



BLUESTEM
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
www.bluestemelectric.com
December 2005

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Attention High School Seniors!

Bluestem Electric Cooperative scholarship application deadline is **December 16, 2005**.
You could be eligible for a \$500 educational scholarship.
See your high school counselor for details or call
Bluestem Electric Cooperative at (785) 456-2212 or (785) 632-3111.

Trustee Elections This Month

In the next few days you will be receiving a voting packet for the Trustee Elections at Bluestem Electric Cooperative. Please be sure to follow directions and return your marked ballot in the envelopes supplied.

Ballots must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2005, to be counted. The teller committee will meet on January 11, 2006, at the Riley County High School at 7 p.m. to tabulate and certify the election results.

The results of the election of trustees will be printed in the February edition of the Bluestem NEWS located in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine.



Do You Depend On Life Support Equipment?

Bluestem Electric Cooperative strives to maintain the best possible service with a minimum of power outages. However, outages do occur occasionally. We need to know the name and location of any cooperative members who depend on life support equipment.

We keep a register of members on life support equipment and it is important that this information be current and accurate. We will make every effort to give priority to restore service to members on life support systems. It is imperative that everyone on life support equipment considers the purchase of a standby emergency generator.

Weather conditions dictate how fast the electric power can be restored. If you or a relative are on life support equipment, please contact our office to be added to our life support list.

-----Clip and Save-----

Bluestem Holiday Closings 2006

- January 2.....New Years Day
- May 29.....Memorial Day
- July 3 & 4.....Independence Day
- September 4.....Labor Day
- November 23 & 24.....Thanksgiving
- December 25.....Christmas



☑ Mark Your Calendar!

What: Bluestem Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting

When: March 27, 2006, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Wamego Middle School

Prepare Now for Winter Storms

It's hard to predict the weather, but it's easy to prepare for it. Here's how to plan ahead for unavoidable power outages that can accompany winter storms.

Listen to weather forecasts every day so you'll know when high winds or heavy snows or ice are on the way. High winds or heavy snows are most likely to affect power lines.

Prepare an outage kit that contains: a battery-powered radio, fresh batteries, a flashlight, candles, matches, a wind-up clock, bottled water, and paper plates and plastic utensils.

Keep a stock of canned food in your cupboard, along with a manual can opener. Consider buying a camp stove and fuel that you can

use (outdoors only, please) if you can't cook on your electric stove.

Post Bluestem's outage phone number on your refrigerator so it will be handy if you must report an outage: Wamego at 1-800-558-1580 or Clay Center at 1-800-297-8725.

Pile a few extra blankets and sweaters together so you can find them easily if the heat goes off. Dress in layers to stay warm.

Teach children to stay away from fallen or sagging power lines. They could be energized and dangerous, even if the power is out.

Our hope is that the weather will spare us and we won't have any outages this winter. If we do, however, we'll restore service as quickly as possible.

Attaching Signs to Poles Is Illegal

Attaching signs or other objects to power poles without Bluestem's consent is against the law and can be dangerous for our linemen.

Signs and other illegal attachments to power poles make the poles extremely hazardous—and sometimes impossible—for line workers to climb and make repairs. It only takes a nail partially driven into a pole to cause serious injury to a line worker. Nail holes also allow moisture to enter wooden poles, causing premature decay and the expense of early replacement.

Attachments to poles also pose a safety hazard for drivers as they impair visibility.

In addition to signs, the cooperative has also seen deer stands, bird feeders, basketball goals and

other illegal attachments. It is often impractical and costly to send a lineman to remove pole attachments.

Bluestem asks the public to please refrain from placing signs or other structures on power poles.

Bluestem line crews climb utility poles at all hours of the day and night, in the worst of conditions. Signs, posters, basketball rims, birdhouses or deer stands attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our line personnel. Sharp objects like nails, tacks, staples or barbed wire can puncture rubber gloves and other safety equipment, making linemen vulnerable to electrocution. Please be respectful of co-op equipment and property. Bluestem line personnel will remove fixtures not belonging to the cooperative.

Cold Weather Rule November 1 to March 31

Cooperative members who are unable to pay their electric service bills during the cold weather period may qualify for this program. The requirements members must meet to qualify are summarized below:

- * Members must notify the cooperative and state their inability to pay their bill in full.
- * Members must apply to federal, state, local, or other financial assistance programs, for which they may be eligible to receive aid in paying utility bills.
- * Members and the cooperative will reach a mutually agreeable payment arrangement.

Please note that failure to follow the above requirements, illegally diverting utility service, receiving service by tampering, or defaulting on a payment agreement, will disqualify the consumer from receiving benefits under the Cold Weather Rule.

The cooperative will: (a) Send one written notice mailed first class at least five (5) days prior to termination of service. A customer may not be disconnected until a 24-hour forecast above the activating temperature predicted by the National Weather Service. The cooperative shall make at least one telephone call attempt with the customer of record on the day prior to termination and a personal contact attempt on the day of termination prior to termination of service.

In no event will the cooperative disconnect service if the temperature is forecast to fall below 35 degrees F. within 24 hours following the time of disconnection. The Cold Weather Rule is to insure that human health and safety are not unreasonably endangered during the cold weather months.

**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**

*Our offices will be closed on
December 26th and January 2nd.*