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Members We Serve

BROWN-ATCHISON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

BROWN-ATCHISON ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.

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FROM THE MANAGER

Back to the Past

With all due respect to Marty McFly, Dr. Emmet, and Biff, sometimes you really do need to look to the past to figure out where you are going in the future — not the other way around.

We successfully made it through another year at Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative. While all of the results from that year are not quite in, it is time to look back on 2023 to gain perspective on where we are going.

There are a number of things from 2023 worth noting: your cooperative improved reliability, built or rebuilt many miles of line, survived significant inflation without a rate increase, planned new sources of power supply, returned a larger amount of capital credits to you the member-owners, continued to develop a professional staff with even more capabilities, and continued educating the board

of trustees to ensure the best governance possible for Brown-Atchison Electric. All of this is reflected in the many successes of 2023 — and bodes even better for the future.



Michael Volker

Ahh ... but wait — I'm getting ahead of myself! Back to 2023 ...

The best way to look back at 2023, but with an eye to the future, is to attend the Brown-Atchison Electric Annual Meeting of the Membership on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024, at the cooperative headquarters at 1712 Central Avenue in Horton.

In the very near future, you will find the annual report, meeting notice

Continued on page 12B ▶

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills. Install weatherstripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



Back to the Past

Continued from page 12A ▶

and invitation in your mailbox. Information on trustee nominees will be included in the report. If you are interested in running for the board of trustees, contact us and we will be happy to explain the nomination and voting process.

Information on the new solar farm construction solely for the benefit of Brown-Atchison members will also be included in the report and discussed at the meeting. We will have a speaker at the annual meeting with solar farm experience who can answer your questions and discuss solar benefits including lower prices and lower volatility associated with wholesale energy purchases.

The annual meeting is a chance to visit with friends, meet with cooperative staff and enjoy a hot meal. There will be prizes, fellowship, a \$10 bill credit (one per membership), and an opportunity to share (and maybe get paid for!) your favorite pictures from the farm or anywhere in the Brown-Atchison service area.

Finally, there will be the opportunity to sign up for the Beat the Peak program (and yes — win a prize). Beat the Peak is the successful program we started in 2022 to cut our summer peak demand and save money year-round.

Please join us on Feb. 22, (registration begins at 10:30 a.m.) at the cooperative headquarters at 1712 Central Avenue in Horton.

The staff at Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative wish you and yours a safe, happy and prosperous 2024. Peace!

Report Suspicious Activity Near Electrical Equipment

Substations are part of the electrical generation, transmission and distribution system. Transformers are contained inside many of them, and their job is to transform voltage from high to low or vice versa, depending on their location within the distribution path.

Besides transformers, substations usually house switches, protective devices and control equipment. In large substations, circuit breakers are used to interrupt any short circuits or overloads that may occur.

No one should approach a substation, touch the fence or enter the gate unless they are authorized to do so.

Paying attention to individuals and activity around substations and other utility equipment helps keep everyone safe. Here are some things to look for:

- ▶ Take notice of individuals in street clothes working near or on utility equipment; if you see this, please report it immediately.
- ▶ Notice whether individuals are dressed in proper personal protective equipment or have utility identification badges.
- ▶ Check vehicles or work trucks in the area for utility branded logos or information.
- ▶ Report suspicious behavior you see, including non-utility employees tampering with utility poles, meters, pad-mounted transformers or other equipment.
- ▶ If you notice anything unusual at a substation, please report it to the utility. Examples include the following:
 - ▶ An open or unlocked gate.
 - ▶ A damaged fence.
 - ▶ Obvious damage to equipment inside the fence.
- ▶ Call 911 and then the electric co-op if you see the following:

No one should approach a substation, touch the fence or enter the gate unless they are authorized to do so.

- ▶ Smoke or fire.
- ▶ Non-utility workers inside the substation fence.

Never try to address an issue yourself. Please report any suspicious activity or damage to the police or Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative.

FIRST RESPONDER SAFETY

First responders should always wait for the go-ahead from the electric utility before addressing a fire or vandalism at a substation, power plant or solar farm. First responders should also communicate with and wait for the utility before approaching a downed power line or damaged pad-mounted transformer.

GENERAL SUBSTATION SAFETY

Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity remind you to:

- ▶ Never go near a substation.
- ▶ Teach children to never go near a substation or climb its fence to retrieve a ball or pet. Let them know they should always stay away and tell a parent or adult, who should call us to report the incident at 785-486-2117.
- ▶ Teach children about the dangers of electricity from an early age.
- ▶ Never try to extinguish a transformer that is on fire since water and electricity do not mix. Call 911 to report the fire.
- ▶ If you see an issue with or notice something unusual about a substation, transformer or power line, contact your electric co-op. Never try to address a problem yourself.

Winter Prep? Think Safety First.

BY PAT MELGARES, K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS SERVICE

K-State climatologist says knowing weather forecasts can help reduce risk during winter weather

If there's a buzzword for winter that Chip Redmond subscribes to, it would certainly be safety.

As a climatologist and manager of the Kansas Mesonet at Kansas State University, Redmond understands the many risks of winter weather.

"The most obvious may be the cold," Redmond said. "It's definitely a time to start pulling out the warmer stuff; the thermals, the overalls ... we really need to become conscious about how many layers we put on in anticipation that the weather can change pretty rapidly this time of year."

Morning temperatures, he said, can be quite chilly, but temperatures in the Midwest and other parts of the country often can warm nicely in the afternoon, before cooling again at sunset. Layering helps to protect during daily weather variations, Redmond said.

He also suggests a warm hat or stocking cap; mittens or gloves; and footwear that provides warmth and traction.

"There is usually an increase in slides or falling accidents this time of year when we get snow," he said. "I suggest minimizing your outside time during slippery periods, or at least have the proper footwear and avoid areas where ice might build up. Sometimes it's easier to walk on grass than the sidewalk."

Redmond offers additional safety tips as winter weather approaches.

REMOVING SNOW

"As much as I don't want to admit it, I'm not as young as I was yesterday," Redmond said. "It takes a toll when we put our bodies under the stress of shoveling snow, especially wet, heavy snow that can be very physically demanding. That has been a leading cause of injuries and even death due to heart attacks. Be vigilant in what your body is capable of."

Redmond suggests asking friends, family and neighbors for help; removing snow in a way that doesn't require picking it up and throwing it; or using a snowblower.

WINTER TRAVEL

"Travel can be a challenge any time of year, but it becomes much more of a challenge in winter because conditions change quickly over short distances," Redmond said.

He advises travelers to always check weather forecasts for their current location, their destination — and points in between.

"There are some apps available that will give you weather by the road [you're traveling]," said Redmond, who suggests the U.S. government website, www.weather.gov, for reliable, up-to-date forecasts across the country.

In Kansas, the Kansas Department of Transportation maintains a website, www.kandrive.org, that includes forecasts, road conditions, live cameras, road closures, and more.

Redmond said if a car's tires are worn, get new ones put on immediately. And, he says, keep a winter preparedness kit in the car that includes such items as blankets, flashlight, cellphone charger, water, radio, dry food and other items to help you weather the elements in case of a breakdown.

When storms are imminent, "don't travel," he said. "Make the smart decision to not go out there."

STAY OFF FROZEN WATERWAYS

"A lot of people in Kansas think that frozen ponds are pretty and they're fun to walk on," Redmond said. "But there's very rarely ever a pond or a lake that's truly safe to walk on. To support a person's weight, you need a lot of ice. To keep that ice frozen, we rarely see those weather conditions align because we still get warmer temperatures in the winter, and enough sun to melt the ice during the afternoon."

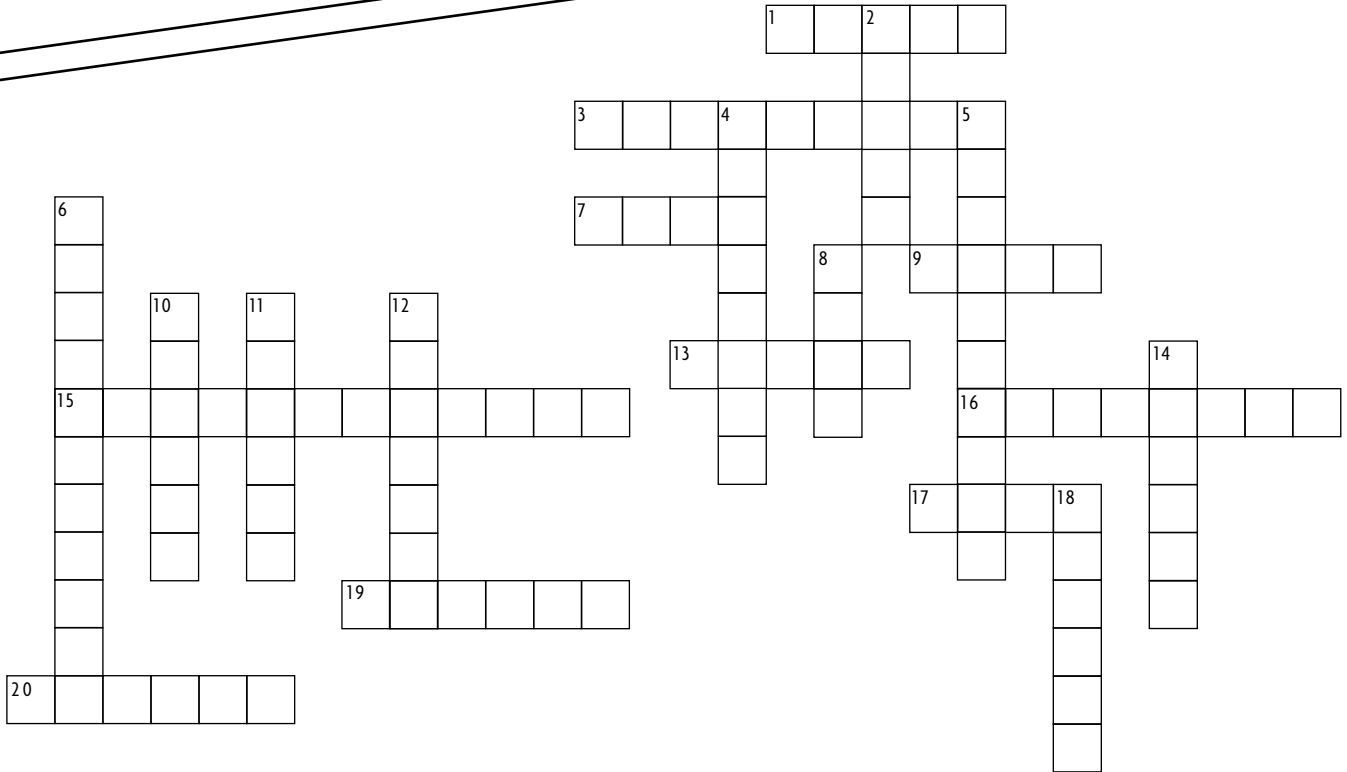
Redmond spoke in depth about winter preparedness and safety on the weekly radio program, Sound Living, produced by K-State Research and Extension. Listen to the full program online at www.soundlivingpodcast.net.



Be Energy Wise!



Read the efficiency tips and find the missing words to solve the crossword puzzle!



Across

- ▶ 1. Purchase a dishwasher that saves _____ and energy.
- ▶ 3. Select efficient home office _____ and electronics.
- ▶ 7. Install ceiling _____ to reduce air conditioning costs.
- ▶ 9. Purchase a clothes _____ with a moisture sensor.
- ▶ 13. _____ between window/door frames and walls.
- ▶ 15. Install a _____ thermostat.
- ▶ 16. Use _____ for light or heat whenever practical.
- ▶ 17. Launder clothes in cold or _____ water.
- ▶ 19. Fix _____ faucets.
- ▶ 20. Turn off electronics and _____ chargers when not in use.

Down

- ▶ 2. Plant _____ to shelter your home from the elements.
- ▶ 3. Upgrade to a high-_____ furnace/air conditioner or heat pump.
- ▶ 4. _____ your attic, exterior walls, basement and crawl spaces.
- ▶ 5. Adjust your _____ when leaving home for an extended time.
- ▶ 6. Completely convert to a compact and other _____ lightbulbs.
- ▶ 8. _____ load dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers.
- ▶ 10. Set the water heaters to no _____ than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- ▶ 11. Use window blinds or _____ to keep out cold or heat.
- ▶ 12. Purchase an insulating _____ for the hot water heaters.
- ▶ 14. Turn off _____ when you leave the room.
- ▶ 18. Install _____ sensors, dimmers and timers for indoor and outdoor lighting.

ACROSS: 1. water, 3. equipment, 7. fans, 9. dryer, 13. caulk, 15. programmable, 16. sunlight, 17. warm, 19. leaky, 20. unplugging
DOWN: 2. water, 3. efficiency, 4. insulate, 5. thermostat, 6. fluorescent, 8. fully, 10. higher, 11. shades, 12. blankets, 14. lights, 18. motion

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.COM