

Bluestem NEWS

BLUESTEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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CONTACT US

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 5, Wamego, KS 66547
800-558-1580

FROM THE CEO

Who Owns What?

Understanding electric equipment responsibilities



Michael Leitch

As July rolls in with longer days and rising temperatures, it also brings the increased potential for severe weather. Summer storms can arrive quickly and hit hard, sometimes causing significant damage to essential electric equipment throughout our community.

Bluestem is always prepared to respond swiftly to outages and restore power safely, but it is also important for homeowners to understand which parts of the electric system are their responsibility and which are maintained by us at the co-op. Understanding these key differences can help speed up repairs and ensure everyone stays safe when the weather turns rough.

Bluestem is responsible for maintaining and repairing the equipment and lines that run to your home, including utility poles, distribution power lines, electric meters and pad-mounted transformers.

Bluestem members are responsible for the equipment located between the electric meter and your home or business, including any underground service lines that lead into the structure and the service panel.

If any equipment that you (the homeowner) are responsible for is damaged, please call a licensed electrician to conduct the repairs. A professional has the experience and know-how to assess and manage these types of repairs.

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“By working together to understand the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared to start the repair and restoration process if severe weather impacts our community.”

SPECIAL MEETING JULY 21

There will be a special meeting in regards to changes with the Parallel Generation and Net Metering rider. The meeting will be held on **JULY 21, 2025, AT 9 A.M.** at the Bluestem Electric Cooperative office at 1000 South Wind Drive, Wamego, Kansas. Please visit www.bluestemelectric.com for more information.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Bluestem Electric offers an automated pay-by-phone option 24 hours a day, seven days a week. By calling 844-973-2526 and following the prompts, you can pay with a credit card, debit card or electronic check with **NO FEES**. You will be required to use your Bluestem account number when calling in to ensure accuracy. If it is your first time using the system, be prepared to create a four-digit PIN. For security reasons and to comply with federal rules and Payment Card Industry (PCI) data security standards, Bluestem employees cannot take your payment information over the phone; however, they are happy to assist if you have questions and can be reached at 800-558-1580.



CONVENIENT PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR OUR MEMBERS

All members receive a standard monthly bill for their electrical use. Bills are due and payable upon receipt.



AUTO PAYMENT

Payments can be made automatically when you sign up for Automatic Bank Draft. Your bank account will be drafted on the due date of the bill each month. Members can sign up through our online bill pay system or through the office. You will receive a statement each month from Bluestem to let you know how much your bill is. The bill will say "Do not pay. Your account will be drafted on the due date."



ONLINE BILL PAY

Online bill pay is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by visiting www.bluestemelectric.com. Members also have the option to download the SmartHub app from the Android or Apple stores on their smartphone. By using your credit card, debit card or bank account, you can either set up a one-time payment or recurring. Recurring payments will be automatically withdrawn each month on the due date.



MAIL

You can pay your electric bill by mailing a check or money order in the return envelope that is included with your monthly bill. If you are mailing a check without the return envelope, please mail to: P.O. Box 33, Wamego, KS 66547.

Be sure to include the name and Bluestem account number of the account to be paid to ensure its proper posting. Please allow sufficient time for postal processing. Payments must be received in our office prior to the due date. We **DO NOT** use the mailing post date for the payment date.



PHONE

Our automated pay-by-phone system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 844-973-2526.

It is as simple as calling and following the voice prompts. This is a **FREE** service allowing you to make a payment by phone with a debit or credit card or electronic check with **NO FEES**. For security reasons and to comply with PCI, Bluestem employees cannot take your payment information over the phone.



800-558-1580

Bluestem Welcomes Summer Interns

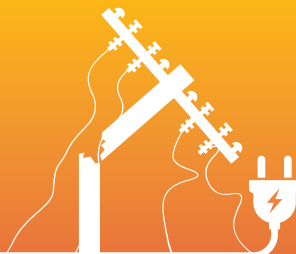


COOPER MATTHEWS (left) and **CAMERON MORGAN** join the Bluestem team this summer as interns. Cooper will be working with the Clay Center crews and Cameron will be working with the Wamego crews.

SAFETY TIP

When you see power lines on the ground following a storm, stay far away, warn others to stay away, call 911 and contact the electric utility. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG



TIPS TO AVOID UTILITY SCAMS



Always be cautious of unsolicited calls (or in-person visits) to your home from companies claiming to conduct energy audits. These are typically telemarketing firms that claim to be a third-party company or pose as a representative from your electric utility to gain access to homes and sell services with the promise of government rebates. Many electric utilities provide energy audit services, but they are typically scheduled at the customer's request. **SOURCE: BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU**



KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE

Fireworks stress out pets. Help keep them calm and safe this Fourth of July:

- ▶ Never leave them unattended outside. Keep them indoors in a quiet space.
- ▶ Play soft music or white noise.
- ▶ Make sure ID tags and microchips are up to date.



FREE AND EASY Ways to Save Energy

Here are **10** easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer.

1 Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day.



2 Set your thermostat a few degrees higher.



3 Take cooler showers (this is better in the summer anyway!)



4 Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of an oven.



5 Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors.



6 Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage).



7 Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them).



8 Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weatherstripping if needed).



9 Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house.



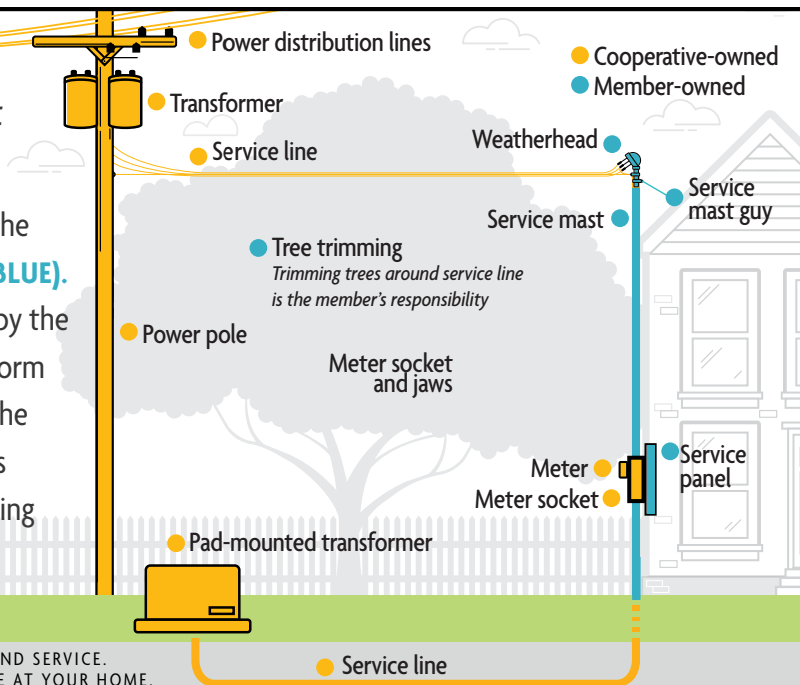
10 Shut the front door (don't air-condition the outdoors).



Who Owns What?

Electric Cooperative-Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the **CO-OP (IN YELLOW)** and the **MEMBER (IN BLUE)**. If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



PEAK HEAT DAY TIPS

Save energy and reduce peak demand this summer!

Raise the thermostat a few degrees to save energy.



Save laundry for off-peak hours.



Run the dishwasher before you go to bed.



Who Owns What?

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When severe weather damages electrical equipment, it's important to note that any necessary repairs to the homeowner's equipment must be conducted before Bluestem's crews can restore power to your home or business. By understanding the equipment you are responsible for, the repair and restoration process will be smoother and faster.

Regular trimming of trees is essential to ensure reliable electric service and minimize damage from severe weather. Bluestem regularly trims trees throughout our service territory to improve service reliability. If you see a tree limb that is obstructing a distribution power line outside your

home, please call Bluestem so we can trim those limbs and maintain those lines.

Any overgrown limbs or vegetation around the service line is the homeowner's responsibility, and in these cases, please call a professional tree trimming service to assist.

By working together to understand the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared to start the repair and restoration process if severe weather impacts our community.

If you have any questions about your electrical equipment, we're here to help. Please contact Bluestem Electric at 800-558-1580.

NEW BILL PRINT FORMAT

We are updating the look of your bill! Members will notice a fresh, easy-to-read design that makes it simpler to find the information you need. For updates on this change please check out future *Kansas Country Living* centerspreads.

