

enchantment

The Voice of New Mexico's Rural Electric Cooperatives

The Buzz about a Co-op **S**pelling Bee



October 2015

Winter Shut-Off Protection Notice

Protection from winter shut-off begins November 15, 2015. To avoid potential disconnection of services, please contact the Human Services Department at 800-283-4465, or the appropriate tribal or pueblo entity for eligibility information for the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Your service will not be disconnected from November 15, 2015 through March 15, 2016, if you meet the qualifications of LIHEAP and have no past due amounts, or you remain current on any settlement or installment agreement for amounts due as of November 15, 2015. Member of New Mexico tribes or pueblos who need help with a translation or with other matters may contact the commission's consumer relations division at 888-427-5772, who will contact the appropriate tribal or pueblo official for assistance.

Nota de Protección de Desconexión del Invierno

La protección en contra de la suspensión de servicio de invierno inicia el 15 de Noviembre de 2015. Para evitar una posible suspensión de servicio, favor de llamar al Departamento de Servicios Humanos al 800-283-4465 o a la entidad de la tribu o pueblo apropiado para recibir información acerca de su elegibilidad dentro del Programa de Asistencia para Energía en Temporada de Invierno para Personas de Bajos Ingresos (LIHEAP por sus siglas en Ingles). Su servicio no será suspendido del 15 de Noviembre de 2015 al 15 de Marzo de 2016, si llena los requisitos del programa LIHEAP y se encuentra al corriente en sus pagos acordados en un programa de pagos o si no tiene adeudos pendientes al 15 de Noviembre de 2015. Miembros de tribus o pueblos de Nuevo México que necesiten traducción o ayuda con otros asuntos pueden comunicarse con la comisión de la división de relaciones con el consumidor al 888-427-5772. Ellos contractaran al oficial de la tribu o pueblo apropiado para asistencia.

Message from the President: Sustainability

Buzz Words. It is entertaining how words or phrases come into popular use and are repeated by newscasters, politicians and our neighbors with little understanding of what they really mean, but they are popular for a period before being replaced by a new Buzz Word.

Such is "Sustainability." What does it really mean? Can you sustain the pace? Or can you keep up in a marathon race? Or will you tire and lose ground to other runners?

Nowadays, sustainability most often has an environmental connotation, widely meaning to keep the components of the environment, such as vegetation, wildlife, etc. continuing to exist and thrive.

How about your electric power to your home? Can we keep the lights on? We at Sierra Electric Cooperative (SEC) continually strive to make the electricity that we provide to your homes and businesses "Sustainable." As the term applies to your electricity, it is inclusive of availability, consistency, reliability, and affordability.

Your SEC power supply system consists of almost 900 miles of electric power lines, more than 4,100 electric meters, about 2,000 transformers, over 13,000 power poles, and other numerous components such as voltage regulators, breakers, and fuses. In addition to the physical components of the electric distribution system, you own, as a co-op member, numerous vehicles, specialized trucks, trailers, and tools, along with computers that have unique programs for managing the operation of your electric supply system, and which manage the Co-op's financial and member information. To guard against cyber-security threats and to keep all this data private and secure, we use several layers of specialized software and hardware.

As a "Not-for-Profit" company, what you pay for your power goes to pay for the electricity that we buy from Tri-State Generation

and Transmission Association (another "Not-for-Profit" cooperative), all of the items mentioned, plus any maintenance, upgrades or replacements needed, training for your employees and trustees, and other expenses necessary to "Sustain" the electricity to your homes and businesses. Also, don't forget, as a member of SEC, you receive Patronage Capital Retirement checks (resulting from margins on operations from previous years), that is a payback to you for your prior years of ownership in SEC.

Sustaining your power system and keeping your electricity affordable is a real challenge today. Sierra County is losing its population. In addition, we have had fewer visitors to the Lake in recent years (yes, they use electricity, and their visitation means that our businesses use more power). In addition, the City of Truth or Consequences, who buys power from your Co-op, recently installed a large solar power system, as has the Walmart store, both of which reduce the power sales of your Co-op. Even with reduced sales, the fixed costs of keeping your electricity "Sustained" stays nearly the same. Your board of trustees, the general manager, department heads and employees work hard every day to find ways to streamline and economize to make sure the funds we do spend are effective and long-lasting.

So next time someone uses the word, "Sustainable," think of how it applies to your home or office every time that you reach for the wall switch to turn on a light, power up your computer, pull the trigger on your electric drill or saw, and on, and on, and on!

John Bokich, President
Board of Trustees
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Celebrate National Cooperative Month!

October is National Cooperative Month, and SEC—and all co-ops across the U.S.—are celebrating the benefits and values that cooperatives bring to their members and communities.



While co-ops operate in many industries and sectors of the economy, seven cooperative principles set us apart from other businesses: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member's economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

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Judy Smith	Trustee	Caballo	District 1
Tom Stroup	Trustee	Elephant Butte	District 2
Board Meeting			
The board of trustees meets the third Friday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the cooperative boardroom.			



SIERRA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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