th day after the date of billing. For all other members, the due date shall be the 20th 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.

If the last calendar day for remittance falls on a day when DSO's office is not open to the general public, then 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 ten 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.

Co-op Inspection Program

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City area this year. These inspections consist of opening every underground transformer and junction box to check connections, as well as making sure all the danger and hazard stickers are intact. Linemen will also make sure rodents and snakes have not entered the boxes, check that trenches are level and compacted, and ensure the equipment is in good working condition. This does take some time and we appreciate patience when the crews are in your area.

Once the crews compile all the inspections, they give this information to our operations clerks to enter service orders and staking sheets, request underground locate tickets, as needed, and prepare material lists. Crews are then sent out to clean up, repair or replace equipment.

Work Plan

Crews will also be working on the annual work plan this year. The 2021 work plan consists of rebuilding about 30 miles of line, replacing older line (some, over 50 years old), and moving line that has right-of-way issues. Most of the line that will be replaced is copper weld, which we have had a lot of issues with over the years, as it doesn't stand up well against ice or wind. By replacing this line, we can reduce outages.

With all the inspections and replacements, our goal is increased reliability, reduced outages and elimination of unsafe conditions. If you see anything out of the ordinary on the power lines, please call the office and talk to one of the operations clerks.

“With all the inspections and replacements, our goal is increased reliability, reduced outages and elimination of unsafe conditions.”

REMEMBER ELECTRICAL SAFETY

As you prepare for planting season don't forget to plan for safety. There are many aspects to safety on the farm, but electrical safety is often overlooked. Keep these safety tips in mind as you prepare for planting.



TRAIN OTHERS: Train anyone working on your farm, including family members and seasonal workers, on electrical hazards.



USE A SPOTTER: When working near power lines, always have a spotter on the ground who can direct you away from power lines or poles if you are getting too close.



SAFETY FIRST: Have daily meetings to review the day's work and discuss safety implications. Know and review where the power lines are, the clearance required, and the proper position of extensions as they are transported.



DO NOT EXIT YOUR CAB: If your machine or truck makes contact with a power line, pole or guy wire, you could become electricity's path to ground and become electrocuted if you step out of the cab.



WAIT TO UNFOLD: Remind workers to fold or unfold extensions well into the field, not close to the field's edge where power lines are typically located.



CALL 911: Call 911 to have your electric utility dispatched to deenergize the power source. Only exit the cab if your equipment is on fire. If that happens, make a solid jump out and hop away with feet together as far as you can.



Smart Home Tech for Your Budget

Smart home devices can add comfort and convenience to your life, but the price tag for some of these devices can be another story. Since many smart home technologies are new and cutting-edge, the cost of owning these devices can sometimes be a major barrier. Luckily, there are several inexpensive options for smart home devices that won't break the bank, while still offering nearly all the same benefits. If you're new to smart home technologies, here are three inexpensive options to get you started.

Smart home speakers provide a wide range of features such as the ability to play music, call friends or family or even locate a misplaced smartphone. One of the most useful aspects of smart home speakers is that they act as a smart home hub for your other smart devices. Each smart speaker comes with a voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant, which can be used to control additional smart devices in your home. When choosing a smart home speaker, make sure your other smart devices are compatible with the system. Google Assistant, for example, works best with other Google products, rather than Amazon or Apple products. Several smart home speakers, especially smaller, entry-level types like the Amazon Echo Dot and Google Home Mini, can cost as little as \$30 or less. This makes them more affordable than the larger versions, like Amazon Echo and Google Home, while still offering nearly all the same features.

Another affordable smart home technology is the smart plug. The technology works by directly inserting the smart plug into an outlet, then plugging your device into the smart plug. This can make any device "smart" by connecting it to your Wi-Fi through the smart plug. They can also be used with smart home speakers. One of the best features

of a smart plug is that it can help you reduce your monthly energy use. This can be done by programming automatic shut-off times to prevent devices from drawing energy when they're not in use. There are plenty of inexpensive and well-performing smart plugs available under \$20.

Smart lightbulbs are among the cheapest and the easiest smart devices to install in your home. They can be controlled through your phone or by voice if connected to your smart home speaker. Some interesting features include the ability to choose different lighting colors and shades, dimness levels, and the ability to turn them on or off entirely. There is an extensive market for smart LED bulbs, but some of the less expensive options are the Wyze Bulb, the Lixf Mini and the Ikea Tradfri, with prices ranging from about \$8 to \$20 per bulb. For multi-bulb fixtures, an alternative to buying several smart bulbs is to buy a smart light switch to control the entire fixture. However, this option doesn't allow for different color choices and requires a bit more handiwork to manually change out the switches.

Remember, if you're looking to buy more than one smart home device, make sure the devices are compatible with your smart home hub (Google Home Mini with Google products, or Amazon Echo Dot with Amazon products) to ensure the best performance of all devices. As with any smart home device, access to a secure and stable Wi-Fi connection will be crucial to using the technology properly. Smart home devices will almost always be more expensive than their "non-smart" counterparts, but they provide additional comfort and convenience that traditional devices simply cannot. The value of these devices is up to you, the consumer, to determine if they are truly worth the price.

2021 Board of Directors Candidates

All directors below are deemed elected (with the exception of the West District vacant position) 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.



Dean Allison



David Butler



Dane Clark



Ken Hedberg

▶ **WEST DISTRICT, POSITION 1**
KEN HEDBERG

▶ **WEST DISTRICT, POSITION 3**
VACANT

▶ **CENTRAL DISTRICT, POSITION 1**
DANE CLARK

▶ **EAST DISTRICT, POSITION 1**
DAVID BUTLER

▶ **AT-LARGE**
DEAN ALLISON

ELECTRONICS EFFICIENCY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Did you know there are ways you can reduce your electronics energy use?
Complete the crossword puzzle below to learn about electronics efficiency.



WORD BANK

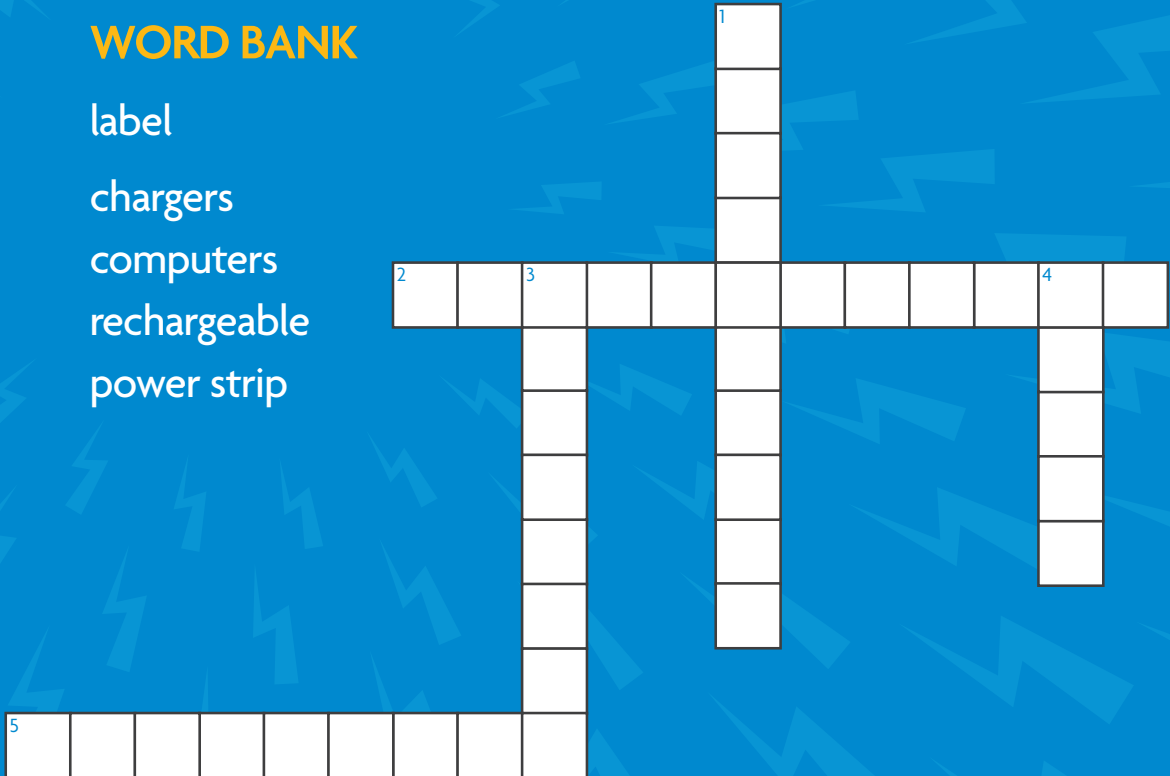
label

chargers

computers

rechargeable

power strip



1. **DOWN:** Use a _____ with an on/off switch when powering multiple electronics to easily manage energy use.
2. **ACROSS:** For devices that require batteries, use _____ ones, which are more cost-effective and environmentally friendly.
3. **DOWN:** Unplug electronic products, like _____, when you're not using them.
4. **DOWN:** Electronics that include the ENERGY STAR® _____ are the most energy efficient.
5. **ACROSS:** Many _____ come with a sleep mode or power management feature, which can save \$30 on annual energy costs.

ANSWER KEY 1. DOWN: POWER STRIP 2. ACROSS: RECHARGEABLE 3. DOWN: CHARGERS 4. DOWN: LABEL 5. ACROSS: COMPUTERS