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President's Report



Josh DeWees
President/CEO

Working together to lower demand

When outdoor temperatures drop, electricity use naturally rises. Colder weather drives us indoors, where we rely more heavily on home heating systems, lighting and household appliances. Heating systems run longer and more frequently to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. Combine that with the fact that most people use electricity at the same times of day — typically in the mornings and early evenings — and the result is significant pressure on our electric grid.

Spoon River Electric works closely with Prairie Power, our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, to plan for these seasonal weather patterns and changes and ensure you have reliable power every day of the year. This partnership involves detailed resource and infrastructure planning to make certain electricity is available whenever you need it. However, it's important to remember that our local system is part of a much larger regional and national electric grid.

During the winter months, when homes and businesses across the country are using more electricity simultaneously, overall demand can approach — or occasionally exceed — available supply. This is especially true during severe weather events, such as ice storms, sudden temperature drops or equipment malfunctions that reduce generation capacity.

To prepare for these scenarios and minimize risks, Spoon River Electric and our G&T partner take proactive measures to strengthen reliability year-round. These include routine system maintenance, investments in grid modernization and comprehensive disaster response planning. These proactive steps are designed to ensure our portion of the grid remains resilient even under extreme conditions. Yet, maintaining

a reliable electric system requires a collective effort — and every member plays an important role in lowering demand when the grid is under stress.

You can help by taking simple actions during periods of high electricity use, especially on the coldest days of winter:

- 1. Lower your thermostat slightly.** Even reducing the temperature by a few degrees can help.
- 2. Delay using large appliances during peak hours,** which are first thing in the morning and early evening. Run dishwashers, washing machines and dryers during off-peak hours — typically midday or late evening.
- 3. Adjust your water heater.** Setting it to 120 degrees F and spacing out showers helps conserve both energy and hot water.
- 4. Unplug unnecessary devices.** Power used for lighting and electronics adds up and accounts for a significant portion of home energy use. Disconnect unused items to reduce energy waste.

Understanding how winter weather impacts electricity demand is key to maintaining system reliability. By practicing simple energy conservation habits at home, you not only save money on your monthly bill — you also help strengthen the resilience of the grid that powers our community. Together, through small actions and shared awareness, we can ensure that our homes remain warm, our lights stay on, and our local grid continues to serve us reliably throughout the season.

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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

POP QUIZ Electricity Terms



How well do you know terms related to electricity? Test your knowledge! **Read the definitions below. Then, look at the word bank to match the correct terms to the definitions.** You can only use the words once, so choose carefully. Check your work in the answer key.

Word Bank: Conductor Volt (Voltage) Circuit
Insulator Static Electricity

1. A complete path that electricity flows through.

2. Something that allows electricity to pass through, such as metal or wire.

3. The standard unit of measurement for electricity.

4. Something that does not allow electricity to pass through easily, such as rubber.

5. Electricity build-up caused by rubbing two surfaces together.

Answer Key:
1. Circuit
2. Conductor
3. Volt (Voltage)
4. Insulator
5. Static

Electricity



Winter safety for outdoor workers

How to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia this winter

When the temperature drops, so does your body's ability to stay safe. Outdoor workers — and those who enjoy outdoor sports like hunting, fishing or hiking — face added risks and must take extra steps to guard against frostbite and hypothermia.

Follow these tips and have a plan to stay safe when working outdoors:

- **Watch the weather.** Monitor the temperature and wind chill. Take frequent breaks indoors to help prevent cold stress.
- **Stay warm and dry.** Dress in loose, warm layers. Wear a moisture-wicking base, an insulating mid-layer and a protective outer layer (flame-resistant/arc-rated (FR/AR-rated) if required for your work). Use warm socks and waterproof boots. Remove any wet clothing as quickly as possible.
- **Protect your head and face.** Use a hat, hood or hard-hat liner. When required for your job, choose FR/AR-rated liners or balaclavas. Avoid bulky hats or loose scarves.
- **Keep your hands safe.** Wear insulated gloves or mittens to guard against frostbite. If working with electricity, always use voltage-rated protective gloves with approved liners — never substitute regular winter gloves in place of necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).

● **Fuel your body.** Drink warm fluids, stay hydrated and eat high-energy foods.

● **Know the warning signs.** Watch for frostbite (numbness, skin color changes) and hypothermia (shivering, confusion, slurred speech).

● **Be prepared on the road.** Keep a winter emergency kit in your vehicle with blankets, traction aids and extra PPE.

Recognizing frostbite

Frostbite happens when skin and tissue lose circulation and freeze, commonly affecting fingers, toes, ears and nose.

Symptoms of frostbite:

- Numbness or tingling in the affected area
- Skin that turns red, white or bluish gray
- Cold, hard or waxy-looking skin
- Stiff muscles and joints

Treating frostbite:

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Warm the affected area with warm (not hot) water, or place hands under armpits.
3. Avoid rubbing or massaging frostbitten skin, as this may cause further damage.
4. Seek medical attention for severe frostbite or skin with blisters.

Recognizing hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when body temperature drops dangerously low.

Symptoms of hypothermia:

- Shivering
- Confusion or slurred speech
- Drowsiness or exhaustion
- Slow, shallow breathing

Treating hypothermia:

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Call 911 immediately, especially if the person is unconscious.
3. Provide warm fluids, avoiding caffeine and alcohol.
4. Remove any wet clothing and warm the torso with layers of blankets or clothing.
5. Wrap the body and head, leaving the face uncovered.
6. If layers are not available, add body heat.

Cold weather brings unique challenges, from icy roads to freezing winds that make outdoor work even more hazardous. Lineworkers and other outdoor professionals face these risks daily to keep essential services running.

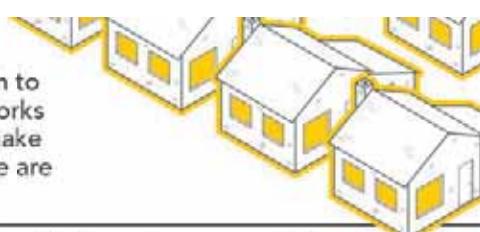
When temperatures drop, look out for one another and take steps to stay safe. Prevention matters — limit your time in the elements, wear proper protective clothing, and stay alert. Working smart in the cold helps ensure everyone makes it home safely.

POWER UNDER PRESSURE

Four Ways to Ease Grid Strain This Winter

Energy use spikes during periods of extremely cold weather, which adds strain to the electric grid. When our community works together to reduce energy use, we can make a big impact in supporting reliability. Here are four simple ways you can help:

1. Lower your thermostat. Even a difference of a few degrees can help.
2. Delay using large appliances. Run them in the evenings or midday when demand is lower.
3. Lower your water heater to 120 degrees and avoid back-to-back showers.
4. Unplug unnecessary devices. Electronics and lighting add up. Unplug any unused items.



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Beware of “winter bill relief” energy scams. Scammers often exploit high winter bills by offering fake discount or relief programs. They may ask for upfront payments or personal details to lower your rate. Legitimate utilities never demand gift cards, wire transfers or payment through apps like PayPal or Venmo. Always verify offers directly by calling your utility’s phone number located on your energy bill—do not call any phone numbers provided in a suspicious email or text. Remember to take time to confirm before you pay; real savings programs won’t pressure you for immediate action.



Preparing for Storm Season?

DON'T FORGET TO READY YOUR CAR

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), every vehicle should have an emergency supply kit onboard. Kits should be checked twice a year and expired items should be replaced regularly. Emergency supply kits should include:



Snowbrush
Shovel
Windshield washer fluid
Cat litter for traction



Warm clothing
Blankets
Drinking water
Nonperishable foods



Properly inflated spare tire
Wheel wrench & tripod jack
Jumper cables
Fire extinguisher



Reflective triangles
Reflective vest
Brightly colored cloth
(to tie on side mirror)



First-aid kit
Flashlight and batteries
Compass
Car charger for cell phone

**Safe
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Source: NSC