



Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative

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**SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

currentnews

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FROM THE MANAGER

New Ways to Use Electricity



Scott Ayres

If you listen carefully, you can hear a quiet transformation happening. Electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among members.

Advancements in technology and battery power coupled with decreasing costs are winning over members looking for comparable utility and versatility. A bonus is that use of electric equipment is quieter and better for the environment.

Inside the home, members and homebuilders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings. Whether choosing between a traditional electric stove or an induction stove top, both are significantly more efficient than a gas oven. That's because conventional residential cooking tops typically use gas or resis-

tance heating elements to transfer energy with efficiencies of approximately 32% and 75% respectively (according to Energy Star®). Electric induction stoves, which cook food without any flame, will reduce indoor air pollution and can bring water to a boil about twice as fast as a gas stove. Robotic vacuums are also gaining in popularity. Fortune Business Insights attributes the growth and popularity of robotic vacuums like Roomba to a larger market trend of smart home technology and automation (think Alexa directing a Roomba to vacuum).

More tools and equipment with small gas-powered motors are being replaced with electric ones that include plug-in batteries. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Hand-held tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered

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Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Storms ripped through part of our state on Friday, April 30, producing numerous tornadoes, report of up to grapefruit-sized hail and battering straight-line winds.

The National Weather Service said the tornado that caused extensive damage in the Wichita and Andover area generated winds of 165 mph, rating it an EF3 on the Enhanced Fujita scale, carving a path of destruction nearly 13 miles long.

Butler Electric Cooperative, which serves parts of the area affected by the tornado, requested, and received mutual aid from Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative, 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Wheatland Electric Cooperative and J&J Powerline Contractors, Inc.

By Monday, May 2 only a few accounts remained without power due to damage on the members' side.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives demonstrates the strengths of our communities and the resilience of our co-op family and rural Kansans.



Sedgwick County Crews work to restore power to Butler Electric members following April 30 storms.



Safety Tips for Before, During and After the Storm

Storm season is in full swing. Summer storms have the potential to produce tornadoes — they can happen anytime, anywhere, and bring winds over 200 miles per hour.

In April, a video of NBC Washington chief meteorologist Doug Kammerer went viral. During a live broadcast, Kammerer called his teenage son to warn him of a tornado that was headed straight for their home. Knowing the kids were likely playing video games and not paying attention to the weather, he told them to head straight to the basement. Kammerer debated if he should call his family on-air, but he knew it was the right thing to do. Luckily, the kids made it safely through the storm.

As adults, we understand the importance of storm safety, but younger children and teens may not realize the dangers storms pose. That's why it's so important to talk to your family and have a storm plan in place. Here are a several tips you can share with your loved ones.

Before the Storm

- Talk to your family about what to do in the event of a severe storm or tornado. Point out the safest loca-

tion to shelter, like a small, interior, windowless room on the lowest level of your home. Discuss the dangers of severe thunderstorms; lightning can strike 10 miles outside of a storm. Remember: when you hear thunder roar, head indoors.

- Make a storm kit. It doesn't have to be elaborate — having a few items on hand is better than nothing at all. Try to include items like water, non-perishable foods, a manual can opener, a first-aid kit, flashlights and extra batteries, prescriptions, baby supplies and pet supplies. Keep all the items in one place for easy access if the power goes out.

During the Storm

- Pay attention to local weather alerts — either on the TV, your smartphone or weather radio — and understand the types of alerts. A thunderstorm or tornado watch means these events are possible and you should be prepared; a warning means a thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted in your area and it's time to act.
- If you find yourself in the path of a tornado, head to your safe place

to shelter, and protect yourself by covering your head with your arms or materials like blankets and pillows.

- If you're driving during a severe storm or tornado, do not try to outrun it. Pull over and cover your body with a coat or blanket if possible.

After the Storm

- If the power is out, conserve your phone battery as much as possible, limiting calls and texts to let others know you are safe or for emergencies only.
- Stay off the roads if trees, power lines or utility poles are down. Lines and equipment could still be energized, posing life-threatening risks to anyone who gets too close.
- Wear appropriate gear if you're cleaning up storm debris on your property. Thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves will help protect you from sharp or dangerous debris left behind.

Summer is a time for many fun-filled activities, but the season can also bring severe, dangerous weather. Talk to your loved ones about storm safety so that everyone is prepared and knows exactly what to do when a storm strikes.

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tools. For DIYers and those in the building trades, national brands such as Makita, Ryobi and Milwaukee offer electric versions of their most popular products like drills, saws, sanders and other tools. In addition to standard offerings, members can now purchase a wider array of specialty tools that plug-in such as power inverters, air inflators and battery chargers.

Keith Dennis, an energy industry expert, and president of the Beneficial Electrification League notes that, “A few years back, the list of new electric product categories that were making their way to the market was limited — electric scooters, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and vehicles.”

Today, the number of electric products available is exploding.

“There are electric bikes, school buses, pressure washers, utility terrain vehicles, backhoes — even airplanes and boats,” says Dennis. “With the ex-

pansion of batteries and advancements in technology, we are seeing almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel as having an electric replacement available on the market.”

A case in point is the increased use of electric-powered tools and equipment, with more national brands offering a wider selection including lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers and snow blowers. The quality of zero- or low-emissions lawn equipment is also improving.

Electric equipment also requires less maintenance, and often the biggest task is keeping them charged. In addition, electric equipment is quieter so if you want to listen to music or your favorite podcast while performing outdoor work, you can; something not possible with gas-powered equipment. On the horizon, autonomous lawn mowers (similar to the robotic

vacuum cleaners) will be seen dotting outdoor spaces.

Another benefit of using electric appliances or equipment is that by virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. In essence, electricity is becoming cleaner through increased renewable energy generation, so equipment that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact over time. Quite a hat trick — improving efficiency, quality of life and helping the environment.



Co-op Sponsors Pedal Tractor Pull

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative will host the Pedal Tractor Pull at the Sedgwick County Fair on Saturday, July 23.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. at the Sedgwick County Fairgrounds, just east of the open-air arena, and the pull begins at 10 a.m.

Children from ages 4 to 11 are eligible to participate. There is no entry fee. Participants are required to wear shoes and must have a parent or legal guardian present to register. Top finishers will advance to the tractor pull event at the State Fair in Hutchinson.



Managing Your Electric Bill Just Got SMARTER



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SmartHub is account management at your fingertips! SmartHub lets you manage all aspects of your electric account online or with your mobile device including viewing your daily usage. Creating a SmartHub account takes less than three minutes. Enter your email address and password to create an account and you're ready to begin.

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If you are already enrolled in e-bill, simply enter your current login information and password. If you are new to the system, click

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How do I get the App for my phone?

Simply look for our name in the Apple Store® or in the Android® Market. Search for SmartHub (not case sensitive but must be all one word); if duplicates appear the correct app is provided by our partner, National Information Solutions Cooperative.

Visit www.sedgwickcountyelectric.coop for more information.

What is Electric Shock Drowning?

Know the signs of this hidden danger.

Electric shock drowning (ESD) happens when electrical current seeps into water from a nearby electrical source such as a yacht, boat or dock. It can also happen in a pool, hot tub or water park if there are any electrical issues.



To Prevent and Recognize ESD:

- ▶ Do not swim around docks with electrical service or boats that are plugged into a power source.
- ▶ If you are swimming and feel tingling or shocks, swim away from the dock or other electrical source.
 - ▶ Try to stay upright and tuck your legs up.
 - ▶ Alert others to cut the power source.
- ▶ Do not jump in to save someone you suspect is exposed to electricity in the water.

Instead:

- ▶ Eliminate the source of power.
- ▶ Throw a float.
- ▶ Call 911.
- ▶ After the power is shut off, pull the person in with the float rope. If you cannot find a pulse, start CPR.

Prevention and Maintenance

BOATS | Ensure circuits have GFCIs and check them often.

DOCKS | Have the electrical system inspected regularly by a licensed contractor.



Learning about the danger of ESD can help keep you and others safe in the water.

Protect the Skin You're In

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States. One in five Americans will develop it in their lifetime, and nearly 20 Americans die from melanoma every day, according to the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Association.

Although those with fair skin are at greater risk than others of getting skin cancer, anyone can get it.

Basal and squamous cell carcinomas are the two most common types. Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, is the third most common type. The risk for melanoma doubles for people who have had more than five sunburns, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation (SCF). However, even without a burn, any sun exposure increases the risk of skin cancer.

The most preventable cause of skin cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun or artificial sources, such as tanning beds.

Safety in the Sun

To prevent skin cancer, protect yourself from UV rays, not just during the summer but year-round. UV rays can reach you on non-sunny days (cloudy and cool days), and they can also reflect off other surfaces like water, cement, sand and snow.

In the continental U.S., UV rays are strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daylight saving time or 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. standard time, according to the CDC. The UV Index forecasts the strength of UV rays for each day. Protect your skin from too much exposure to the sun when the UV Index is 3 or higher by:

- ▶ Staying in the shade.
- ▶ Wearing sun-protective clothing.
- ▶ Wearing a hat with a wide brim.
- ▶ Wearing sunglasses that wrap around and block both UVA and UVB rays.



Additional tips from the AAD include:

- ▶ Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- ▶ Reapply sunscreen every two hours or after sweating or swimming.
- ▶ Apply enough sunscreen to cover skin not protected by clothing.
- ▶ Do not forget to apply it to the tops of your feet, your neck, your ears and the top of your head.

Indoor tanning

Using a tanning bed, booth, sunbed or sunlamp exposes users to high levels of UV rays. Over time, too much exposure to UV rays can cause skin cancers, cataracts and cancers of the eye, according to the CDC.

Indoor tanning does not protect against sunburns. A "base tan" is a sign of skin damage. Using a tanning bed or other indoor tanning methods can also cause serious injury; burns send more than 3,000 people to the emergency room each year.

The Skin You're In

The bottom line is that you should protect your skin from sun/UV exposure at all times. Consider using a self-tanning product if you want to look tan (but be sure to still use sunscreen). Perform regular skin self-exams to detect skin cancer early when it is most treatable. See a dermatologist if you notice new or suspicious spots on your skin or anything changing color, itching or bleeding.

SOURCES: CDC, AAD, SCF