

THE NEWSBOY

News for Members of San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

Seeing Ciello fiber hanging on SLVREC's poles or being buried in neighborhoods is becoming a familiar sight to our members. The modems or ONT's (Optical Network Terminal) are also easily recognizable in your homes and businesses.

A less visible, but incredibly important part of your fiber optic internet service is what we refer to as the core in our Network Building at SLVREC's headquarters. This is where the magic happens! IP addresses are assigned, internet and phone traffic is routed down one of several redundant paths to Denver, and decisions are made electronically in micro-seconds. As our network has grown and more of our members have come to rely on us for critical transactions such as credit card purchases, monitoring security systems and reading X-rays remotely, we have seen the need to upgrade our core network to world-class quality.

We are in the process of replacing our switches, routers and other devices with new Cisco equipment. This step will give us a very solid and reliable core network. Cisco is known around the world for manufacturing the finest networking gear available. Another one of their trademark qualities is technical support that is second to none. This means when we do have an issue,

Cisco engineers will be available to help us diagnose a problem quickly and efficiently.

We understand the high degree of trust you as our members and customers have placed in us, and your cooperative is taking this step to help ensure that your decision to get phone and internet service from Ciello will prove to be a wise choice.

Occasionally, we are questioned as to why we don't immediately begin connecting our members to the internet once a cable is placed through their neighborhood. Quite often, our fiber deployment is a two-stage process. First, we string a "backbone" fiber between our substations or directly to a school or other business that we have contracted with and there is a need to turn up their service within a specific timeframe. The second step is to place additional "distribution" fiber within the neighborhood to provide service to each home and business in the area. Connecting members to our "backbone" fiber requires that each connection be re-worked once distribution fiber is installed. To avoid duplicating efforts and cost we try to engineer the design accordingly. However, understand that once the backbone fiber is placed we are on the way to bringing great internet service to your neighborhood!

Reliable to the Core



THIS ISSUE

Reliable to the Core

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Loren Howard

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Stay Safe, Stay on the Bus



On an April morning in 2016, Clint Shults was driving a school bus to take students to an FFA competition in Rangely, Colorado. The team's horse judging coach, Silvia Otabachian-Smith, followed the bus in her car. Heavy, wet snow had been accumulating, and the bus snagged a power line just as it was falling to the ground under the weight of the snow.

"I kind of saw a flash, noticing that the snow had fallen off of one of the power lines," explains Clint. "We started dragging power lines for the next at least 100 yards, and knew we were in pretty tough shape." From behind the bus, Silvia witnessed several bursts of fire. Fortunately, Clint knew what to do. He brought the bus to a stop so as not to make the situation any worse by bringing down more electrical equipment. "I told my wife to call 911,...and we had everyone remain on the bus," explains Clint. One of the students called Silvia and told her to stay in her car.

"There is such a thing as step voltage, that even though the wire is on the ground as you walk into that scene, you could be stepping into different voltage variations and injure yourself," explains Sheriff Mazzola, first responder on the scene.

Everyone on the bus and first responders waited for a utility employee to arrive and ensure the downed power line was de-energized before anyone stepped off the bus or onto the accident scene.

Safe Electricity wants you to know the steps to take to stay safe if you are in a vehicle that comes into contact with a downed line or power pole:

1. Stay calm, and stay inside the vehicle.
2. Call 911.
3. Warn others to stay away from the vehicle.
4. Stay seated and do not exit the vehicle until utility personnel say it is okay to do so.
5. If you must exit the vehicle because it is on fire, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Keeping your feet together, shuffle or "bunny hop" to safety.

For other chaperones who travel with students and might encounter a downed power line, Clint urges, "Do not tell any young person or any passenger to get off the bus." Frank Sampson, manager of operations at White River Electric adds, "Electricity is invisible, and there is no way to determine visually if a wire is energized."

For more on this story visit SafeElectricity.org.



WHEN LINES COME DOWN,
DON'T PLAY AROUND.

STAY ON THE BUS

See the story:

 **Safe
Electricity.org**

REC
SAN LUIS VALLEY
POWERING A VITAL VALLEY



LOREN HOWARD

The Importance of Infrastructure

There are many conveniences most of us have come to expect in the world we live in today – comfortable homes, running water, heating and cooling when we need it, electricity for our instant use, reliable transportation and the list goes on and on. Of all these conveniences, electricity is certainly one of the most disruptive when it is not available. I often call electricity the ‘Primary Utility’ because without it, most other conveniences stop immediately or within a short period.

Unless you truly live “off the grid”, our homes and businesses rely on the constant supply of electricity. Reliably generating, transmitting and delivering electricity requires 24/7/365 attention. Tri-State Generation and Transmission is REC’s wholesale power provider. Tri-State has built a robust generation portfolio which includes coal and gas fueled generation, wind, hydro and solar. In addition, Tri-State’s electric transmission system has provided great reliability in delivering electricity to the San Luis Valley.

The last system needed to bring electricity to your home and business is REC’s responsibility and that system is usually referred to as the distribution system. REC has worked diligently over the past 80 years to build and maintain the final system needed to bring the convenience of electricity to you, reliably. Every year, REC staff and the Board of Directors review a two year and a five year work plan, evalu-

ating which poles, wires, transformers and all other electric system components are approaching their reliable life. REC expends millions of dollars replacing portions of its electric distribution system working to ensure electricity stays on. The history of electric outages on REC’s system shows that it is almost never the result of simple equipment failure. Most outages are caused by lightning, traffic accidents, snow and wind — causes over which there is little or no control.

Nevertheless, REC is always looking for new ways to reduce the frequency and duration of electric system outages.

REC is in the process of upgrading the system that monitors and operates the distribution system and substations. This system is termed the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. This upgrade will make significant improvements in the ability to monitor and respond to electric distribution system events. In addition to this new system, REC staff will be evaluating distribution system automation which can respond more quickly to system outages, reducing the time members are out of power when outages occur.

Be assured that staff of REC take great care and pride in the quality of the electric distribution system, delivering that crucial utility we all rely upon — Electricity.

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Your email will be forwarded based on the direction you provide in your subject line.

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Trimming Back Future Problems

Autumn heralds some annual traditions in this area. At least one weekend, you should plan to drive with family or friends to enjoy the vibrant fall foliage. Sometimes on these trips you may spot some of our REC line crew or Asplundh working by the road, trimming tree branches growing too close to power lines.

Enjoy the beauty trees add to our region, especially at this time of year, but also take comfort in knowing power will be available when you need it. At San Luis Valley REC, we're committed to providing you with reliable power. There are some things we can't stop — high winds, ice storms, snow storms — but we do what we can to prevent other outage culprits.

As you can probably guess, weather-related events cause the majority of power outages for REC — a whopping 19 percent according to a survey by our national service organization, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. But vegetation — trees, shrubs, brush — growing too close to power lines and distribution equipment leads to 15 percent of power interruptions.

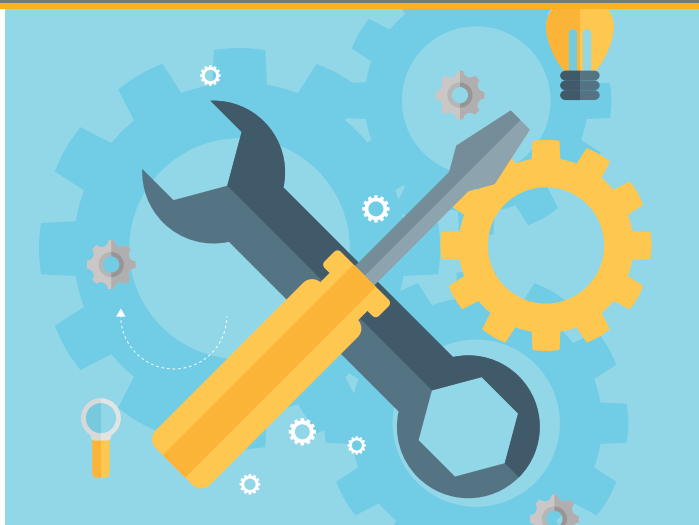
To “cut back” on potential tree-related problems REC operates an aggressive vegetation maintenance program. Our

line crew or Asplundh look for foliage growing under lines, overhanging branches, leaning or other types of “danger” trees that could pull down a power line if they fall, and trees that could grow into lines. It's a job that's never done — by the time crews finish trimming activities along our 2,770 plus miles of distribution lines, vegetation has started to grow back at the starting point.

In working to keep a safe, reliable, and affordable supply of power flowing to your home or business, we need your help. Let us know if you notice trees or branches that might pose a risk to our power lines. Even more important, before planting trees in your yard, think about how tall they may grow and how wide their branches may spread. As a rule of thumb, 25 feet of ground-to-sky clearance should be available on each side of our utility poles to give power lines plenty of space. Choose tree varieties with care and plant with power lines in mind.

Thanks for your help as we work together to keep electricity reliable. To report trees you think may pose a problem, call 719-852-3538. To find out more about proper tree planting, visit www.arborday.org.

Conservation Corner



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cooler temps will be here soon! No matter what kind of heating system you have in your home, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining and upgrading your equipment. Contact a licensed professional to inspect your system *before* the winter chill arrives.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy





RECIPES OF THE MONTH

INGREDIENTS

1 pound pork tenderloin, pounded thin
Coarse salt
Extra-virgin olive oil
Unsalted butter
4 plums, cut into wedges
1 red onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup red-wine vinegar

Pork and Plums

Slice pork tenderloin, and season with salt. Brown pork in olive oil and butter over medium-high heat, and remove. Saute plums and red onion over medium heat. Add vinegar, and stir until bubbling. Return pork to pan, and toss.

INGREDIENTS

12 ounces dried rigatoni
1 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into chunks (3 1/2 cups)
2 3/4 cups milk
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
8 ounces smoked Gruyere cheese (or smoked cheddar) shredded (2 cups)
8 slices bacon
2 small sweet onions, cut into chunks
3 ounces sourdough bread
2 tablespoons butter, melted
fresh flat-leaf Italian parsley

Butternut Squash Mac and Cheese

Preheat the oven to 425° F. Lightly butter a 3-quart au gratin or baking dish; set aside. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain; transfer to a large bowl.

Meanwhile, in a large saucepan combine the squash and 2 1/2 cups of the milk over medium-high heat. Bring to boiling; reduce heat to medium, and simmer until the squash is tender when pierced with a fork, 18 to 20 minutes. Stir together remaining 1/4 cup milk and flour; stir into squash mixture. Bring to boiling; cook until thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in 1 1/2 cups of the Gruyere until melted; keep warm.

Meanwhile, in a very large skillet cook bacon until crisp; drain on paper towels. Crumble; set aside. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons bacon drippings. Return skillet to the heat.

Add onions to skillet; cover and cook over low heat 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover and increase heat to high. Cook 4 to 6 minutes more, stirring, until onions are golden.

Add squash-cheese mixture, onions, and bacon to the bowl with the pasta. Toss well to combine, then transfer to prepared baking dish.

Place bread in a food processor and pulse with two or three on/off turns to form large coarse crumbs (you should have about 2 cups). Transfer to a small bowl; mix with melted butter. Sprinkle remaining Gruyere and the bread crumbs over pasta mixture. Bake until top is browned, about 14 to 15 minutes. Cool 5 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley. Makes 6 to 8 servings.



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POWERING A VITAL VALLEY

P.O. Box 3625
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September 2017

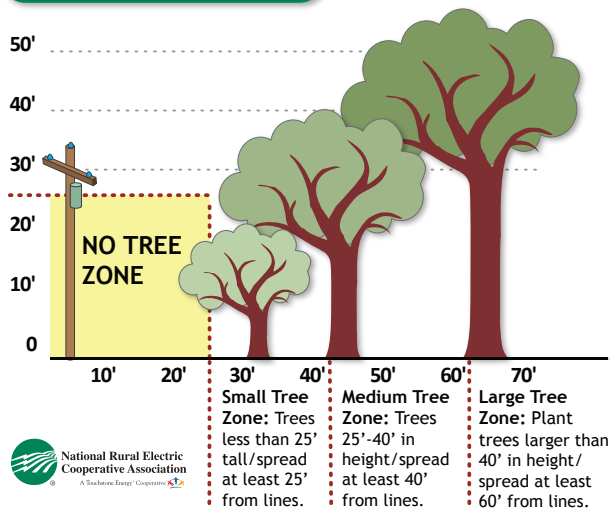
80
Years

Lighting the Way

Photo Credit: NPS/Patrick Myers



Tree Planting Guide



SLVREC's office is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Thursday.
The office is closed Friday through Sunday.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE

866-HEAT HELP (866-432-8435)
www.energyoutreach.org

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Board Meeting — September 26 @ 6:30 p.m.
The REC Board of Directors meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.

Your Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative

