

# This November, Let Your Voice be Heard

Low voter turnout has been a topic of conversation for the last several election cycles. Since the 1960s, voter turnout during presidential elections has seen a steady decline—with the occasional uptick here and there. In the 2016 primary election cycle, voter turnout in most states was only 21 to 30 percent, and this was a record year for primary voter turnout! In New Mexico, we saw a voter turnout percentage of only 34 percent. Voter turnout in Otero County was 31.46 percent, while Lincoln County saw 37.6 percent of voters participate.

Some speculate the reason for the decline is because the average American is not as engaged in politics as they have been in the past. And who can blame us really? Often times, we may feel like candidates are not speaking to the issues we care about. Or perhaps we don't feel like we understand enough about the candidates' stances on the issues, or even the issues themselves. But we can change this.

Here at OCEC, we want to see civic engagement in our rural communities increase. We want to give you what you need to make informed decisions about candidates at all levels of government, not

just the presidential race. And we want you to know more about the issues that could impact our local communities.



America's electric cooperatives are doing their part by informing co-op staff and members through Co-ops Vote, a non-partisan campaign with one simple goal: increase voter turnout at the polls this November. By visiting [vote.coop](http://vote.coop), you can learn about your candidates, access voter registration information and more.

The future of rural economies depends on their ability to keep up with today's global economy, which is why access to broadband internet is a key topic of discussion this election season. Just 55 percent of rural Americans have broadband at home. Quick access to information is crucial in finding a job, getting a better education and even gathering the information needed to make major health decisions. But there is a barrier: expensive costs.

With the right state and federal policies, broadband technology can become available to all rural Americans, allowing families and businesses to communicate in new and faster ways.

We encourage you to visit [vote.coop](http://vote.coop) and take the pledge to learn more about the issues that impact us locally. Let's work together to improve our communities by increasing voter turnout and changing our country, one vote at a time.

## Halloween Safety Tips for Kids and Teens

- Never, ever go into a stranger's house or even ring their door for treats unless your parents are with you and say that it's okay. There are some people in life that aren't very nice to kids, and you have to be careful. Always make sure your mom or dad is within sight when you go out trick-or-treating.
- Be careful when you cross a street. Make sure to look in both directions and make sure there are no cars coming. If you have a little brother or sister with you, take their hand and help them get across the street, too. If the street has a stop light, wait until the cross walk light signals you that it's okay to cross, but still check before you cross, look both ways.

## October is National Cooperative Month

OCEC wants to celebrate with you! Join us at any of our three offices in Cloudcroft, Carrizozo or Alto on Thursday, October 13, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for refreshments and giveaways. Our co-op is great because of you—our members.

## Answers to Common Cold Weather Questions

Why do electric bills go up in winter months? Even if you don't use electric heat, you may notice your bills are higher during colder months. Several factors can contribute to those higher bills.

### Among them are:

- Warm baths and hot showers feel great on cold days. And heating extra water can increase your consumption and your electric bill.
- Shorter days and longer nights mean lights stay on longer, both inside and outside.
- Most heating systems use electricity for some functions, such as operating the fan, and many run continuously when it's very cold.
- Space heaters, electric blankets, and heating pads—used to feel cozy on cold nights—cost to operate.
- Many consumers use the clothes dryer more often in the winter, rather than an outside clothesline.

## Board of Trustees



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## Board Meeting

The board of trustees meets the third Friday of the month at 9:00 a.m. at the cooperative.



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8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (M-F)