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# YOUR LOCAL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

## From the General Manager, Aaron Ash

One year ago in April, the weather turned violent in Vernon County. On the west edge of Sac Osage Electric's territory, a tornado damaged buildings and roads, turned over railroad cars, and broke electric pole after electric pole, 23 in all. Our linemen went to work and had power restored in less than 16 hours. It was a heroic effort with all the construction crews and service linemen pitching in to get everything back in service that this severe storm wiped out in a matter of minutes.

As a relatively new manager, the April tornado was the worst crisis I'd faced. Thankfully, the professional people in the office and the extraordinary linemen and leadership team in place worked together to get the job done. Along with our system, the storm did enough damage in Vernon County to qualify for FEMA aid. Sac Osage did an excellent job of restoring the electrical system and tracking everything involved, so that our members could recover some of that cost through FEMA. The storm was a very big event in our Cooperative's history, and we all learned a lot coming through it.

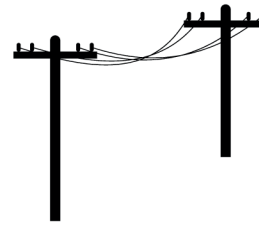
That knowledge would all be put to use in May. More tornadoes struck, this time in the northern part of Sac Osage Electric territory. Instead of 23 poles, over 200 would have to be replaced. The recovery and restoration would be measured in days instead of hours. This time the damage was localized more to Sac Osage's system causing well over one million dollars in damage, but thankfully, missing public buildings and structures. The Cooperative would not receive federal funding because the county had not met the threshold for emergency status.

The initial shock of the damage was almost overwhelming to me, but our crews and employees stepped up immediately and got to work. The linemen worked long days into the night for five days straight, receiving help from nearby cooperatives and contractors. The same coordination that had made things go smoothly in April was compounded and improved in May. In some ways Sac Osage Electric is still recovering from that storm (the Cooperative had to access an emergency line of credit), but 5,600 members were back in power the same week.

As I reflect on the anniversary of these storms, it is obvious to me how blessed I am to be here at Sac Osage Electric Cooperative. We celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day this month, and there are no better linemen than the men we have working at your electric cooperative.



**LINEMEN APPRECIATION DAY IS APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**



APRIL 2026

## Net Metering Availability

Missouri's Net Metering Act requires retail electric suppliers to have net metering available to members who have their own electric generation units that meet certain criteria, one of which is that the unit is powered by renewable energy resources. Net metering is where the member receives credit for the electricity he/she generates in lieu of electricity supplied by the electric utility.

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative has a net-metering agreement for the interconnection of a distributed generation source. Our policy, agreement, and application reflect the standards set by the Net Metering and Easy Connect Act (ECA). Net metering is available to members on a first come, first served basis until the total rated generating capacity of the net metering systems equals 5 percent of the utility's single hour peak load during the previous year.

Members interested in net metering should contact Sac Osage Electric Cooperative when considering new systems. Sac Osage Electric Cooperative will be happy to go over members' usage history and give them a realistic idea of what can be expected from a renewable system.

To view or print our Distributed Generation Net Metering Agreement, you can visit our website at <https://www.sacosage.com/forms>.



## May is Catch Up Month for Budget Billing

Budget billing is a program designed to help members manage their electricity costs by spreading payments evenly throughout the year. Instead of facing higher bills during the summer or winter, members can pay a consistent amount each month.

To qualify for the budget billing program, members must have:

- A twelve month payment history at the same location
- No delinquent payments
- No returned checks

April is an ideal time for budget billing members to review their actual account balance. This balance appears on the bill as "ACTUAL AR BALANCE" under the line item charges.

**Negative Balance:** Indicates a credit balance, meaning the member has paid more than needed, which will carry over into the final month.

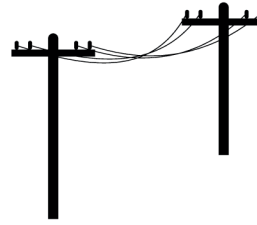
**Positive Balance:** If this amount exceeds the budgeted monthly payment, members might consider paying extra in April to avoid a significant payment in May.

Members not enrolled in budget billing will not see this line on their bills.

For more details about budget billing or to check your Actual AR Balance, contact Sac Osage Electric at 417-876-2721. Additional information is available on our website at: <https://sacosage.com/budget-billing>.



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## Storm Watches vs. Warnings - Safe Electricity

At any moment, thousands of thunderstorms occur worldwide. To protect yourself, your family and your property from seasonal thunderstorms and tornadoes, you need more than a flashlight and a few cans of food (although they are essential parts of your emergency kit). Beyond the items in your preparedness kit, it is a good idea to fully understand how dangerous storms can be and how to interpret weather alerts to minimize risk.

### **Watch versus warning**

When bad weather is approaching, people typically turn on the TV, pull up a weather app or look online for information. If you see a severe weather watch or warning, something bad could be heading your way. However, many people do not consider the differences between the two.

A watch means there is a significant chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado. Watch and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures, like unplugging electronics and checking the contents of your emergency preparedness kit.

A warning means that a severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. The moment you get a warning, take shelter in the safest part of your home, which is usually in your basement or the interior part of your home.

### **Thunderstorms**

Thunderstorms are some of the most common yet destructive weather events on Earth. Most of the damage comes from flooding caused by heavy rains, lightning strikes and high winds. Some storms also deliver hail and can even spawn tornadoes. Bad weather systems, such as those that cause thunderstorms, can cause broken windows, extreme water damage, fallen trees, serious fires, downed power lines and more.

Do not ignore the potential hazards of thunderstorms.

Keep flashlights or battery-operated lights well supplied with batteries or charge them regularly. Keep a supply of nonperishable food and drinking water on hand. Turn off and unplug electronic equipment to protect it from power surges. Move valuables out of the basement or other locations that may flood. If a power outage occurs, never use a portable generator in your home, enclosed structure or garage. Do not step into a flooded basement or area since the water could be electrified.

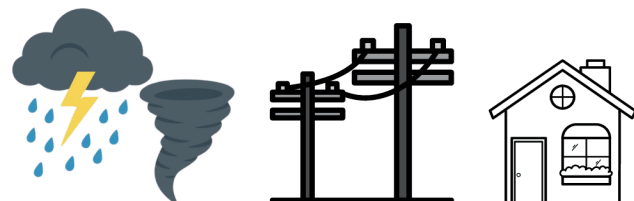
### **Tornadoes**

The central part of the United States is sometimes referred to as Tornado Alley because it is the most common geographic location for these disastrous storms. The Great Plains have the perfect environment and climate for severe storm creation. While tornadoes can happen in any month, they are much likelier in the spring and summer than in other seasons. April, May and June have more than twice as many reported tornadoes as any other time of the year.

To stay safe during a tornado, be aware of weather conditions during thunderstorms that could breed tornadoes. Know the best place to shelter both indoors and out and always protect your head.

Understanding severe thunderstorm and tornado watches and warnings can help keep you and your family safe. Do not underestimate the potential power of these weather systems. Take steps to protect yourselves and your property before a storm hits.

For more information about storm preparedness and electrical safety, visit [safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org).



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