

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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LIGHTBULB WINNERS

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- ▶ Steve Austin
- ▶ Dale Baughman
- ▶ Aaron Andrews
- ▶ Cara Borth
- ▶ Tara Augstin
- ▶ Taylor Bayne

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!

NONDISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Report Suspicious Activity Near Electrical Equipment

Substations are part of the electrical generation, transmission and distribution system. Transformers are contained inside many of them, and their job is to transform voltage from high to low or vice versa, depending on their location within the distribution path.

Besides transformers, substations usually house switches, protective devices and control equipment. In large substations, circuit breakers are used to interrupt any short circuits or overloads that may occur.

No one should approach a substation, touch the fence or enter the gate unless they are authorized to do so.

Paying attention to individuals and activity around substations and other utility equipment helps keep everyone safe. Here are some things to look for:

- ▶ Take notice of individuals in street

clothes working near or on utility equipment; if you see this, please report it immediately.

- ▶ Notice whether individuals are dressed in proper personal protective equipment or have utility identification badges.
- ▶ Check vehicles or work trucks in the area for utility branded logos or information.
- ▶ Report suspicious behavior you see, including non-utility employees tampering with utility poles, meters, pad-mounted transformers or other equipment.
- ▶ If you notice anything unusual at a substation, please report it to the utility. Examples include the following:
 - ▶ An open or unlocked gate.
 - ▶ A damaged fence.
 - ▶ Obvious damage to equipment inside the fence.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills. Install weatherstripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



DO'S and DON'TS Around Electricity



Start discussions about electrical equipment and safety when children are young.

Here are some great safety lessons to teach:

DO'S

- ▶ Do stay inside after a storm in case there are downed power lines.
- ▶ Do place a cellphone on the bedside table, not on bedding or under a pillow.
- ▶ Do find another tree to climb if an overhead power line is nearby.
- ▶ Do fly kites, drones or other remote-controlled toys in an open area away from overhead power lines.

DON'TS

- ▶ Do not go near a downed power line.
- ▶ Do not use or set plugged-in items near water, including a sink, pool or bathtub.
- ▶ Do not go near or enter a substation to retrieve a toy or pet.
- ▶ Do not try to free an object that is stuck in a power line.

SOURCE: SAFE ELECTRICITY



6 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2024 CMS Scholarships Available

The CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., awards six \$1,000 scholarships annually to eligible applicants.

PURPOSE

To support development of effective leaders through educational opportunities.

OBJECTIVE

To provide financial assistance to make it possible for six high school graduates based upon scholastic and extracurricular achievements to continue their education.

SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Current high school seniors whose parents/guardians are members of CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., are eligible to apply for these scholarships. Each applicant must intend to enroll as a full-time student in an accredited university or college, including junior, community, vocational or technical college. All applicants for the CMS Electric Scholarship shall be considered on the above criteria without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender, national origin or existence of physical handicap.

SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA

Scholarship merit is based on three categories: scholastic achievement, school extracurricular activities and community activities.

HOW TO APPLY

Students wishing to make applications should contact the CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. office, or a member of the CMS Board of Trustees from within the district in which they reside to obtain application forms or print from the CMS website

www.cmselectric.com. Completed applications must be postmarked and/or returned to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., **BY FEB. 12, 2024.**

MAIL APPLICATIONS TO:

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
P.O. BOX 790
MEADE, KS 67864**

Questions about the scholarship program should be directed to Kirk A. Thompson, CMS general manager, at 620-873-2184 or 800-794-2353.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Selection is made by the scholarship committee of CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. Applicants must be willing to be interviewed by the committee, if necessary. Decisions made by this committee shall be final. Runners-up will be selected if the recipient forfeits scholarship rights.

SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENT

The scholarship recipients shall provide proof of satisfactory college enrollment to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. The cooperative will then pay the institution. Should the recipient withdraw from college, payment of scholarship monies shall cease, and reimbursement of unused monies shall be made to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc.

CONDITIONS

In the event the scholarship recipient receives financial assistance from other sources, which would constitute a full scholarship, the recipient shall notify CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., and relinquish rights to the scholarship. The money shall then be awarded to the runner-up, provided that person continues to meet all criteria.

Winter Prep? Think Safety First.

BY PAT MELGARES, K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS SERVICE

K-State climatologist says knowing weather forecasts can help reduce risk during winter weather

If there's a buzzword for winter that Chip Redmond subscribes to, it would certainly be safety.

As a climatologist and manager of the Kansas Mesonet at Kansas State University, Redmond understands the many risks of winter weather.

"The most obvious may be the cold," Redmond said. "It's definitely a time to start pulling out the warmer stuff; the thermals, the overalls ... we really need to become conscious about how many layers we put on in anticipation that the weather can change pretty rapidly this time of year."

Morning temperatures, he said, can be quite chilly, but temperatures in the Midwest and other parts of the country often can warm nicely in the afternoon, before cooling again at sunset. Layering helps to protect during daily weather variations, Redmond said.

He also suggests a warm hat or stocking cap; mittens or gloves; and footwear that provides warmth and traction.

"There is usually an increase in slides or falling accidents this time of year when we get snow," he said. "I suggest minimizing your outside time during slippery periods, or at least have the proper footwear and avoid areas where ice might build up. Sometimes it's easier to walk on grass than the sidewalk."

Redmond offers additional safety tips as winter weather approaches.

REMOVING SNOW

"As much as I don't want to admit it, I'm not as young as I was yesterday," Redmond said. "It takes a toll when we put our bodies under the stress of shoveling snow, especially wet, heavy snow that can be very physically demanding. That has been a leading cause of injuries and even death due to heart attacks. Be vigilant in what your body is capable of."

Redmond suggests asking friends, family and neighbors for help; removing snow in a way that doesn't require picking it up and throwing it; or using a snowblower.

WINTER TRAVEL

"Travel can be a challenge any time of year, but it becomes much more of a challenge in winter because conditions change quickly over short distances," Redmond said.

He advises travelers to always check weather forecasts for their current location, their destination — and points in between.

"There are some apps available that will give you weather

by the road [you're traveling]," said Redmond, who suggests the U.S. government website, www.weather.gov, for reliable, up-to-date forecasts across the country.

In Kansas, the Kansas Department of Transportation maintains a website, www.kandrive.org, that includes forecasts, road conditions, live cameras, road closures, and more.

Redmond said if a car's tires are worn, get new ones put on immediately. And, he says, keep a winter preparedness kit in the car that includes such items as blankets, flashlight, cellphone charger, water, radio, dry food and other items to help you weather the elements in case of a breakdown.

When storms are imminent, "don't travel," he said. "Make the smart decision to not go out there."

STAY OFF FROZEN WATERWAYS

"A lot of people in Kansas think that frozen ponds are pretty and they're fun to walk on," Redmond said. "But there's very rarely ever a pond or a lake that's truly safe to walk on. To support a person's weight, you need a lot of ice. To keep that ice frozen, we rarely see those weather conditions align because we still get warmer temperatures in the winter, and enough sun to melt the ice during the afternoon."

Redmond spoke in depth about winter preparedness and safety on the weekly radio program, *Sound Living*, produced by K-State Research and Extension. Listen to the full program online at www.soundlivingpodcast.net.



Report Suspicious Activity Near Electrical Equipment

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- ▶ Call 911 and then the electric co-op if you see the following:
 - ▶ Smoke or fire.
 - ▶ Non-utility workers inside the substation fence.

Never try to address an issue yourself. Please report any suspicious activity or damage to the police or CMS Electric Cooperative.

FIRST RESPONDER SAFETY

First responders should always wait for the go-ahead from the electric utility before addressing a fire or vandalism at a substation, power plant or solar farm. First responders should also communicate with and wait for the utility before approaching a downed power line or damaged pad-mounted transformer.

GENERAL SUBSTATION SAFETY

CMS Electric and Safe Electricity remind you to:

- ▶ Never go near a substation.
- ▶ Teach children to never go near a substation or climb its fence to retrieve a ball or pet. Let them know they should always stay away and tell a parent or adult, who should call us to report the incident at 620-873-2184.
- ▶ Teach children about the dangers of electricity from an early age.

- ▶ Never try to extinguish a transformer that is on fire since water and electricity do not mix. Call 911 to report the fire.
- ▶ If you see an issue with or notice something unusual about a substation, transformer or power line, contact your electric co-op. Never try to address a problem yourself.

TYPES OF TRANSMISSION SUBSTATIONS

There are three types of transmission substations: step-up, step-down and distribution:

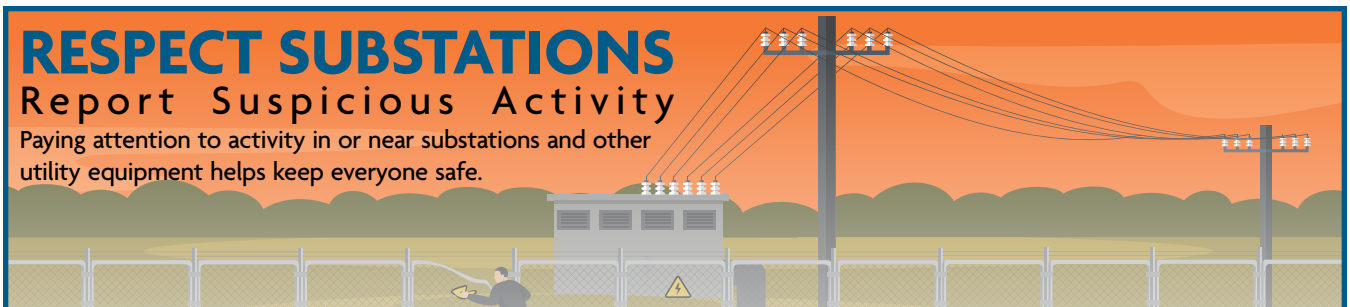
- ▶ A step-up substation receives electric power from a nearby generating facility and uses a large power transformer to increase its voltage so it can travel to distant locations.
- ▶ Step-down transmission substations are located at switching points on an electrical grid and connect various parts of the electrical system.
- ▶ Finally, distribution substations are located near end-users (homes, multi-family units and businesses) and reduce voltage to power homes and businesses.

For more information about substations, transformers or anything else concerning electricity, or to have us talk to your group about electrical safety, call 620-873-2184. For more information about electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

RESPECT SUBSTATIONS

Report Suspicious Activity

Paying attention to activity in or near substations and other utility equipment helps keep everyone safe.



Authorized workers should:

- ▶ Wear proper personal protective equipment and display an ID badge.
- ▶ Use work vehicles that have utility branded logos/information.

Suspicious activity includes individuals in street clothes who are:

- ▶ Near or inside a substation fence.
- ▶ Tampering with equipment, such as power poles, meters and pad-mounted transformers.

If you notice anything unusual at a substation, please report it to the electric cooperative.

Examples include:

- ▶ An open or unlocked gate.
- ▶ A damaged fence.
- ▶ Damage inside the fence.

Call 911 and then the electric cooperative if you see:

- ▶ Smoke or fire.
- ▶ Non-utility workers inside the substation fence.
- ▶ Non-utility workers on a pole or tampering with a meter.

SOURCE: SAFE ELECTRICITY