



May 2016

RURAL  
MISSOURI

# Sac Osage Electric Cooperative

# News

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## OBSERVE ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH THIS MAY

*Safe Electricity has tips and resources to help you stay safe around electricity*

Electricity is such a common presence in modern life that many people do not notice it until the power goes out or an electrical accident happens. May is the perfect time to broaden your knowledge of electricity since it is Electrical Safety Month. The information you need to brush up on your electrical safety knowledge is available at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

"Safe Electricity has educational materials available to the public," says Janna Dody, Communications Coordinator. "Please take time in May not only to learn more about electricity, but to share that knowledge with others."

One of the most compelling resources is the series of "Teach Learn Care TLC" videos, which feature the stories of people whose lives were affected by electrical accidents. The survivors and loved ones of those involved in electrical accidents want you to learn from their stories to avoid similar tragedies. Families at home, teenage drivers, construction workers, boaters and farmers are all featured—proving that electrical tragedies can strike anywhere.

Safe Electricity has a video featuring Kyle Finney's Live Line demonstration, which shows the dangers of high voltage electricity. You can see electrical arcs, find out what happens when a Mylar balloon comes in contact with power lines and learn more about safety measures to take in and around the home. Safe Electricity also has a library of articles available to the public. You can also like Safe Electricity on Facebook to get timely updates and reminders about electrical safety.

If you would like a personal demonstration for a group, for kids or adults, Sac Osage Electric can provide a live demonstration. Call 417-876-2721 to schedule a FREE demonstration.

Safe Electricity hopes you will observe electrical safety month and encourage friends and family to do the same. Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## PHOTO & SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

### - EL DORADO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Sac Osage Electric presented its live-line safety demonstration to El Dorado Christian School in April. Sixty-four students from K-4 to 6th grade heard the message to look out for powerlines, avoid electrical distribution equipment and other elements of electrical safety around the home. The live-line demonstration gives a visible representation of the dangers high voltage lines present.

The cooperative provides the safety demonstration as a free service to the communities it serves. Anyone interested in having Sac Osage do a session at their school, civic group, or other organization can call Aaron Ash or Janna Dody at 1-800-876-2701.

**Just a friendly reminder  
that May is catch up  
month for those members  
on Budget Billing.**



**OUR OFFICE WILL  
BE CLOSED ON  
MONDAY, MAY 30TH  
IN OBSERVANCE OF  
MEMORIAL DAY.**

## Plant colonists

Forsythias and lilacs are common springtime sights in the United States, but neither plant is native. The forsythia made its way from China to England thanks to Robert Fortune, a plant hunter for the Royal Horticultural Society. A few plants sailed to America with settlers



in 1860. Lilacs may have come from Persia to New Hampshire in 1695. In 1750, purple lilacs were planted at Gov. Wentworth's home in Portsmouth, and in 1919, the purple lilac was adopted as New Hampshire's official state flower.

## Pet appreciation week

The American Humane Association has designated the first full week in May (May 1-7 this year) as a time to appreciate pets and other animals. Dogs and cats were once worshipped as gods in some societies. In the 11th century, a dog called Saur was



named king of Norway by his master, the actual ruler, who was angry with his subjects for having once deposed him. English writer Samuel Johnson fed his favorite cat, Hodge, fresh oysters every day; and U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt invited his extra-toed cat, Slippers, to diplomatic dinners.

## Tornadoes and green skies

Most tornadoes in the United States occur in May, often striking suddenly and without warning, and few natural phenomena are harder to predict. Folk wisdom advises that a "pale green sky means the wind is high." In other words, the sky turns green just before a

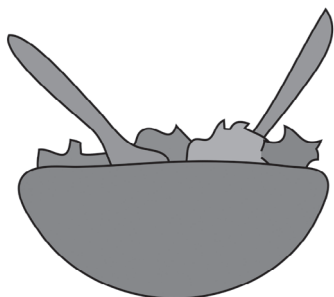


tornado forms. Although no one knows for certain why this happens, one theory suggests that because storms usually develop in the afternoon, the longer wavelengths (red and yellow) of afternoon sunlight (already deficient in blue) turn the bluish, water-heavy clouds green.

For recipes, gardening tips and weather forecasts, visit:  
[www.almanac.com](http://www.almanac.com)



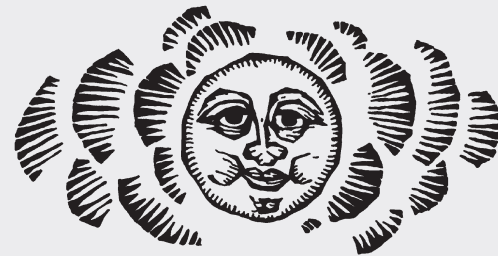
### Recipe for Goat Cheese and Greens



4 cups mixed salad greens  
1 medium red onion, peeled and sliced  
4 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled  
2 tomatoes, cored and cut into wedges  
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste  
Croutons  
Balsamic vinaigrette

Rinse salad greens, pat dry and place in a large salad bowl. Add the red onion, goat cheese and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. When ready to serve, add the croutons and vinaigrette and toss well. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

## THE OLD FARMER'S



## WEATHER PROVERBS

**A cold May is kindly and fills the barn finely.**

**The weather usually clears at noon when a southerly wind is blowing.**

**With dew before midnight, the next day will sure be bright.**

**When the thrush sings at sunset, a fair day will follow.**

**Plant the bean when the moon is light; plant potatoes when the moon is dark.**

**Clover contracts its leaves at the approach of a storm.**

**Wind roaring into the chimney, there is rain to come.**

**A late spring is a great blessing.**

# Keeping it all inside

## Identifying sources of air leaks inside your home

**Dear Pat: I recently moved into a new home, and it feels drafty. I added weatherstripping to the doors and windows, but it doesn't seem to have solved the problem. Are there additional steps I can take to increase comfort?**  
— Rob J.

Dear Rob: Sealing air leaks is one of the easiest and most cost-effective improvements you can make in your home. Weatherstripping doors and windows is a great first step and one that will likely pay for itself within a year. However, there are less obvious sources of air leakage that can cause significant discomfort in your home. The average home leaks about half of its air every hour through various cracks and gaps. These air openings add up to a 2-foot-square hole in the average home — that's like having a window open all day, every day. Sealing your home can help keep heated and cooled air indoors, making your home more comfortable and reducing your energy bill.

While drafty windows and doors are obvious sources of air leakage, there are other places where air could be escaping and where moisture, pollen, dust and pests could be getting in. For example, holes drilled into your walls, ceiling and attic for plumbing pipes and electrical lines can be a major source of air leakage. Outlet covers and recessed lights also can have small gaps where conditioned air can escape. Other sources could include leaks in air ducts in unheated spaces, chimneys and attic accesses.

To find air leaks, you can start with a visual inspection, checking for gaps and cracks where air could escape. Walk around your home's exterior and closely examine where different building materials meet, such as around the foundation perimeter, around outdoor water faucets and where the siding and the chimney meet. Indoors, examine common sources of air leakage, including electrical and water service entrances, baseboards, door and window frames as well as attic access doors.

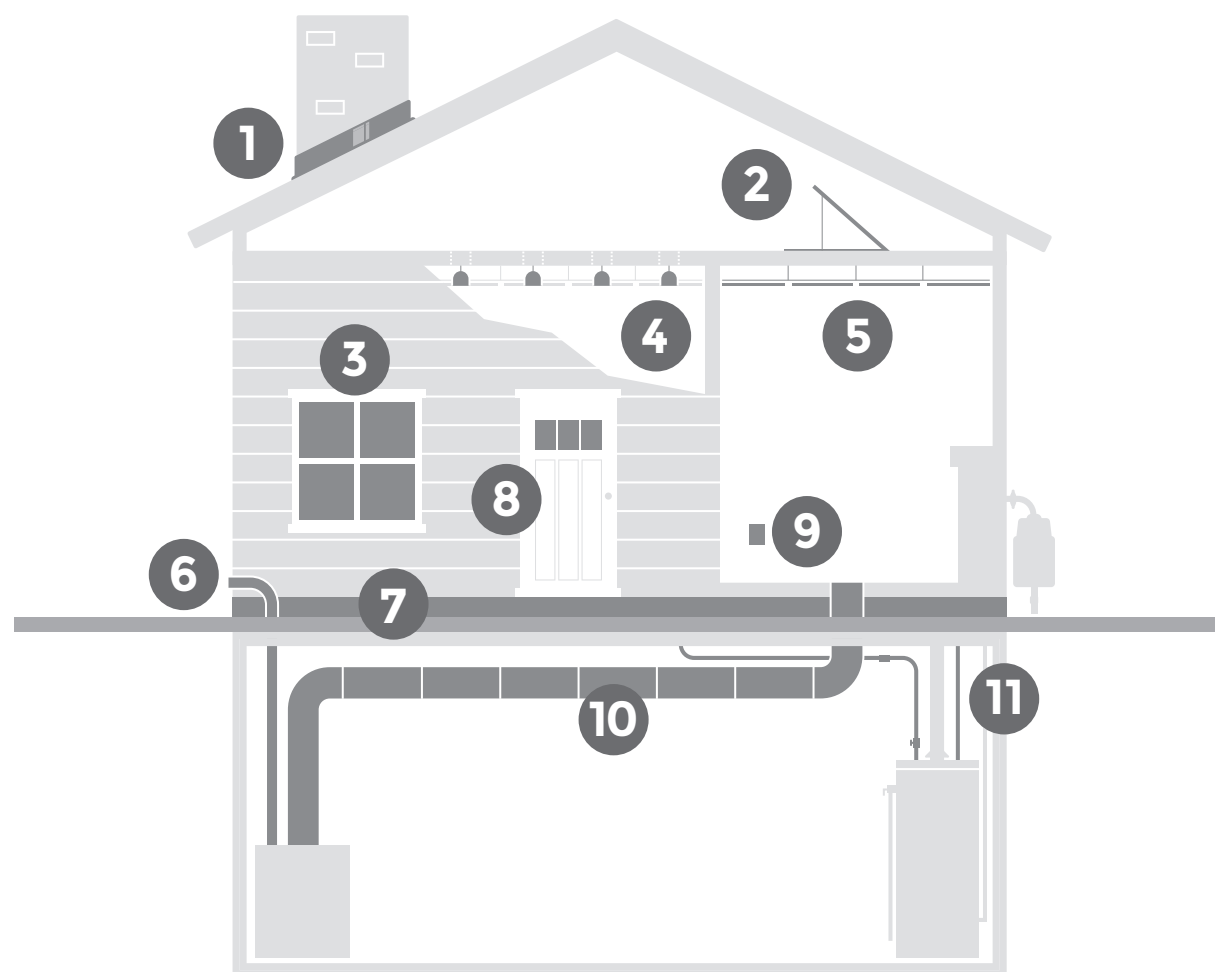
Though a visual inspection often can identify the most obvious areas for improvement, a blower door test can give you the most thorough accounting of air leaks in your home. A blower door test is commonly performed during an energy audit. During this test, a powerful fan is mounted in the frame of an exterior door, pulling air outside of the house and lowering the air pressure inside. Then, the higher pressure air from outside of the house comes in through any unsealed openings, which the energy auditor locates, often using a smoke pen. Check with your electric cooperative to see if it offers home energy audits.

Once you have found the air leaks, the next step is to seal them. The materials you need will depend on what gap is being sealed. For example:

- Doors and windows with gaps at the frame need weatherstripping.
- Small gaps, such as around outlets, can be filled with caulk.
- Large gaps and holes, such as around pipes, may need foam insulation, foil insulation, sheeting or a combination of materials.

You may have heard that your home needs some amount of air leakage to stay properly ventilated — and this is true. A home that is too

### COMMON AIR LEAKS



- |                    |                         |                              |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Chimney flashing | 5 Dropped ceiling       | 9 Outlets & switches         |
| 2 Attic entrance   | 6 Water & furnace flues | 10 All ducts                 |
| 3 Window frames    | 7 Sill plates           | 11 Plumbing & utility access |
| 4 Recessed lights  | 8 Door frames           |                              |

Some of the most common areas for air leaks in your home may not be located where you most commonly look.

“tight” can have issues with too much interior moisture, as well as carbon monoxide risks if combustion appliances don't have adequate ventilation. It is especially important that you not plug up vents that bring in outside air to a gas or propane furnace or stove.

However, relying on uncontrolled air leaks instead of using mechanical ventilation is not a good idea. In cold, windy weather, your home will be drafty — but in warm, still weather, not enough air may come in, leaving you with moisture and air quality issues. An energy auditor can use a blower door test to ensure a healthy level of air infiltration for your home and, in the unlikely event that your home is too tight, recommend a good ventilation strategy. If you have questions, please contact your local electric cooperative.

*This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Amy Wheelless of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on ensuring quality energy efficiency work, please visit [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energy-tips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energy-tips) or email Pat Keegan at [energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com](mailto:energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com).*



## Manager's Column —

### IT TAKES A CUT ABOVE TO STAY A STEP AHEAD

For years, trees have been appreciated for their shade, planted for their fruit, harvested for their wood. Trees contribute to our health, beautify our homes and farmsteads, help regulate our atmosphere, and can even reduce our electric bills, if carefully planned and planted.

However, trees can also cause headaches. Their roots can damage foundations. They can topple in storms and destroy buildings. And, their highreaching limbs can interfere with the reliable delivery of electricity to your home.

Limbs and leaves in contact with power lines can conduct electricity, creating a potentially dangerous condition for anyone who comes near. Tree-to-line contact also contributes to what electric system professionals call "line loss." The term refers to electricity created at a generating plant that does not reach its destination, an inefficiency that increases costs for us and for you.

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative strives to be a good steward of one of nature's gifts. However, we must maintain the integrity of the system by regularly trimming and pruning trees. Crews and contractors who work for us to clear rights of way are trained to work around high-

voltage lines safely and preserve the plants when possible. Cooperatives that keep their rights of way clear can demonstrate the benefits in reliability and savings to their members.

Vegetation management for distribution lines is addressed through the National Electric Safety Code (NESC). Distribution lines deliver electric energy to cooperative members. Although there are no specific requirements, NESC states, "vegetation that may damage ungrounded supply lines should be pruned or removed." In addition to safety concerns and outage prevention, vegetation management is necessary to reduce unexpected costs to electric cooperatives. By keeping rights of way clear, co-op crews are able to restore power more quickly, improve reliability, and prevent expensive repairs to systems damaged by fallen trees or neglected vegetation.

And, please, if existing trees are close to the lines and need trimming, don't try to tackle the job yourself. Every year, amateur tree trimmers are hurt or killed when trying to clear limbs near power lines. Call the right-of-way professionals at Sac Osage Electric.

**Tall trees, such as:**  
maple, oak, spruce,  
and pine

### Plant the right tree in the right place

Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines

