



SPARKS

FEBRUARY 2025

STAY SAFE: HOW TO PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER AND POWER OUTAGES

It's that time of year again when preparing for winter weather is essential—especially if you're new to the area. While we work tirelessly to keep the lights and heat on, Mother Nature often has other plans. Last year, a record-breaking storm left some members without power for nearly a week. Despite our best efforts, challenges like icy roads, blocked access, and extreme conditions can slow restoration. Being prepared helps us all weather the storm more safely and comfortably. That's why we want to help you stay prepared at home in case of outages.

To be better prepared, store all your winter supplies in one central location for easy access. Keep essential items like daily medications, canned goods, nonperishable food, and water in this spot. For power-dependent medical devices, always have a backup plan in place. Consider alternate plans for refrigerating medicines, and include any necessary devices, flashlights, phones, tablets, and pet supplies such as extra food.

Make sure essential items like extra blankets, warm clothing, hats, gloves, and shoes are also readily available. Don't forget a first aid kit, alternative light sources, and ensure your car is fueled and your generator is well-maintained, and load tested. In addition, store important

documents such as your ID, insurance, and prescriptions in a safe, easily accessible place.

We do everything we can to keep the power on during these harsh storms, but this is not always the case due to severe conditions. During winter weather, please follow these steps if you believe there is an outage:

- Confirm the outage by making sure lights and electronics in other rooms have no power. Sometimes you may blow a fuse, so check other areas throughout the house and your electric panel. Please check breakers inside and outside as well.
- Call High West Energy at 307-245-3261 or 833-619-0867 to report an outage. You will be asked to provide your name and service address. Please have your meter number, account number, and a phone number available as well. SmartHub users can also report an outage directly on SmartHub. If interested, you can sign up for SmartHub on our website.
- After you have reported your outage, please turn off any appliances you were using when the power went off, especially the stove, iron, or power tools. Do not use ovens or stoves to heat your home either. Turn off all large appliances such as space heaters, air conditioners,

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BOARD APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR DISTRICTS 14, 16, AND 17. IF YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO APPLY. APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 14, 2025. CALL OUR OFFICE FOR QUESTIONS!

HIGH WEST ENERGY



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OUTAGE PREPARATION

YOUTH CAMP SNEAK PEEK

The mission of High West Energy is to serve our members and communities by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy and services.

CONTACT US

307-245-3261
www.highwest.coop

MAIN OFFICE

6270 County Road 212
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday
7:30 AM - 5 PM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Romsa, District 11
Gary Smith, District 12
Jessica Crowder, District 13
Jerry Burnett, District 14
Damon Birkhofer, District 15
Kosha Olsen, District 16
Kevin Thomas, District 17

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
sparks@highwest.coop

For updates, follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn!

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

and water pumps. This will prevent the electrical circuits from being overloaded when power is restored. Finally, disconnect any sensitive electronic equipment such as computers and televisions to avoid damage from a power surge.

- Make sure standby generators are installed and wired properly. Generators need to be used outdoors and away from windows. Never connect a generator directly to your main electrical panel. Without these correct safety mechanisms, power from the generator could flow onto the power line and injure you or a High West Energy employee. It is also smart to install carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup on every level of your home to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. If you would like a quote on generator installation, please call our office.

During significant outages, our phone lines may be busy. Please keep trying until you're able to reach a representative or leave a message. You can also call our IVR number, 833-619-0867, to directly report an outage without the wait.

STAY CONNECTED: EASY WAYS TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

- Call 307-245-3261 to reach a Member Services Representative or our after-hours dispatch team.
- Call 833-619-0867 to automatically report an outage without the wait.
- Report an outage on our website through your account.
- Directly report an outage from SmartHub.

If reporting an outage on SmartHub, please use the comments section to share any important details that could help our crews diagnose the issue and stay safe. Include information like a transformer on fire, downed power lines, fallen poles, etc.

It is also advised to check with local officials about emergency shelters near you, whether this is a community center or town hall. During these times, please make sure it is safe to leave your house and/or travel.

If there is any damage after the storm, please make sure to document it by taking pictures. After power has been restored, throw away any food that has been exposed to 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more, or any food that has an unusual color or odor. In the case that power has been out for more than a day, discard any medication that requires refrigeration.

Restoring power is a complex process, but High West Energy has a plan in place to ensure electricity is restored as quickly and efficiently as possible. The process follows a specific order: transmission outages are addressed, followed by restoring power to substations. Finally, we work on distribution lines and individual services.

To stay informed during outages, you can always check our outage map on our website, and we do our best to keep our Facebook feed current with the most recent updates.

High West Energy does everything it can to keep your electricity on during these times, but it is always best to be proactive about weather uncertainty. Please follow these simple steps as we all prepare for winter weather.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER - Mike Romsa, District 11

High West Energy is excited to sponsor an incredible opportunity for students to explore the world of energy and leadership at Youth Energy Leadership Camp. Presented by the Nebraska Rural Electric Association, this all-expenses-paid camp takes place each summer in Cozad, Nebraska.

WHO CAN APPLY?

The camp is open to students currently in 9th, 10th, or 11th grade who are dependents of a High West Energy member.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Build leadership skills through small group activities and career development sessions.
- Experience the life of a lineworker by climbing poles, riding in a bucket truck, and more.
- Participate in workshops, demonstrations, and presentations from regional experts.
- Tour power plants to see how electricity is generated.
- Enjoy fun activities like swimming, a banquet, and a dance.

BONUS OPPORTUNITY:

Your child could be selected as one of three campers to represent Nebraska as an Ambassador at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in 2026.

HOW TO APPLY:

Applications are due by June 2025. To learn more or apply, email brooke.darden@highwest.coop or call 307-245-3261.

Help your child unlock their potential and discover a world of opportunities with this unforgettable experience!

