



SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

currentnews

SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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FROM THE MANAGER

Building a Smarter Cooperative With Smart Meters



Scott Ayres

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) was introduced to Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative starting in 2010. As we look to the future and keep up with technological advancements, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is excited to announce we are set to make technological advancements to our existing metering system with a new Landis+Gyr meter deployment. By taking the next step in meter advancements we will be able to better serve you as a cooperative member. To put it in perspective, we would not consider going back to using kerosene lamps to light our homes now that we have access to safe and reliable electricity. In the same way, we are

heading toward the electric grid of the future as we install our new meters.

REASONS FOR UPGRADING

- ▶ Our current metering system is out of date and we are unable to order replacement parts and meters, as they are no longer being produced and supported.
- ▶ The new system will allow us to capture data from meters in real time rather than just a daily reading, including heat sensing warnings, outage detection, meter tampering and remote disconnects just to name a few.
- ▶ The upgrade will enable us to notify members regarding outages and allow our linemen to see a more specific area where the trouble may have occurred.
- ▶ Meter sockets will also be inspected as meters are replaced, which will help us identify and address issues before an outage occurs.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

HEADQUARTERS

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

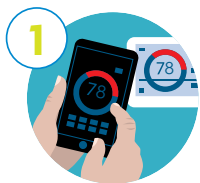
SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Are you interested in buying a level 2 charger for your electric vehicle? Have the charger installed by a qualified, licensed electrician or contractor. Charging stations may draw more power than your home can handle, or if not wired correctly can overheat and cause a fire. SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.COM

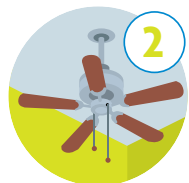
Tips to BEAT THE SUMMER PEAK

When we all work together to lower energy use during peak hours, we can lock in lower electricity rates, so everyone saves.

Here are a few simple ways to save during peak summer hours.



1 Raise the thermostat a few degrees.



2 Use ceiling fans (in occupied rooms) to feel cooler.



3 Avoid using major appliances.



4 Close drapes and blinds to block heat from the sun.



5 Turn off and unplug non-essential electronics and lights.

Watch the Clock to Lock in Energy Savings

As temperatures rise and summer activities heat up, a reliable flow of electricity is essential to ensure Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative members stay cool and connected.

August brings some of the most extreme summer temps, which means people will be spending more time indoors to avoid the heat, and air conditioners will be working overtime. This increased use of electricity will cause spikes in demand, also known as energy peaks. During peak times, from 3 to 6 p.m. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative works closely with our wholesale power provider to ensure a balanced supply of electricity is always available to meet our community's energy needs.

The electric grid is essentially a giant network that connects power plants, utility poles and power lines to homes and businesses across the country, throughout our state and to our local communities. All parts of the network must work together to ensure the flow of electricity stays balanced 24/7.

When the demand for electricity is higher than usual, power providers must ramp up electricity production — whether from coal, natural gas, wind, solar or other energy sources — and utilities will pay more for electricity produced during the peak. These higher prices along with the general increase in electricity use are why you typically see higher bills during the hottest months. In extreme cases, demand can overpower the available supply, causing electricity shortages. During these times, utilities are required to implement rolling power outages to reduce the demand for electricity and rebalance the grid.

When our area experiences extreme summer heat and higher demand for electricity, you can help by conserving energy. It's easy — just check the clock and avoid your energy-intensive activities and chores during peak hours. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's

peak hours during summer months are 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

When we all work together to reduce energy use during peak times, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative can lock in lower electricity rates so everyone in our community saves. Conserving during peak times also eases pressure on the grid and helps balance the supply and demand of electricity.

There are many ways to lower your home energy use. Here are a few recommendations to help you save energy (and money) during the summer peak:

► **SET YOUR THERMOSTAT A FEW DEGREES HIGHER.** If you have a smart or programmable thermostat, adjust the settings so your cooling system syncs with the off-peak hours.

► **SPEAKING OF RAISING THE THERMOSTAT, DID YOU KNOW CEILING FANS CAN MAKE YOU FEEL 4 DEGREES COOLER?** Operate ceiling or oscillating fans in occupied rooms to supplement your air conditioning. Be sure to raise the thermostat while fans are running for maximum energy savings. For summer operation, set your fan to rotate counterclockwise to push cooler air down, which creates a “wind chill” effect. And, remember, fans cool people (not homes), so turn them off when you leave the room.

► **PLAN ENERGY-INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES LIKE LAUNDRY AND RUNNING THE DISHWASHER FOR OFF-PEAK HOURS.** Use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters and other appliances in the same way.

► **UNPLUG ELECTRONICS WHEN THEY'RE NOT IN USE** or use power strips to manage devices.

► **CLOSE DRAPES AND BLINDS** during the afternoon to block unnecessary heat from sunlight.

When we all work together to beat the summer peak, our entire community benefits. Saving energy during peak times reduces your bills, keeps electric rates lower for all and relieves pressure on the grid.

For Safety's Sake, Don't Mess With a Meter

For your safety, never tamper with or pull (remove) a meter. Only electric utility crews should access an electric meter.

Illegally accessing a meter can cause an arc flash bright enough to result in blindness and powerful enough to launch fragments of red-hot, shrapnel-like debris, according to the Cooperative Research Network. Serious injury or death from electrocution, explosion or fire is often a result of meter tampering.

Unfortunately, individuals may unlawfully try to tamper with a meter to bypass it, create an illegal connection to a power line, electrify fences or attempt to reconnect or disconnect the power, often resulting in disastrous consequences.

MORE ON METER SAFETY

- ▶ Tampering with a meter is illegal in Kansas.
- ▶ Meters should only be installed, maintained or removed by electric utility crews.
- ▶ Accessing the backside of a meter can generate high voltage; pulling or tampering with a meter can cause electric shock, sparks, surges, explosions or fire.
- ▶ Electricity should always be connected or disconnected using a transfer switch or a dedicated disconnection point.

- ▶ There is no guarantee that a structure is deenergized by pulling a meter.
- ▶ If firefighters respond to a call and know they will need a disconnect, they should call the electric utility while en route to the scene.
- ▶ If firefighters try disconnecting a home by pulling a meter, it can introduce additional problems and damage. Direct any questions to Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative.

OTHER FACTS

If a home's electricity is shut off at a main disconnect, the house can be automatically reconnected if there is a standby generator or battery-stored power.

Only the electric utility can properly and safely disconnect a meter. Utility crews are trained in proper disconnection techniques and wear protective clothing and gear.



**METER
TAMPERING IS
NOT
WORTH IT.**

For your safety, never tamper with or remove a meter. Doing so could result in an arc flash bright enough to cause blindness and powerful enough to launch fragments of red-hot, shrapnel-like debris, according to the Cooperative Research Network.

ONLY ELECTRIC UTILITY CREWS CAN PROPERLY AND SAFELY DISCONNECT A METER. They are trained in safe and proper disconnection techniques and wear protective clothing and gear.

METER FACTS

- ▶ Tampering with a meter is illegal in most states.
- ▶ Meters should only be installed, maintained or removed by electric utility crews.
- ▶ Accessing the backside of a meter could generate high voltage.
- ▶ Serious injury or death from electrocution, explosion or fire is often a result of meter tampering.
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SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Building a Smarter Cooperative With Smart Meters

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WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE INSTALLATION PROCESS

- We will attempt to notify an area in advance when meter exchanges will occur. **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR PHONE NUMBER IS UP TO DATE IN OUR SYSTEM.**
- Exchanges will be performed by an employee with a **SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC LOGO** on the vehicle.
- Immediately prior to accessing the meter we will make an attempt to notify our members in person at your home or business.
- During your meter exchange, you may experience a short disruption of power.
- The new meters will say **SEDGWICK COUNTY ELECTRIC COOP** on the bottom side of the meter.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR METER IS INSTALLED

- Your kilowatt-hours rate will not change.
- Your next bill after the meter change out will

show your new meter number below the old meter number. Details and usage from each meter will be included.

Once your meter has been exchanged, we encourage you to take advantage of the additional data now available to make smart energy choices. The new meters provide information about power usage to help you understand how and when you use electricity. You can view this data in the SmartHub Billing Portal available from our website and app.

It will take some time for the cooperative to exchange the meters and install the equipment. Please be patient during this process.

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative is excited about these new meter advancements, which are the next step in maximizing the capabilities and technology the cooperative has implemented over past decades. Please feel free to contact the Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative at 316-542-3131 with any questions or concerns.

CO-OP SPONSORS PEDAL TRACTOR PULL

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative hosted the Pedal Tractor Pull at the Sedgwick County Fair on Saturday, July 13. Children from ages 4 to 12 participated and top finishers advanced to the tractor pull event at the State Fair in Hutchinson.

LOOK FOR WINNERS POSTED IN SEPTEMBER'S MAGAZINE.



SAFETY FIRST WITH HOME CHARGING STATIONS

Installing an electric vehicle (EV) level 2 charger is not a do-it-yourself project. It is important to have a charging station installed by a specialized licensed contractor. This will help protect the integrity of your EV and your home's wiring.

BASIC SAFETY TIPS

- Read and follow EV manufacturer's instructions.
- Use charging equipment sold or endorsed by the EV manufacturer.
- To prevent a home fire or other hazards, have the charger installed by a licensed contractor.

A LICENSED CONTRACTOR/ELECTRICIAN WILL:

- Ensure the level 2 charger is wired safely and properly.
- Assess your home's electrical system to ensure it can handle the charger's load.

WHY PROFESSIONAL INSTALLATION IS IMPORTANT:

- An inadequate power supply can cause an electrical circuit overload.
- Overload can cause your charger to overheat, harming your charging device and wiring.
- Excess heat from a circuit overload can cause an electrical fire.

AFTER YOUR CHARGER IS INSTALLED:

- Keep charging components out of children's reach.
- Inspect charging equipment regularly for signs of wear.

NOTIFY YOUR ELECTRIC UTILITY BEFORE HAVING A LEVEL 2 CHARGER INSTALLED. SOME UTILITIES OFFER SPECIAL RATES, REBATES AND LOAN OPTIONS.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG