

Country News



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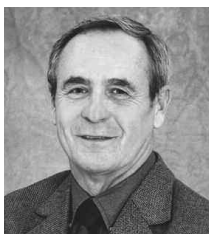


Touchstone Energy®

Hunting Safety Is a Matter of Common Sense

BY JOHN HUPPERT, GENERAL MANAGER

You may be wondering why the general manager of your electric co-op would take the time to talk about hunting safety. Read on and I believe you will agree with me that it is important throughout all of K.C. Electric Association's territory.



John Huppert

First and foremost, lots of us in K.C. territory love to hunt. Antelope, deer, turkeys, doves and pheasants are plentiful. While we love the visibility we have on the plains, it also creates a hazard when high-powered rifles are used. A rifle shot can carry up to two and a half miles.

Common sense rules apply:

Know what you are shooting at and what is behind the game. Is there a house, power line or vehicle? Take the time to find out.

Don't get so involved in your hunting that you forget to watch for hazards. Snakes may still be out during hunting season.

Always point the gun muzzle in a safe direction.

Never cross a fence, climb a tree or ladder or stand or jump in a ditch with a loaded gun.

Treat every firearm or bow with the same respect you would show a loaded gun. Unload firearms and unstring conventional bows when not in use. (Barry Andrews, account #11014 70002)

Avoid horseplay with firearms. When hunting, wear daylight

fluorescent orange so you can be seen from a distance or in heavy cover.

Control your emotions when it comes to safety.

Wear hearing and eye protection.

Don't drink alcohol or take drugs before or while handling firearms.

Always unload weapons before riding in any vehicle, including all-terrain vehicles.

If you are using a shotgun, be careful not to fire at power lines, insulators or substations. Doves sitting on a power line are tempting, but please don't fire until they are well clear of the lines. One misplaced shot can cause an outage, start a fire or cause an injury.

We wish you a safe and enjoyable hunting season. Keep it safe for you, for your hunting companions and for those of us who are out working the lines to bring electrical power to you.

CLAIM YOUR CREDIT TO WIN A PRIZE

Each month, K.C. Electric offers consumers a chance to earn a \$10 credit on their next electric bills or to win a prize. If you recognize your name and account number, call 719-743-2431 to claim your credit or prize. It couldn't be easier.

Read *Colorado Country Life*, find your name and give us a call. You must call during the month in which your name appears in the magazine (check the date on the front cover). In August, Gerald Morris of Flagler LHS Partnership in Hugo called to claim his savings. Harold Thomas of Bethune called to claim his prize.

Reaching for the Moon

Co-op month celebrates how cooperatives transformed rural America BY MEGAN MCKOY

Neil Armstrong realized the dream of millions of Americans when he walked on the moon in 1969.

“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind,” Armstrong declared 40 years ago as families tuned in to watch the historic moment on televisions across the nation.

The fact that so many people could watch the first moon walk reflects another dream: easy access to electricity. During the last 75 years, electric co-ops have built 2.5 million miles of power lines across rural America, enough to reach from the earth to the moon five and a half times.

In the 1930s, 90 percent of Americans living in cities had access to central station electricity service, but only 10 percent of rural Americans could claim the same. Since rural electric service generated little profit, investor-owned utilities demanded that farmers and their neighbors pay up to \$3,000 per mile to build lines to their homesteads. They then charged them monthly rates as high as \$30, far above what the city dwellers paid. This was during a time when per capita income averaged around \$1,800 a year.

Before co-ops, in many rural areas power was not available at any cost. To get around the utilities, enterprising folks deployed “light plants” powered by steam engines and windmills or complicated battery systems to provide themselves with electricity. However, these household generators were not only bulky, noisy, expensive and costly to maintain, they

also produced little electricity, just enough to light the lights dimly or run a few appliances. They also posed a safety risk.

But all that changed in 1935, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order creating the Rural Electrification Administration, now the Rural Utilities Service. It had one goal: to provide low-cost loans and engineering support to help electrify the countryside.

To meet the challenge, farmers and other rural community leaders joined forces to form electric cooperatives. A fee of \$5 was collected from each family. That fee made them members and owners of the co-op and generated the capital needed for the co-op to qualify for a loan. As a result, most of the nation’s 900-plus not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric co-ops were formed in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Just as the Apollo 11 mission marked a new era of scientific possibilities, the rural electric program showed America exciting things happen when people cooperate. Over the past seven decades, electric cooperatives have grown into a nationwide network serving roughly 17.5 million homes, businesses, farms and other establishments, representing over 42 million people, 12 percent of the U.S. population. Electricity is no longer a dream for rural America, it’s a reality.

But the mission’s not over. As electric co-ops celebrate October as Cooperative Month, they are focusing on keeping electricity affordable for all Americans. Electric co-ops are providing a strong voice



Over the last 75 years, electric co-op line workers have built enough miles of electric line to reach to the moon and back five and a half times.

for consumers in state legislatures and Congress. And with debate swirling in Congress on energy and climate change policy, electric co-op members must work together once more to ensure the future of their electricity supply.

From putting money back into members’ wallets to ensuring an affordable, reliable and safe flow of electric power, co-ops remain an essential fiber in the fabric of rural America. To learn about electric cooperatives near you, visit www.crea.coop.

WEATHERIZATION TIP

Test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, hold a lit incense stick next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatches and other locations where there is a possible air path to the outside. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing or weather-stripping.

CHANGE FURNACE FILTERS THIS FALL

Keeping the filter on your furnace (gas or electric) clean makes the furnace run efficiently. Change the filter every month of the heating season (or year-round if the filter is also used for air-conditioning). Be sure you insert the new one so it faces the right way. The filter protects the blower and its motor. A clogged filter makes the motor work harder and use more power, so change your filter this fall in preparation for the heating season.



The Town of Kit Carson Is Its Own Story

BY BEN ORRELL, MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

I try extremely hard to get stories from each of the communities that are served by K.C. Electric. This month I went to Kit Carson to find a story, but it didn't take long to realize that the story was not in Kit Carson. Kit Carson was the story.

First and perhaps foremost, Kit Carson is one of the friendliest towns on the plains. Just walk into Mary's Market and you will get a warm greeting whether they know you or not. You feel like a long-lost friend. When I was there, we talked about how small towns struggle and how somehow they pull through. We agreed that is possible because small-town people are tough, have a strong sense of community, are willing to work hard and are resilient.

Joyce Colvin, a long-time resident of Kit Carson, was happy to report that Kit Carson has a new business. In any small town there are needs to be filled, and food is one of those needs. As is always the case, if something needs to be done, look for the busiest people in town to step up. Ruby Gibbs and her family now own and operate a Piccadilly pizza and sub shop and operate a hair shop out of the same building. They are full-time farmers and ranchers, but they wanted to help out their community.

Kit Carson has a great school, two restaurants, a bank, four churches, a fire

department, great parks, a town hall, 24-hour fuel availability, auto parts, a liquor store, a post office, lumber and hardware, groceries and museums. I am sure there are other things that I have not included, but none of those things are what makes Kit Carson unique and special. What makes it worthy of note is the attitude of the people in the town. Despite the hard times and empty buildings, they haven't given up or even pondered giving up. (WIN *Dennis Towns, account #1113240002)

The town was buzzing the day I was there. People were mowing, cleaning, sprucing up and painting. Perhaps it was in preparation for Kit Carson Days. That is an event not to be missed. They have a breakfast, followed by a rodeo and a barbecue. I have been informed by more than one person that it is probably the best-tasting barbecue in the world. In addition, they have a parade, horseshoes, a poker run, vendors, a dance, a supper and a wonderful melodrama. All this takes place every year on Labor Day weekend. Put it on your calendar for next year.

Throughout the town there is evidence of pride. Buildings are painted and decorated; flowerpots are hand decorated and have flowers blooming along the main street. One of the buildings has a hand-painted sign proclaiming that the Wildcats were state champions.

The museum that sits just north of the highway midway through town is excellent. It is obviously a labor of love on the part of many. It started as a dilapidated old depot that was slated for destruction or removal in 1968. Fortunately, it was saved and now is restored to its former grandeur. There is an old Union Pacific caboose there as well. Across the street is a display of old farming equipment, an oil well pump and much, much more.

The next time you pass through Kit Carson, take the time to look around. This is a community with a lot to offer. Stop at the museum. Whether you spend 10 minutes or two hours there, you will be fascinated by all it has to show you. The museum is open every day between Memorial Day and Labor Day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The museum is operated by the Kit Carson Historical Society. A comment taken from the website states the historical society's attitude: "We are creatures of memory and hope. If the past is blotted out and a memory no longer functions, man is robbed of a source of great pleasure."

Kit Carson strikes me as a community that is filled with "creatures" of hope, but they don't just hope and they are not just reliving the memory. They are working to assure that Kit Carson has a future. I believe it does and that it will be bright.

Schedule a Home Inspection This Fall

October is Home Inspection Month — the perfect time to call an electrician to inspect your home's electrical system. (Sylvia Palmer, account #1002800001)

Unless your house is brand new, fire hazards could lurk behind the walls in your electrical wires. Frayed wires, loose connections and overloaded circuits could be dangerous.

If your house is more than 20 years old, schedule an inspection right away. You need to know if your home's system can handle today's load of computers and large electronics, and you should install ground fault circuit interrupters to prevent electrocution.

Before the electrician arrives, do your own mini home inspection. Make sure to look for the following items:

- Extension cords that have become permanent fixtures. Extension cords are made for temporary use only, so rearrange furniture to move your electrical device closer to an outlet so you won't need the longer cord.
 - Outlets that spark when you insert or remove a plug, and loose outlets that won't hold a cord.
 - Overloaded outlets. If every outlet requires a power strip, have your system upgraded with several more outlets.
 - Open outlets within the reach of children. Plug open outlets with plastic safety plugs to keep little fingers out.
- Notify your inspecting electrician of these and any other concerns, and ask what he can do to help make your home a safer place.

Do Space Heaters Really Save?

BY ROBERT A. DICKELMAN

At this time every year — when people first fire up their furnaces — the phones start ringing at K.C. Electric Association. Many of the calls are from members wanting to know if a portable electric space heater can help reduce their utility costs for the upcoming heating season. The answer: maybe.

A space heater is a pretty simple device — and it's close to 100-percent efficient, since almost all of the electric energy that goes into the unit is converted to heat. That being said, keep in mind that any time a portable electric space heater is turned on and producing heat, it's also consuming energy. (Paul Dechant, account #1110570001)

Government standards limit the maximum output of a portable electric space heater to 1,500 watts, which is far too low for heating an entire home or even a large room. In fact, one rule of thumb suggests that it takes 10 watts of electricity to heat one square foot of space. In other words, 1,500 watts of electricity should heat a room measuring 150 square feet — but that's without considering other factors affecting the room, such as its location within the house, insulation, air leaks and number of windows and doors. (Cody Brothers, account #1270600003)

If you set up a space heater in an always-cold room to take the chill off, your power bill is going to increase unless you make other changes at home to reduce your energy use. In fact, the only way a portable electric space heater is going to help you lower your annual heating bills is if you use it to heat the room you're in and turn down the thermostat for the rest of the house.

Seal Your Home Against the Coming Cold Weather

Using caulk to seal your home is cheap and easy and can save you money on heating costs this winter. Caulk around baseboards, around storm windows and around plumbing penetrations that come through walls beneath all sinks. Caulk electrical wire penetrations at the top of interior walls.

Outside your home, caulk around all penetrations including telephone, electrical, cable, gas, water spigots and dryer vents. In basements, seal sill and band joists with a durable caulking or foam sealant and caulk around the windows. Verify that your supply air duct "boots" (behind supply air registers) are caulked to your ceiling or wall Sheetrock or flooring.

Installing weather stripping is also inexpensive and quickly pays for itself in savings. Ensure windows and doors are properly weather-stripped. Also, check that windows with window-mounted air-conditioning units have weather stripping between the middle of the top and bot-



tom panes. Also, using heavy-duty, clear sheets of plastic on the inside of your windows can reduce the amount of cool air entering your home.

When heating or cooling, keep your windows locked and use drapes to your advantage. They can be left open during the day to catch solar heat and closed at night to prevent heat loss during the coming colder months. All of these inexpensive investments can help you keep your home warm this winter and save money on energy bills.

Your Neighbor's Kitchen

Deluxe Scalloped Cabbage

- ◆ 1 large head of cabbage, shredded
- ◆ 3 tablespoons butter
- ◆ 3 tablespoons flour
- ◆ 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- ◆ 1/4 cup milk
- ◆ 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- ◆ 2 tablespoons chopped pimiento
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

◆ Cook shredded cabbage in a small amount of salt water until tender. Drain well.

◆ Melt butter, blend in flour, add soup and remaining ingredients. Cook over low heat until smooth and thick. Pour sauce over cabbage and mix well. Serve hot.

DOROTHY LANDRY,
COLORADO SPRINGS

Hawaiian Baked Beans

- ◆ 3/4 pound bacon
- ◆ 1 onion
- ◆ 1 16-ounce can pork and beans
- ◆ 1 16-ounce can lima beans
- ◆ 1 16-ounce can kidney beans
- ◆ 10 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, cubed
- ◆ 1 cup ketchup
- ◆ 3/4 cup brown sugar
- ◆ 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

◆ Chop bacon and onion into small pieces and sauté together. Drain all three cans of beans. Cube cheese. Mix all ingredients together. Bake in a 325 degree oven for 1 1/2 hours or cook in a slow cooker for 6 hours on a low setting.

LIAN EMMERLING, HUGO

IRRIGATION METER READINGS

Meters will be read on the following dates:

October 28-29
November 30 • December 1, 30-31