



POWERLINES

August 2020

The Official Newsletter of Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation

Operation Round Up Passes \$600,000 Mark



Operation Round Up (ORU) turns Tri-State EMC consumer-members' cents into dollars. More than \$40,000 has been awarded just in 2020, bringing the total since the program's inception to more than \$600,000.

ORU, Tri-State EMC's philanthropic program, allows consumer-members to round up their power bill to the next dollar, with the extra change earmarked for

local schools, nonprofits and local charities. Headed by a seven-member volunteer board, the Tri-State EMC Foundation distributes ORU funds.

If you are not participating in Operation Round Up and would like to opt in, or if you are currently participating in the program and want to opt out, please contact the TSEMC office at (706) 492-3251.

How to Clean Your Thermostat

If we've learned one thing from the pandemic, it's the importance of keeping surfaces clean.

At this time of year, one of the most-touched surfaces in your home just might be the air conditioner's thermostat. Killing germs on the thermostat's surface is only one reason to clean it regularly, however. Often, a malfunctioning thermostat is just dirty.

Dirt can affect the way the thermostat calibrates, making it use more energy than normal to maintain a comfortable temperature in your home. In other words, a clean thermostat is a more energy-efficient thermostat. (Note that smart thermostats do not need interior cleaning.)

Cleaning your thermostat when the seasons change from warm to cool, and then again when they change back, can extend the life of the device. Here's how to clean your thermostat:

- Remove the cover. Depending on the model, you might have to remove screws but most covers simply snap off.
- Using a clean, soft paintbrush and a gentle touch, dust the inner workings of the thermostat. For grime or debris at points where the electronic components touch, slide an open dollar bill like dental floss between them to loosen and remove it. An alternative tool is a can of compressed air.
- Inspect the device for loose or corroded wires. If you find any, call an electrician. Repairing a thermostat is not a do-it-yourself job.
- Replace the batteries.
- Dust the cover and then put it back on.

Labor Day Closing



**Tri-State EMC will be closed
Monday, Sept. 7, 2020,
for Labor Day.**



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Installing a smart power strip is a quick and easy way to start saving money while making your home more energy efficient. Smart power strips can actually cut off power to save energy because they can detect when a device is in standby mode.

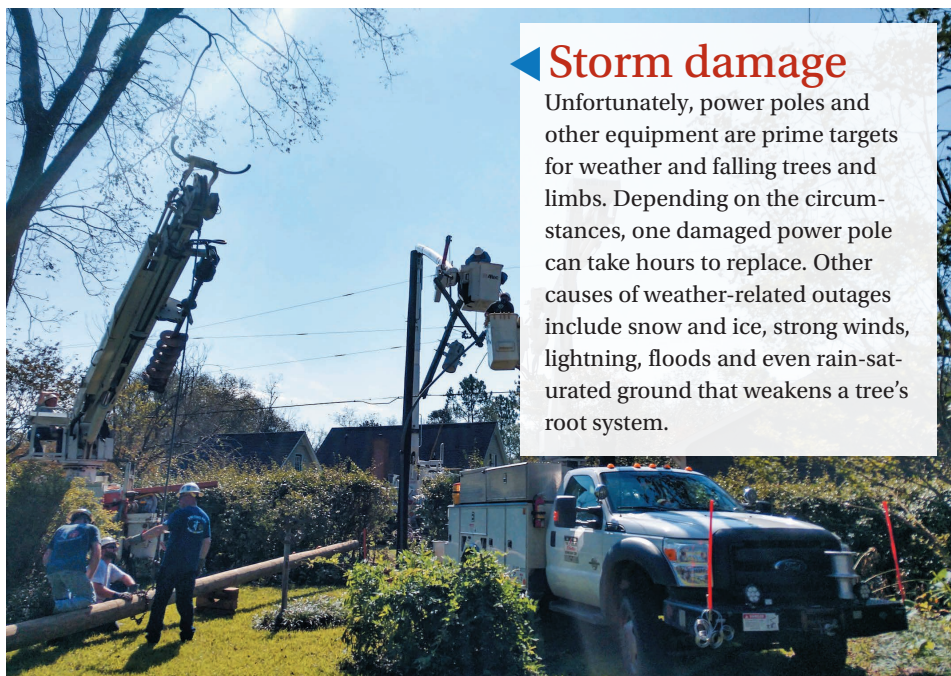
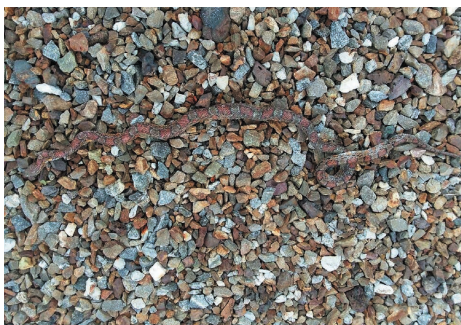
—Source: energy.gov

What Can Cause Power Outages?

Trees, Storms, Accidents, Snakes, Birds and Much More!

Animals

Critters such as squirrels and birds are frequently known to cause power outages and blinks. Recently, a snake trying to get to a bird's nest caused a power outage at the Basin substation, leaving approximately 4,500 Tri-State EMC (TSEMC) members without power. ▼



Storm damage

Unfortunately, power poles and other equipment are prime targets for weather and falling trees and limbs. Depending on the circumstances, one damaged power pole can take hours to replace. Other causes of weather-related outages include snow and ice, strong winds, lightning, floods and even rain-saturated ground that weakens a tree's root system.

Vehicles

Both minor and serious vehicle accidents involving power poles can cause extended outages. After TSEMC crews de-energize the line, they must wait for emergency responders to clear the scene before repairs can begin. ▼



Vegetation

Vines and tree branches cause power interruptions when they contact lines. TSEMC's vegetation management team works year-round to clear areas in our service territory known as rights-of-way to help prevent power outages. ▼



IN CASE OF OUTAGES

- Visit our Outage Center at www.tsemc.net for outage locations and information.
- Use our mobile app. During widespread outages, our phone lines may be busy. Download the Tri-State EMC PowerPal app available for free in your app store.