

Sun River Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone Numbers: 406-467-2526 or 1-800-452-7516

Website: www.sunriverelectric.coop

After Hours & Weekend Dispatch:
406-467-2526 or 1-800-452-7516

If calling from a local number or cell phone –
please use: 406-467-2526 or 406-467-2527

Be sure to check your breakers before reporting outages.

Ripples


FEBRUARY 2026

Annual Meeting set for March 27

As we say goodbye to 2025 and prepare ourselves for a wonderful and prosperous 2026, it is time to remind our membership of the upcoming Annual Meeting at the end of March. Sun River Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be held March 27 in the Fairfield Community Hall. We

sincerely hope each of you will mark this day on your calendar and plan to attend. This year the two districts looking for board nominations are District No. 2 (Upper Sun River-Augusta-Simms) and District No. 7 (Highwood-Armington-Stockett). Cooperatives are democratic organizations that maintain their

strength and success through membership participation. If anyone wishes to petition to become a trustee, they can pick up a nominating petition at the Sun River Electric office.

The requirements to become a trustee are listed below and can also be found listed in the bylaws. 

SREC Bylaws – Article III Section 7: Nomination and Election of Trustees

No member of the Cooperative can petition to become a trustee of the Cooperative unless he or she has been a paying member for five consecutive years and a resident and property owner in the district he or she is to represent. In the year in which a trustee position shall be voted upon at the annual meeting of the members, a person desiring to be elected or re-elected to that trustee position shall submit to the Cooperative a nominating petition. Each nominating petition shall consist of the printed name, address, and telephone number and original and dated signature of no less than ten (10) members of the cooperative, and they must reside in the district described in Section 6 above for which such a trust position is to be elected. In order to be eligible to run for the Board of Trustees, a candidate's nominating petition shall be submitted to the cooperative no less than thirty (30) days before the annual meeting. The petitioned members name must be posted at the principal office of the Cooperative no less than twenty (20) days prior to the meeting and

the Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting or separately but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting a statement of the number of trustees to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates whom petitioned. The ballot to be used at the election shall list the names of the candidates who completed the requirements. Each member of the Cooperative present at the meeting shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from each district. The candidate from each district receiving the highest number of votes at the meeting shall be considered elected as trustee. Article IV: Qualification and Tenure At the annual meeting of the members for the year 1940, the trustees from districts 3, 4, and 5 shall be elected for a three-year term, trustees from districts 2 and 7 for a two-year term and trustees from districts 1 and 6 for a one-year term. In the years thereafter, beginning with the board members next term, all trustees shall be elected for a three-year term. All trustees elected shall hold office during the respective terms for

which they were elected and until their successor shall have been elected and shall have qualified. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a trustee or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who: (a) is not a member of the Cooperative and a bona fide resident of the particular district which he or she is to represent or (b) is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the Cooperative or is an employee of the Cooperative. Upon establishment of the fact that a trustee is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, it shall immediately become incumbent upon the Board of Trustees to remove such trustees from office. Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Trustees.

REMINDER:

Bills not paid by the 10th of the month will be charged a \$10 late fee.



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SREC Youth Tour Essay winners

Bailey Anderson and Annie Diekhans win a free trip to Washington D.C.

BAILEY Anderson, daughter of Seth and Susanna Anderson, and Annie Diekhans, daughter of Luke and Kelsy Diekhans, have been selected to represent Sun River Electric Cooperative at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. They will travel to D.C. in June with students from other Montana Electric cooperatives. While in D.C. they will learn more about electric cooperatives, tour the U.S. Capitol building, meet with Montana state legislators, and visit museums, monuments and famous landmarks.

Bailey is a junior at Simms High School, she is a member of National Honor Society, the BPA chapter president, and plays basketball and volleyball. She is also active with her



Bailey Anderson



Annie Diekhans



church youth group. Annie is a sophomore at Power High School, she is the class president, FCCLA president, a member of student council, and she participates in basketball, volleyball, track and golf. She is also in band and very involved with her 4-H Club.

Both of the girls wrote an essay about cooperatives' concern for their communities. RM



SIGN UP FOR FREE KIDS BOOKS

Preschool children, ages birth to 5, who live within the Sun River Electric Cooperative service territory, are eligible.

You can register online at <https://imaginationlibrary.com> or scan the QR code below.



PRESIDENT'S DAY CLOSURE

Sun River Electric Cooperative's office will be closed on Monday, Feb. 16.

WE OFFER ENERGY-EFFICIENT APPLIANCE REBATES

HAVE you recently purchased new appliances?

Sun River Electric Cooperative offers rebates for household appliances to our members. If you purchase an Energy-Star-compliant clothes washer or dryer, dishwasher, refrigerator or freezer, you are eligible to receive a \$25 rebate. If you have a washer/dryer all-in-one combo, you can receive a \$50 rebate. Just download the rebate form from the website: www.sunriverelectric.coop, fill it out, attach a copy of the receipt and send it to SREC, or fill out



the information on the rebate page and attach a copy of the receipt and submit it electronically. The application will be reviewed, and the \$25 credit will be applied to your billing account. For a

listing of Energy-Star-rated appliances, go to www.energystar.gov.

If you purchase an electric water heater, you may qualify for a \$100 rebate. The water heater must be at least 90-percent efficient, and at least 40-gallon capacity. The rebate form is also on the SREC website. Simply download it, fill it out and attach a copy of the receipt. 366428

Rebate forms must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. If you have any questions, call Sun River Electric at 467-2526 or 1-800-452-7516. RM

Generator backfeed

A hidden danger for linemen and you

WHEN the power goes out, many people turn to portable generators to keep their homes running. While generators can be a great source of backup power, **improper use can create a deadly hazard** known as **backfeed**.

What Is Backfeed?

Backfeed happens when electricity flows in the opposite direction of its intended path — **from a home or business back onto Sun River Electric Cooperative's (SREC) powerlines**. This usually occurs when a generator or solar system is connected incorrectly, allowing power to travel out through the service line instead of into the home.

During an outage, this can **re-energize lines** that our linemen believe are safely de-energized. Even one improperly connected generator can send thousands of volts back through the grid, posing a serious risk of **electrocution** to our crews working to restore power.

Why it's dangerous

Backfeed is invisible and unpredictable. It not only endangers utility workers, but can also cause:



See backfeed explainer graphic on the next page

- **Damage to your generator** by overloading or overheating it
- **Fires or wiring damage** inside your home
- **Expensive system damage** that can prolong outages

How to prevent it

Backfeed is entirely preventable with the right equipment and precautions:

1. **Install a transfer switch.** Have a licensed electrician install a transfer

switch before connecting a generator to your home's electrical system. This device isolates your generator from SREC's lines and prevents electricity from flowing back into the grid.

2. **Never plug a generator into a wall outlet.** This practice — often called "backfeeding the house" — is extremely dangerous and illegal in many areas. Instead, plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords.

3. **Follow manufacturer instructions.** Always read and follow your generator's manual for proper use, ventilation and load limits.

4. **Notify SREC.** If you install a generator or solar array, contact us so we can ensure it's safely integrated and compliant with local requirements.

A shared responsibility

At Sun River Electric Cooperative, keeping our linemen — and our members — safe is our highest priority. Using generators correctly helps protect lives and allows our crews to restore power more quickly and safely.

RM

Article courtesy of Jacob DeLong, Lincoln Electric Cooperative.

HIDDEN NUMBER

If you find your account number hidden in this issue, it is worth a \$50 credit on your next statement. There is one number hidden in every issue. Give us a call if you are the lucky consumer.

**406-467-2526 or
1-800-452-7516**

ALWAYS | BEFORE YOU
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Backfeed

Backfeed on power lines happens when electricity flows in the opposite direction from its intended path, typically from an improperly connected residential generator or solar array back onto the distribution system. It can be extremely dangerous for utility workers, particularly during an outage restoration, when crews may believe all lines are de-energized. Here's how backfeed works and some key ways to protect against it.

● Service drop

Sends power to residence from the grid, but can also be energized from the home.

● Lockout/Tagout

Crews lock main breaker and solar panel disconnects in "off" position.

● Solar panels

Distributed generation like rooftop solar can backfeed if improperly wired.

● Automatic anti-islanding inverter

Monitors grid and shuts off power output in an outage.

● Meter settings

Some newer meters can be set to automatically detect backfeed during an outage or maintenance work.

● Transfer switch

Ensures connection to grid through the service panel is severed when a generator is connected.

● Generator

Must be connected to a transfer panel to avoid backfeeding. Improper connection can cause short circuits, fire, damage to grid components like transformers, and injury to working crews or even neighbors in their homes.

● Line testing

Lineworkers test feeders to ensure they're de-energized, but may not expect power to be coming from the service drop.

.....Downed line

● Backfeeding danger

● Preventive measures