



POWER-GRAM

A Monthly Newsletter for Members of

**OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

**November
2017**



Cloudfcroft

575-682-2521

Alto

575-336-4550

Carrizozo

575-648-2352

www.ocec-inc.com

LOBBY HOURS

8 AM - 4 PM

Monday - Friday

TO REPORT AN

OUTAGE, CALL

1-800-548-4660

FOR BALANCE

INFORMATION

OR TO PAY YOUR

BILL, CALL

1-844-846-2695

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Look Out for Scams

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). OCEC will never ask you to offer up personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact our member payment center either in person, or over the phone at 1-800-548-4660.

If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of OCEC that needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

Government agencies like the IRS will never

call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.

If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.

If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

OCEC wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or would like more information about how you can protect yourself from scammers, call us, or visit our website 1-800-548-4660 or www.ocec-inc.com.

**OCEC Offices Closed for
Thanksgiving Holiday
November 23-24, 2017**

**OCEC is THANKFUL for
all our members and wish
each of you a safe,
healthy & happy holiday.**



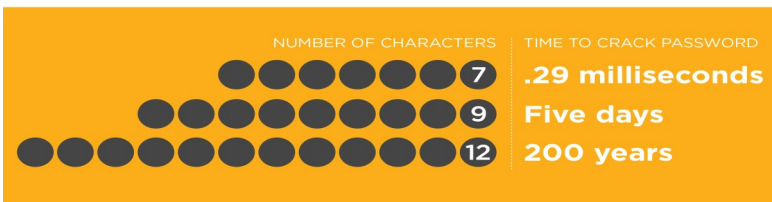
ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient: unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. You could save \$10 to \$20 per year.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

How long should your password be?

The length and complexity of a password has a direct impact on how difficult it would be to crack.



Energy Efficiency for the Modern Family and Its Many Devices

If you are struck by the amount of screens, remotes, gaming controls, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. The typical American family is well connected and owns a variety of electronic devices. According to the PEW Research Institute, 95 percent of U.S. families have a cell phone and 77 percent of Americans own a smart phone. Nearly 80 percent of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately half own tablets.

Consumer electronics coupled with the growing array of smart home appliances and technology have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on our many devices has new implications for home energy use and efficiency.

Using smart technology to manage energy savings

So how can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before? The answer may lie with some of those same electronic devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy savings is a touchscreen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.

From the convenience of your mobile device, smart technologies can maximize your ability to manage electricity use across several platforms—controlling your thermostat, appliances, water heater, home electronics and other devices. One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat, like Nest models. Using your mobile device, you can view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor how much energy is used and make adjustments accordingly. For example, program your thermostat for weekday and weekend schedules so you are not wasting energy when no one is home. Check and adjust the program periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified appliances. Many new appliances include smart-technology features such as refrigerators that can tell you when maintenance is required or when a door has been left open. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want the load to start. This means you can program your task for off-peak energy hours—a smart choice if your electric rate is based on time of use.

“Old school” energy savings for new devices

Of course there are the time-tested “old school” methods of energy efficiency that can be applied to the myriad of household electronic devices and screens. Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious “vampire power” users, meaning they drain energy (and money) when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or placed on a timer.

While modern life involves greater dependence on technology, your best resource for saving energy and money remains your local electric co-op.

Regardless of your level of technical expertise with electronic devices, OCEC can provide guidance on energy savings based on your account information, energy use, local weather patterns and additional factors unique to your community.

\$100 Rebate Available for Smart Thermostats through Energy Efficiency Program



Today's growing array of smart home appliances and technologies have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on so many devices has new implications for home energy use and efficiency.

OCEC's Energy Efficiency Program provides a \$100 rebate for smart thermostats. Check details on the program on our website, www.ocec-inc.com.