

# Otero County Electric Cooperative



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Mario Romero

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800-548-4660

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**Website** • [www.ocec-inc.com](http://www.ocec-inc.com)

**Office Hours**  
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (M-F)

## Board of Trustees

**President**  
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**Vice President**  
Matt Flotte, Central District

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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.

## Office Closing

OCEC Offices will close on Monday, February 17, in honor of President's Day. Normal office hours will resume on Tuesday, February 18.

## Apply for a Rebate!

Be sure to apply for a rebate from our Energy Efficiency Program. You could be eligible for money back on qualifying purchases of appliances, insulation, televisions, and much more. Visit your local OCEC office or website for additional details.

[www.ocec-inc.com](http://www.ocec-inc.com)



## Apply for Scholarships!

The Otero County Electric Education Foundation offers scholarship to graduating high school seniors who will be attending an accredited New Mexico university, college, or vocational/technical school. Scholarships for the Fall 2020 semester are available to active members receiving service from Otero County Electric Cooperative and their immediate family.

Applications are available at your local cooperative office, online at [www.ocec-inc.com](http://www.ocec-inc.com) or from your school guidance counselor.

**Deadline is  
Monday, March 16.**

## Tips for Winter Safety

This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

- 1. Don't overload outlets.** Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.
- 2. Never leave space heaters unattended.** If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items.
- 3. Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.** These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads—look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged.
- 4. Use portable generators safely.** Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

## My Winter Electric Bill is High

You just received your bill and are shocked at the amount, then notice your electric usage has gone up considerably. Colder temperatures during the winter can drive up utility costs as the most common source of high electric consumption is your home's heat source.

As much as 31 percent of energy consumption in your home is from heating. Low overnight temperatures contribute to furnaces and blowers on wood burning stoves turning on more frequently. If the house is colder than normal, how many of you turn on one or

more electric space heaters? Space heaters heat a small space but use an enormous amount of electricity and will cause your electric bill to skyrocket. Oh, and don't forget the engine block heater on your diesel pickup—they are an often unthought of contributing factor to increased electric bills.

When looking for ways to lower your electric bill, consider making changes to the larger category of electric consumption—heating/cooling and water heating—to have the most impact.

### RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION

