



CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Lightbulb Winners

- Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:
- ▶ Travis Apsley
 - ▶ Joy Beasley
 - ▶ Linda Burris
 - ▶ Pete Doerksen
 - ▶ Susan Chambers
 - ▶ Robert Colter
- Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!



Nondiscrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FROM THE MANAGER

Your Co-op is a Catalyst for Good



Kirk Thompson

Over the years, you've probably heard or read about CMS Electric's concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart because it's who we are as a co-op.

Over the past few months, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges and strengthen the safety net for our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to maintain business continuity while staying focused on the bigger mission, helping our consumer-

members during this turbulent time.

Now, with the holidays fast approaching, these recent events have made me pause and think about the role we play in our community. While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission — to be a catalyst for good.

We also have a strong commitment to safety — not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools as we are able to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We hold safety demonstrations at community meetings and other gatherings. Although we haven't been able to do many demonstrations this year due to the pandemic, we are hoping to continue this education as it is safe to do so.

CMS Electric invests in the economic development of the community through an active role in our local Chamber of Commerce.

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Cold Weather Rule

Effective Nov. 15 to March 1

CMS Electric Cooperative shall not disconnect a member's residential service between Nov. 15 and March 1 when the local National Weather Service office forecasts the temperature will drop below 32 degrees in the 24-hour period following the time of disconnection.

It will be the responsibility of the cooperative during the cold weather period to send one written notice to the member. The member will receive a second written notice 24-hours prior to any scheduled disconnect at their address or at their meter location that they are to be disconnected. The member can avoid disconnection by bringing the member's electric bill current prior to the scheduled disconnect time.

The Cold Weather Rule is to ensure that human health and safety are not unreasonably endangered during the cold weather months.

For more information concerning bill assistance, please contact CMS Electric at 800-794-2353.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/node/119>, or at any USDA office, or call 866-632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202-690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Your Co-op is a Catalyst for Good

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You'll also see our employees serving on local boards, coaching youth sports and volunteering at charitable events. Because when you work at a co-op, you understand how important a strong community is — after all, without our consumer-members, the co-op wouldn't exist.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on; but our passion is our community. Because we live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you, whether providing energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or discuss payment plan options during these difficult times, please reach out to us at CMS Electric.

Concern for community is the heart and soul of who we are. And no matter what the future brings, you can count on your electric co-op to care about you.

Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

Our offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27, in observance of the holiday. From our co-op family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!



Rural communities depend on co-op voters.

- Learn about the issues.
- Talk to your family and friends.
- Cast your vote.

Election Day is November 3, 2020

Be an active participant in our democracy.
Be a co-op voter. | www.vote.coop

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Source: energystar.gov



5 Electrical Safety Features to Be Thankful For

Most days, we go about our lives without thinking too much about the many electronic gadgets and electrical safety features that allow us to perform simple tasks at work and home without a second thought. This Thanksgiving, let's take a moment to be thankful for some of the devices that help make our daily tasks safer and more convenient.

For Your Safety: Built-In Devices

GFCIS: Ground fault circuit interrupters are inexpensive electrical devices that can either be installed in your electrical system or built into a power cord to protect you from severe electrical shocks. GFCIs are generally installed where electrical circuits may accidentally come into contact with water, such as kitchens, bath and laundry rooms, outdoors or in the garage. Be sure to test GFCIs monthly to make sure they are working properly.

AFCIS: Arc fault circuit interrupters could potentially prevent more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. These safety devices are typically found within your electrical panel or receptacles in the wall. An arc fault is a dangerous electrical problem caused by damaged, overheated or stressed electrical wiring or devices.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS: Usually found in a garage, basement or laundry room, circuit breaker boxes are an essential safety feature in your home, preventing electrical injuries and fires. Each box is filled with individual circuit breakers designed to 'trip,' or shut itself off when necessary to stop the flow of electricity. Circuits trip for several reasons, including overloaded circuits, drawing too much power from one circuit, ground faults, abnormal flow in a circuit, and short circuits when current travels along an unintended path.

Use Them Safely: Convenience Items

DEVICE CHARGERS: Whether for work or personal use, most of us can't go a day without accessing our favorite cell phone, tablet, laptop or other portable essentials. While we rely on our chargers to keep these items running, be sure to treat charging components with care and use them correctly. Here are some safety tips:

- ▶ Personal electronic devices should NOT be

placed under pillows or used on or underneath bedding.

- ▶ Do not leave cords plugged in when not in use because little ones or pets who put them in their mouths can get burned or shocked.
- ▶ Do not leave them around when not in use because toddlers might try to insert the wrong end into an electrical outlet and get shocked or burned.

Remember to childproof your outlets as well if they are not the tamper-resistant versions.

- ▶ Don't use charging devices near water or in damp conditions.
- ▶ Replace original charging components with the same brand and type whenever possible. Using off-brand or generic versions can be dangerous if they are faulty.

EXTENSION CORDS AND MULTI-OUTLET POWER

STRIPS: Extension cords and multi-outlet power strips or devices, while incredibly handy, should always be inspected for damage prior to use. Use them as a temporary fix, not a long-term solution, and use them safely:

- ▶ Never use an item that feels hot or is damaged in any way.
- ▶ Plug them directly into an outlet, and not into another extension cord or power strip.
- ▶ If you are using a strip or extension cord outside, make sure it is rated for outdoor use.
- ▶ Make sure these convenience items (cords and strips) are approved by a reputable independent testing laboratory like UL.
- ▶ When using an extension cord, make sure the wattage rating of the cord and the appliance match.

These are just a few electrical safety items to be thankful for this year.



Billing Inquiries

Billing is completed on the second to last billing day each month. Bills are due typically 20 days after billing. For billing questions, please contact our office at 800-794-2353. If you have multiple meters and are interested in invoice billing, please contact our office to set it up. For more information about our Budget or Even-Pay plans, please contact our office as well.

Payment Arrangements

CMS Electric understands when members struggle to stay current on their bills and we are here to help. We can work with you to set up payment arrangements. To make a payment arrangement, please contact our office at 800-794-2353.

Be a Smart Cookie

Holiday Baking Tips



TEST SMOKE DETECTORS

Make sure they are working properly.

WATCH YOUR SLEEVES

Loose sleeves are not ideal when in the kitchen.

PUT A LID ON IT

Have lids handy in case of a grease fire.

OLD THINGS DON'T BECOME NEW

Don't use appliances in disrepair.

HOW THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

Consider having a fire extinguisher on hand.



WHERE THERE'S HEAT, THERE COULD BE FIRE

Keep flammables such as pot holders away from the stove.

NOT CHILD'S PLAY

Keep children and pets away from cooking areas.

KEEPING TIME

Use a timer when the oven or stove is on.

STAY WITH IT

Don't leave the room if you are broiling, frying or simmering food.

PAY ATTENTION

Take a nap after the feast.

Your CMS Payment Options

CMS Electric has six convenient payment options for our members. All members receive a standard monthly bill for their electrical use. Bills are due and payable upon receipt. We realize one method of payment does not fit every member's needs, so we have several payment options available for your convenience. All our payment options are free.

1. Auto Payment/Bank Draft



Members have the option to have payments automatically withdrawn from their bank accounts or credit/debit cards. Sign-up is available through our online bill pay system or through the office. Auto payments are drawn automatically each month on the due date of the bill. A form is also available on our website cmselectric.com.



4. Night Deposit Boxes

There are night deposit boxes located at either office in Meade or Coldwater. Payments dropped off after 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, will be posted the next business day. Please pay inside to avoid broken payment arrangements or disconnection.

2. SmartHub/Online Bill Pay



Online bill pay is also available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Click the "Pay Online" button on the left side of CMS Electric's website or follow cmselectric.smarthub.coop/login.html. Members can also download the "Smart Hub" app from the Apple or Android marketplaces on any mobile device.



5. Mail*

CMS Electric's monthly bill comes with a return envelope that you use to mail your check back to us at P.O. Box 790, Meade, KS 67864 or P.O. Box 738, Coldwater, KS 67029
**Please allow additional time if using the postal service. Payments must be received in our office on or prior to due date. We DO NOT use the mailing post date for the payment date.*

3. CMS Electric Offices



You may pay by check, cash or credit/debit card at either office in Meade or Coldwater. Our offices are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday, except for select holidays.



6. IVR

CMS Electric has an automated pay-by-phone option. Members can use a check or credit/debit card by calling 888-395-5281.