SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
NEWS

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President's Report

Josh DeWees
President/CEO

Horses gallop – and so can power lines

How can galloping lines impact power transmission and distribution?

Galloping power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line.

This change in airflow can cause the power line to start to bounce.

Once the lines get going, they can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground.

There is not much a power company can do to alleviate galloping lines, since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. To help prevent this, many power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping winds.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- Any utility wire, including telephone or cable lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the type of line — stay away from all lines.
- Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.
- Keep in mind that a dead line could become energized during power restoration efforts or with improper use of generators.
- Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional poles or other equipment to collapse.
- If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.
- Only exit a car or cab near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.

For more electrical safety information, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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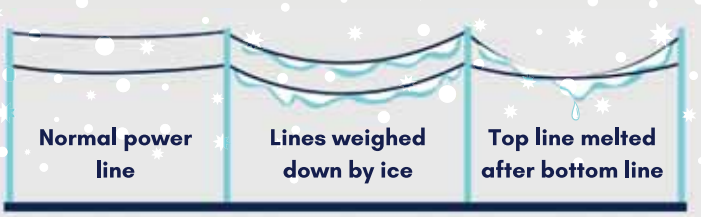
Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,272

Number of members served: 5,022

Number of power poles in territory: 29,361



ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT

When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.

ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages

SafeElectricity.org®

Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

How extreme winter weather impacts reliability

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases because heating systems are running longer and more often. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times — morning and early evening — and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Spoon River Electric, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

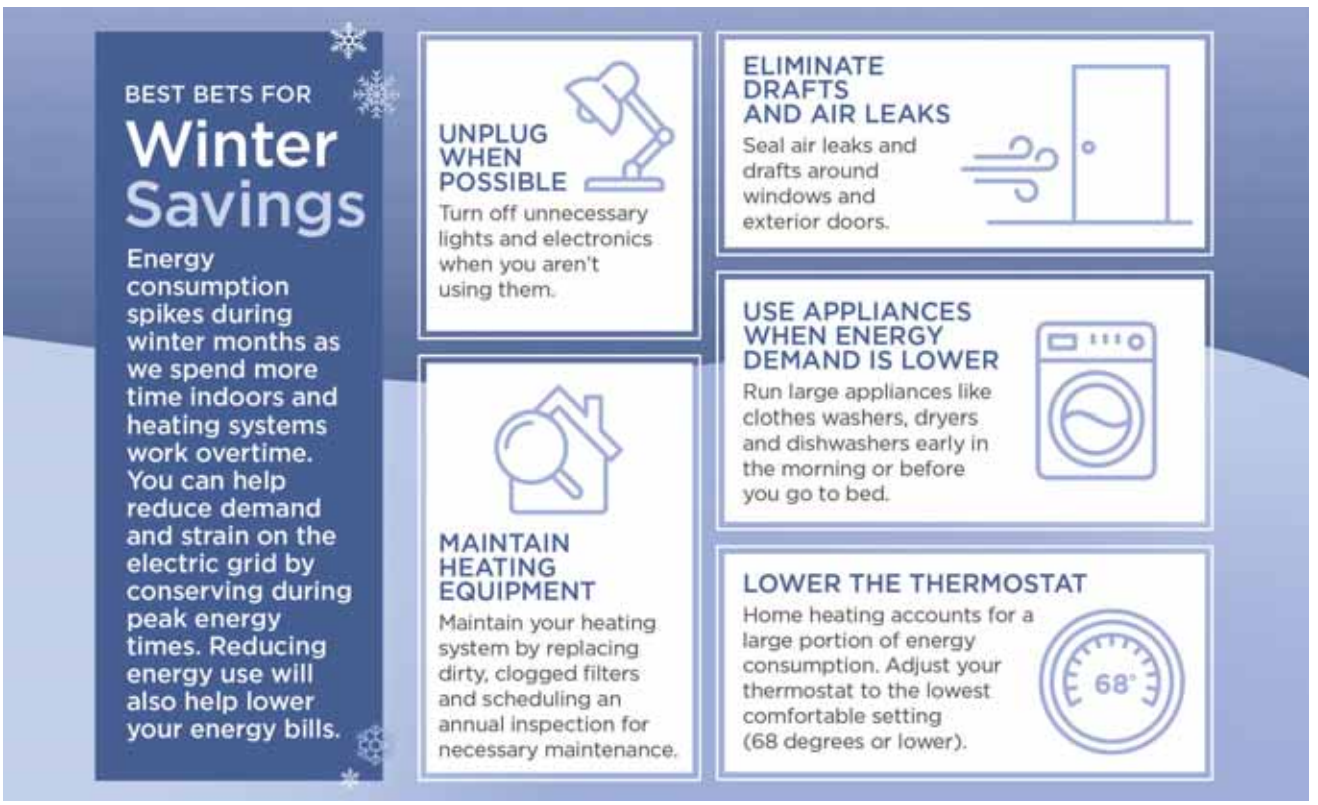
In winter months, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or an equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region of the country may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid. Spoon River Electric will inform you of the situation.

Spoon River Electric and our G&T take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning, but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and your neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid:

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible.
  - » Pro tip: Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder.
- Stagger your use of major appliances.
  - » Pro tip: Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
  - » Pro tip: Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
  - » Pro tip: Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
  - » Pro tip: Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during extreme cold, you can save money and contribute to the resilience of the grid.



WINTER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Did you know most home fires happen during colder months? Play it safe this winter season.

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.

Energy Explorers

A	P	I	R	P	A	J	G	F	W	D	C	Q	T	W
U	L	B	S	G	W	N	N	P	T	S	A	T	A	T
R	L	A	Y	P	J	I	U	Q	P	Q	N	G	E	O
C	T	W	R	Y	J	D	X	A	R	X	D	B	L	Z
J	F	T	P	M	K	G	C	I	B	T	L	T	C	F
X	B	K	Y	Z	S	E	M	B	Q	G	E	B	D	B
G	B	W	B	Z	H	K	T	Z	H	J	H	R	M	X
C	V	X	J	E	B	X	S	X	B	Q	C	K	V	A
V	I	M	A	B	O	K	A	T	C	S	I	K	F	E
X	Y	T	Q	Y	K	J	S	F	N	Q	V	T	J	W
L	E	V	J	A	N	V	U	W	C	B	A	P	A	W
R	T	R	E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	S	O
W	Z	B	K	R	Y	X	S	B	V	A	Q	O	U	E
S	D	R	O	C	N	O	I	S	N	E	T	X	E	P
I	F	J	R	W	K	J	B	Q	P	U	B	D	T	Z

Never overload electrical outlets with too many **electronics**.

Test smoke and carbon monoxide **alarms** every month.

Never leave a **candle** burning in an empty room.

Keep flammable items at least three feet away from a **space heater**.

Extension cords should only be used temporarily. Damaged or frayed cords should be thrown away.