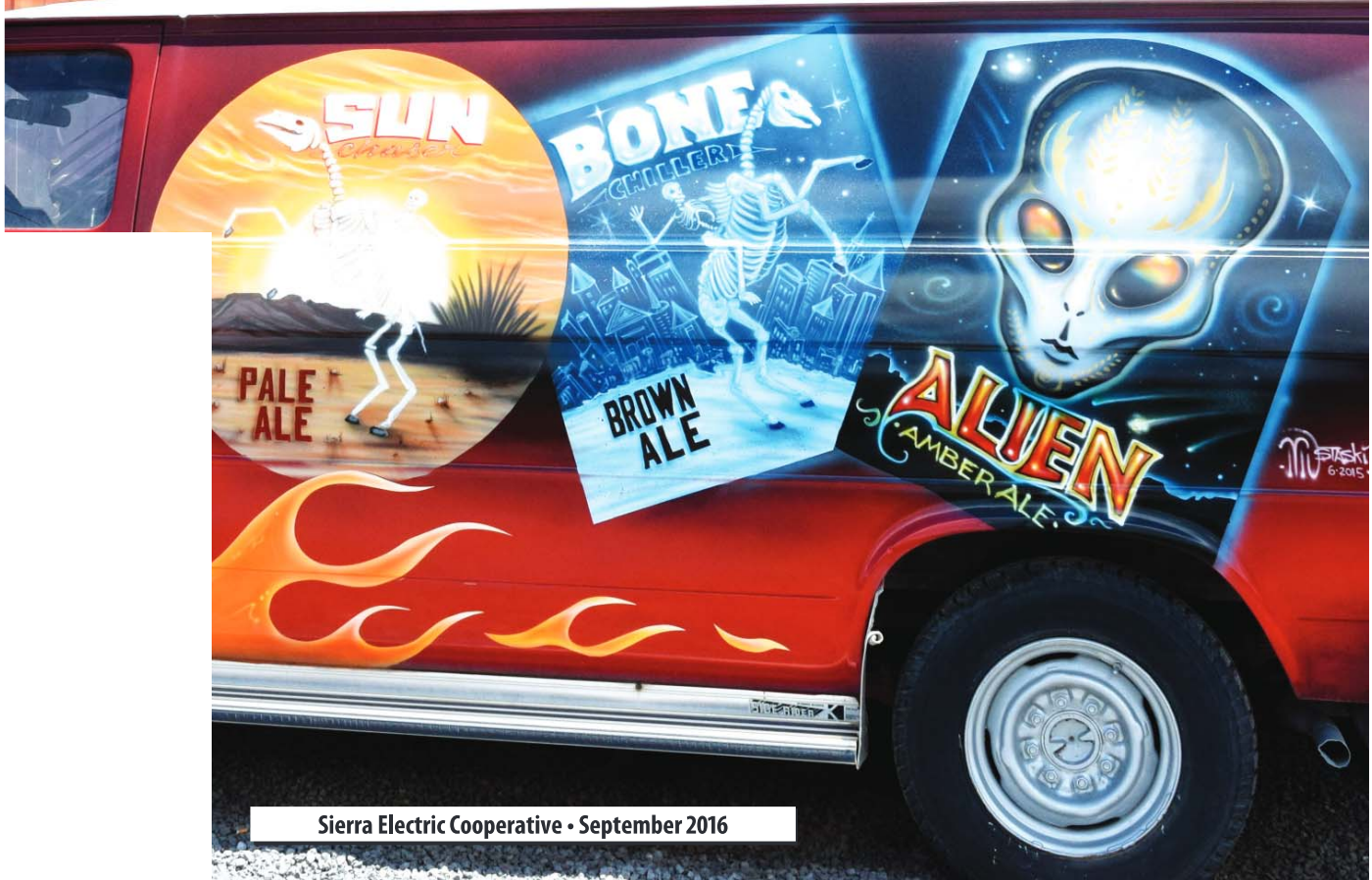


# enchantment

The Voice of New Mexico's Rural Electric Cooperatives



## Tapping a Trend



Sierra Electric Cooperative • September 2016

# Be Lightning Quick to Be Safe During Thunderstorms

Many of our members can attest to the fact that thunderstorms appear quickly and can do a lot of damage in a short period of time. Typically, the months of July, August and September produce the largest amounts of precipitation in Sierra County and in many cases thunderstorms with dangerous lightning that accompany the rainfall. According to the National Lightning Detection Network (NLDN), there were 1,033,658 cloud-to-ground lightning flashes in the state of New Mexico in the year 2015. New Mexico is ranked 6th highest in that category for 2015 with Texas, Florida, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri leading the top five.

On July 27, 2016, a thunderstorm passed through the northwestern portion of our service area and brought with it high winds and dangerous lightning. Sierra Electric experienced an extended outage due to the storm, including three power poles near Cuchillo that were blown down due to the high winds. Correlated with the time of the outage, a 21 kA (21,000 amperes) lightning strike was recorded at a distance of 6.79 miles from Cuchillo.

There have been 21 lightning deaths in the United States as of the end of July 2016. The odds of being struck by lightning in your lifetime are 1 in 3,000. The best defense during a lightning event or thunderstorm to avoid injury is to create a good offense.

When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within

six miles (10 kilometers) of you and is dangerous.

The most important thing to do at that time is to seek shelter inside a large enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring. In the event of a lightning strike, the plumbing and wiring will conduct the electricity more efficiently than a human body. Not all types of buildings or vehicles are safe during thunderstorms. Buildings with exposed openings, like metal sheds, picnic shelters, carports and porches are dangerous, even if they are "grounded."

Lightning flashes may conduct their current through the ground to a person after the flash strikes a nearby tree, antenna, or other tall object. The current also may travel through power or telephone lines or plumbing pipes to a person who is in contact with an electric appliance, telephone, or plumbing fixture. Once inside a sturdy building, stay away from electrical appliances and plumbing fixtures. Do not use electrical appliances unless it is an emergency and stay out of the shower or bath until the threat of lightning has passed.

The threat of lightning continues for a much longer period than most people realize. In fact, some lightning flashes have been documented to travel more than 25 miles away from the thunderstorm cloud. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before leaving shelter.

For more information on lightning and safety, visit [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov).



**SEC will be CLOSED**  
**Monday, September 5,**  
**in observance of Labor Day.**



## Winter Shut-Off Protection Notice

Protection from winter shut-off begins November 15, 2016. To avoid potential disconnection of services, please contact the Human Services Department for eligibility information for the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at 1-800-283-4465. Your service will not be disconnected from November 15, 2016 through March 15, 2017 if you qualify for LIHEAP and you remain current on any payments that you owe under a payment plan, or you have no past due amounts as of November 15, 2016. For more information call the Human Services Department at 1-800-283-4465.

## Nota de La Protección de Desconexión del Invierno

El 15 de Noviembre del 2016 empezara la protección de desconexión de servicios. Para prevenir una posible desconexión de servicios, por favor de contactar al Departamento de Servicios Humanos para información sobre elegibilidad para el programa de bajos recursos de energía, (LIHEAP) al 1-800-283-4465. Su servicios no serán desconectado durante el 15 de Noviembre 2016 hasta el 15 de Marzo del 2017 si usted califica para el programa de bajos recursos de energía, (LIHEAP) y si usted continua al corriente en los pagos que usted deba bajo un plan de pago, o hasta el 15 de Noviembre del 2016 y no tenga ningún pago atrasado. Para información en español llame al Departamento de Servicios humanos, 1-800-283-4465.

### Board of Trustees

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Thomas Stroup	Trustee	Elephant Butte	District 2

### Board Meeting

The board of trustees meets the third Friday of the month at 8:30 a.m. in the cooperative boardroom.



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**Website Address**  
[www.sierraelectric.org](http://www.sierraelectric.org)  
**Office Hours**  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (M-F)

**General Manager**  
Jimmy Capps

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative