



Sac Osage Electric Cooperative

News

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Pick Up Your 2020 Calendar

New calendars are available at cooperative headquarters, two miles east of El Dorado Springs on 54 highway. Members are encouraged to come by the office and pick one up even if they usually pay their bill on-line or by mail.

In 2019 Sac Osage held a contest to be a part of the 2020 calendar. Members were asked to submit photos taken within the cooperative service territory. The following members won a \$25 credit on their electric bill:

- Jill Uptegrove
- Jeanie Foreman
- Joyce Cain
- Jack Gill
- Lorri Terry
- Susan Lawson
- Don Brunson
- Jan Neale
- Ralph Bland
- Judd Lawson
- Rachel Daulton
- Roxene Robison

Sac Osage will be sponsoring the same contest this year for next year's calendar. Photographs must be taken within the service territory for this members-only contest.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Linemen, Kent Henry and Brian Fugate, restore power during an ice storm in 2007.

Be Prepared for Icy Weather

Every year Sac Osage prepares for extreme winter conditions. Forecasts are carefully watched and crews are on standby for threatening situations. During the temperate months tree trimming is used to try to keep limbs out of lines even when covered in ice. The cooperative takes all reasonable steps to build a system that can withstand Missouri's extreme weather.

Regardless of the precautions the cooperative takes, some members will likely find themselves without electricity during the coldest times of the year. Members can check on an outage status through the Smarthub app on their smart phone. Here members can check to see if the cooperative is aware of the outage without needing to call into the cooperative. The app also allows members to report outages. The cooperative website, www.sacosage.com, has an outage map that shows where known outages are and the approximate number of members who are out of power.

Working winter outages brings special challenges to outage restoration. Linemen must navigate roads obstructed by snow and ice to get to locations responsible for the outage. Members and other citizens are asked to stay off the roads as much as possible in such weather. Missouri recently passed Lyndon's Law which strengthens the penalties for hitting a highway or utility worker in a work zone.

If ice does form on power lines, the lines themselves can become a hazard. Downed lines may still be energized even if lying on the ground. Lines that are just weighed down by ice but still hanging in the air are even more likely to be energized and should be completely avoided. When reporting downed lines to the cooperative, the yellow tag on the nearest pole that the member can safely view will help linemen find the right place. Each tag has a unique identifier for our service territory. Members should always find a safe pole for reference rather than approach a pole with a downed line.



Your Spare Change Can Change Lives in Your Community



Director Gary Ashby presents a donation to Barbara Long.

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative serves nine counties in rural Missouri. Throughout those nine counties there are many people living close to the poverty line. There are also many people and organizations who are willing to help.

Barbara Long is the director of Community Outreach in Nevada, Missouri. Under her leadership Community Outreach runs many programs to help people in need throughout the year. One worthy program is the yearly Christmas Baskets. These packages are put together to provide hope and help during the Christmas season. Volunteers work hard to pack up items to make sure no Vernon County family is left out at this special time of the year.

In Cedar County a similar program is run as the Stockton Christmas Baskets. This program ensures that families in need received a meal and two presents for the children. Last year the program served over two hundred and twenty people. It has been serving Stockton and the surrounding areas

for more than fifteen years. Michael Tunnell of Stockton Christian Church helps spearhead this effort.

In St. Clair County the Care Connections center is dedicated to taking care of the needs of older citizens. While you will find many eating at the center each day, the center also provides a home delivery service for people who are unable to travel. The volunteers and workers have delivered more than twenty thousand meals to St. Clair County residents. The center believes in serving the community so that no one over the age of sixty is denied a meal. Margie Weaver who runs this and other centers says that the community makes this place possible. Those that can pay and leave a little extra do. With volunteers and other donations no one is left behind at Christmas or throughout the year.

In El Dorado Springs volunteers run another Christmas basket program. The donation based service prepares goods for the needy in their community. Families that would have to otherwise go without are given this aid



Dirs. Ted Woodrell (left) and Neale Johnson (right) present a check to Michael Tunnell for Stockton Christmas baskets.



St. Clair County Senior Center in Osceola, Missouri



Bags that will soon be filled with hot meals for delivery.



Senior center dining room serves many purposes.



Directors, Ray Huesemann (left) and Tim Minehardt (right), present a check to Margie Weaver for the St. Clair County Senior Center.

through the gifts of others.

These four organizations have many things in common. They fill a need in the rural community. They are driven by volunteer efforts. And they are supported by many members of Sac Osage Electric Cooperative.

Through the volunteer donation program our board of directors was able to present checks for three hundred dollars to each of these community organizations. This money will help keep these programs going to serve citizens in our area who need some extra help.

The funds are raised by members who have agreed to have their electric bill rounded up to the next whole dollar. So if their electric bill is \$103.20,

eighty cents goes into the fund, and the member writes a check for \$104 even. The maximum donation is never more than eleven dollars and eighty-eight cents a year, and averages right around six dollars a year.

For most members the spare change given to get to the next whole dollar will never be missed. Put together with the other Sac Osage Members' donations, this money adds up to a real difference in the rural community.

The cooperative wants all of the members who are currently supporting this program and rounding up their monthly bill, to know that the money is going to worthy causes. It all stays in the community to help out those in need. With more members willing to round up their bill, more funds would be available for more of these community led, volunteer supported programs.

To be added to this effort at this time, members need to fill out a one-time form. It can be found at www.sacosage.com or picked up at Sac Osage Electric Cooperative headquarters just east of El Dorado Springs on highway 54. By sending the form with the next month's bill the member will have a part in all these efforts. One of the founding principles of rural electric cooperatives is "commitment to community." Sac Osage is proud to continue that commitment and give our members a chance to participate.



Director Ken Hacker (right) presents a check to Steve Wiseman for El Dorado Springs Christmas Baskets.



Blinking Lights

Sac Osage is committed to providing reliable power to our members. It is a fundamental cooperative principle. Part of that commitment is designing a system with equipment in place to help ensure that reliability.

Members will sometimes experience very short power outages often called "blinks." These are generally caused by breaker operations somewhere up the powerline. The breaker operation happens when there is a short or fault on the line. Often breakers will attempt to reclose up to three times.

If a branch comes into contact with the powerline it may conduct electricity to the pole or ground creating a dangerous situation. In that case the safety device would open the line and members would experience a power outage until a lineman can locate the problem, clear the branch, and reset the breaker to close the circuit. However, if the branch contacts the line but then falls harmlessly away, the device can reclose the circuit. In this instance the member would only see a "blink" instead of a lasting outage. This means that the annoying blinking lights may have saved the member a prolonged outage.

To the member the blink is still an irritation, and it may return. There may be some place along the line where vegetation needs to be cut back or some cooperative equipment such as lightning arrestors or insulators have been damaged and need to be repaired. The cooperative's digital meters are capable of remembering blinks and can help employees narrow down the area and find issues faster than ever before in cooperative history.

Blinks can often occur on clear

days. Traffic accidents or farm vehicles can cause an outage in one area but only be a blink to members closer to the substation. A problem with a transmission line miles away from Sac Osage territory may cause these momentary power losses to multiple substations in the service area.

Members who are concerned about damage to sensitive electronic devices from these momentary power losses can get some peace of mind from an uninterruptable power supply. An uninterruptable power supply is an electrical device that runs your plugged in appliance through its battery. So even for a momentary power loss, your appliance sees no voltage change. Generally, uninterruptable power supplies only provide power for a few minutes in any single outage. They gained prominence for giving computer users enough time to save and shut down systems in case of a power loss. But they will keep a television and satellite receiver going right through a "blink".

Weather Radios Still a Great Safety Device for Rural America

Most Americans now own a mobile phone. That holds true for rural Missouri as well. Modern smartphones have good emergency alerts that can be set to let users know when severe weather is in their area. However, not all members get a good mobile signal at or in their home.

For members who would like some peace of mind that they will not be caught unaware when a storm is coming, a NOAA weather radio is an excellent solution. Weather radios can be programmed with the individual's county, so when a severe weather warning is issued it will automatically let them know what is coming.

Sac Osage has weather radios for sale in the resale department at cooperative headquarters. Staff can help program the radio for the member's county.



Pick Up a Free Energy Savings Guide

while supplies last

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative offices will be closed January 1st in celebration of New Years Day.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

As you ring in the New Year make a resolution to save energy.

- Seal leaks that let cold air into your home
 - Change your furnace filter monthly
 - Repair leaky faucets and toilets
 - Dress for winter, and turn down that thermostat
- We all benefit when you practice these tips.

