



SEDGWICK COUNTY  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

currentnews

## SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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**Stan Theis**  
Director

### STAFF

**Scott Ayres**  
General Manager/CEO

**Lora Alloway**  
Office Manager

**Kyle Pipkin**  
Line Superintendent

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 220  
1355 S. 383rd St. West  
Cheney, KS 67025  
316-542-3131  
Fax: 316-542-3943

## FROM THE MANAGER

# How Severe Winter Weather Impacts Reliability

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. We're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times — in the morning and early evenings — and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

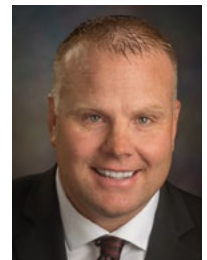
In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region of the country may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid, and Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative will inform you about the situation.

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative and our G&T take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid

and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- ▶ Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- ▶ Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens, and dryers.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.



Scott Ayres

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## BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE ELECTRIC GRID

It powers our homes, offices, hospitals, and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we're starting our day, and in the evenings when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations, and other infrastructure that spans the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection, and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

## Board of Directors Election Notification



Do you live in one of the following territories? Would you like to run for the Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors?

- ▶ **TERRITORY 4** – West of 167th St. W., East of 295th St. W, South of US-54.
- ▶ **TERRITORY 5** – West of 407th St. W (170th Ave.), West side of Cheney Lake.
- ▶ **TERRITORY 6** – East of 407th St. W (170th Ave.), South of 29th St. N (Smoots Creek Road), West of 167th St. W, North of US-54.

To request a board of directors application, contact Executive Assistant Jo Luehrs at 316-542-3131 or [www.jluehrs@sedgwickcountyelectric.coop](mailto:www.jluehrs@sedgwickcountyelectric.coop). **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION IS FEB. 9, 2024.** Voting will take place at the annual membership meeting on April 9, 2024.

## How Severe Winter Weather Impacts Reliability

*Continued from page 12A* ▶

- ▶ Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
    - ▶ **PRO TIP:** Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed. Experts recommend replacing your furnace filter at least every three months or every two months if you have pets or allergies.
  - ▶ When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
    - ▶ **PRO TIP:** Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
  - ▶ Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
    - ▶ **PRO TIP:** Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.
- As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

## SAFETY TIP

Did you know mylar balloons can damage the power grid and cause power outages? When balloons are released outside, they eventually fall back to earth and their remnants can cause harm to wildlife. To stay safe, consider alternatives to balloon releases and enjoy balloons indoors.



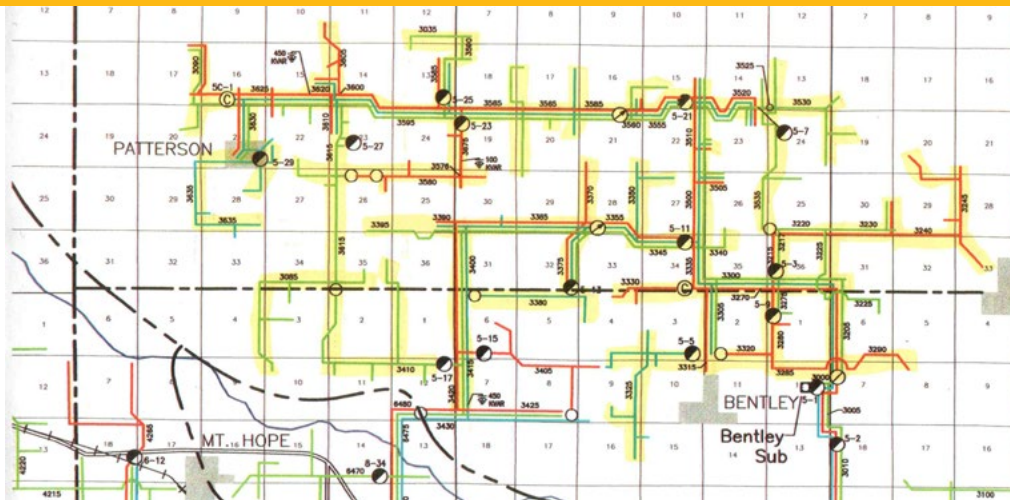
SOURCE: [WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.COM](http://WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.COM)

# Why Pole Inspection and Treatment is Necessary

As in the case with most electric utilities, Sedgwick County Electric Co-op is dependent on the use of wooden poles. Even though the poles we use are initially treated to resist decay, over time all wooden poles will deteriorate and ultimately need replaced. The decay rate varies dependent upon soil type, moisture levels, temperatures, and the type of wood the pole is derived from. The objective of our pole inspection/treatment program is to determine if a pole is still useful and safe, and prolong its life.

Sedgwick County Electric Co-op currently contracts with Global Utility Services to perform our pole inspections and treatment. While a visual inspection is valuable and essential in evaluating the overall condition of the pole, any internal decay below the ground line would go undetected if not for our pole inspection/treatment program.

Our inspection process involves a visual inspection/treatment of each pole in which we look for woodpecker holes, significant cracks, signs of termite and carpenter ant activity, or other defects with the pole that may result in a pole failure and/or rejections. Inspectors then complete a sound and bore test of the pole, where they will expose the



By continuing our Pole Inspection/Treatment and Pole Replacement program, we have extended the useful life of our wooden poles, reduced maintenance costs and increased the reliability and safety of our electric system for all our members. Global Utility Services will be testing/treating poles in the Bentley/Patterson area.

pole below the ground line, bore the pole at an angle in two different locations, determine the size of the decayed pocket below the ground line and sound the pole above the ground line with a hammer looking to see if the decayed pocket extends above the ground line.

The majority of decay in a wood pole occurs in the first 18 inches below the ground line. Wood preservative is applied to the pole to treat against external rot. If the integrity and strength of a pole is compromised and considered dangerous, the pole is replaced immediately.

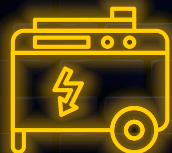
By continuing our pole inspection/treatment and pole replacement program, we have extended the useful life of our wooden poles, reduced maintenance costs and increased the reliability and safety of our electric system for all our members. **GLOBAL UTILITY SERVICES WILL BE TESTING/TREATING POLES IN THE BENTLEY/PATTERSON AREA.**

## What is *Backfeed*?

**Avoid deadly backfeed and help keep lineworkers safe.**

Backfeed is when power flows in reverse. An alternate power source, usually a portable or permanent generator, feeds energy back through a home's electrical system, meter and into the power lines.

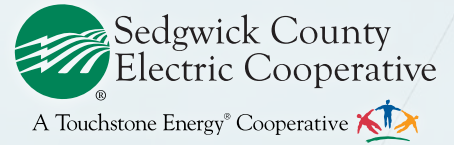
Permanent generators should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician and have an automatic or manual transfer switch, depending on the generator. A transfer switch transfers a power source safely from its primary source to the backup source.



**Never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet or electrical system.  
Ensure transfer switches are professionally installed and working properly.  
Electric lineworkers thank you in advance.**



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRIC.ORG



# JOIN US

SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

# Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting of Sedgwick County Electric Co-op will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at The Cotillion, 11120 W. Kellogg in Wichita.

For quick registration and to enter to win **CASH**, bring your registration card located on the back cover of the April issue of *Kansas Country Living* magazine.



**Doors open 6:15 p.m.**  
**Dinner served 6:30 p.m.**



**Door prizes.**  
**Chance to win \$100 bill credit.**

**Enter for a chance to win \$100 CASH** bring your registration card (located on the back cover of April's *Kansas Country Living* magazine).



**Co-op updates.**  
**Director elections.**  
**Youth Tour winners announced.**  
**Employee introductions and service awards.**

APRIL 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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