

# FEC® POWER

## Source

Vol. 27 No. 07/08

Farmers' Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer

## West and Smith Re-elected at 85th Annual Meeting of Members

Farmers' Electric Cooperative held its 85th Annual Meeting of members Saturday, May 13, 2023, at the San Jon High School Gym, San Jon, New Mexico with 157 members and their guests present. Board President, Mike West, called the business meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Trustees, Mike West



Attorney Hal Greig (middle) was recognized for 38 years of service to FEC

present at the meeting, unanimously passed three Bylaw changes.

Thanks go out to all those in attendance and all the employees



Judy Smith, District 5 Trustee

who worked to help make the annual meeting a huge success. Congratulations to Donny Segura of Tucumcari for winning this year's grand prize of \$1,000 in free electricity! Two "first-time" attendee prizes, (\$50 energy certificates), were also awarded. A child's grand prize, a \$100 Visa card was awarded to a lucky young lady in attendance. There were a total of 81 prizes awarded to adults and children.

A special "Thank You" goes out to San Jon School's Alan Umholtz, JaTawn Wright, Megan Archuleta, and Stormi Sena for making us feel so welcome. Thanks to the Lady Coyote Softball team, coaches, and parents for all their help serving the meal to approximately 342 guests. Also,

(District 3 - Fort Sumner) and Judy Smith (District 5 - Tucumcari/Ragland). Mike West ran unopposed and was re-elected by acclamation. Judy Smith was challenged for her Trustee position but won re-election by majority vote. The election process was managed and certified by the Elections and Credentials Committee chaired by Alan Herman, CPA. Terms for FEC Trustee positions are three years. Additionally, FEC members



Trustee George Dodge, Jr. showing his approval of the BBQ lunch

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Manager's Message...



**Antonio Sanchez, Jr., CEO**

## Let's Be Clear...

There is a misconception that rural electric cooperatives are against the concept of rooftop solar or other forms of distributed generation (wind, solar, geothermal, etc.) owned and operated by our members. This is simply not true. One of the cooperative's main concerns lies with how these DG systems affect our other members who do not utilize them. These members are the ones left to pay costs associated with maintenance and depreciated plant costs that are absorbed through any potential avoided costs associated with DG member systems. This is the reasoning behind creating rates that include DG system riders that help offset these costs that would otherwise be paid by non-DG system members.

FEC is a member of the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA) also known as the NM Statewide Association. Several of our member cooperatives have recently experienced solar system salespeople claiming to have engaged in sales of their systems through programs offered by local electrical cooperatives.

This is a false claim as no electric cooperative in New Mexico has such a program. What we've learned is that these salespeople are riding the coattails of the Net Metering program regulated by the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. The reason the salespeople are promoting the



“cooperative's program” is they are relying on the creation of excess capacity (kilowatt-hours) to create billing credits. In these occurrences, the DG systems were intentionally sized in a manner to create more kilowatt-hours than what are used in a typical month in an effort to have the cooperative purchase them at avoided cost to try and totally offset their monthly bill and potentially create a small credit towards the next month's usage. In New Mexico there is a “solar cap” statute that restricts the sizing of the DG system to 120% of the average annual consumption. This applies to “net metering”, a billing mechanism that offers a credit to residential and business members who are making excess electricity with their DG system and sending it back to the grid.

There is an application process here at FEC in which a member is required to apply for a net-metering setup. The member applying is required to provide

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**Board of Trustees:**



**Mike West**  
Trustee Dist. 3  
President



**George Dodge**  
Trustee Dist. 4  
Vice-President



**Donnie Bidegain**  
Trustee Dist. 7  
Sec. - Treas.



**Pat Woods**  
Trustee Dist. 6



**Justin Barnes**  
Trustee Dist. 1



**Judy Smith**  
Trustee Dist. 5



**Jubal Pierce**  
Trustee Dist. 2

**POWER SOURCE**

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We are on-call 24 hours each day, 365 days each year, to serve your electric power needs

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(575) 762-4466  
**Fort Sumner**  
(575) 355-2291  
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(575) 472-3971

## MISCONCEPTION *from* PAGE 2

information on the system they are looking to have installed on their home. In order to meet the requirements for approval, the system must be appropriately sized and engineered (sealed by a licensed engineer in good standing) and inspected by the local inspecting authority before FEC can engage in the net metering process. This may require a study of the member's system by FEC to assure there are no safety or system concerns that would be caused by a reverse flow of electrons back to the grid. In such instances, the member would be required to pay for any upgrades to the transformer and conductors to support this additional capacity. Members who are not aware of these requirements are often upset at FEC. The application for net-metering can be found on our webpage here: [www.fecnm.org/interconnection-applications](http://www.fecnm.org/interconnection-applications). There are two different applications, one for up to 10kW and the other is greater than 10kW.

DG systems are a valid option for our members who have done their homework, have an understanding of what to expect once their DG system is installed and took the time to visit with FEC to get any of the potential questions they had prior to energizing their new system. That's all we can ask for.

Until next time,

## Federal Tax Credits for Homeowners

Go to [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov) and find information on federal tax credits for energy efficient upgrades to your primary residence. There are too many to list them all but, here are some, just to name a few: Insulation, heat pump water heaters, exterior windows, air-source heat pumps, central A/C conditioners, electric panel upgrades to 200+ Amps, and exterior doors. Click on the calculator icon. Then click on "Tax Credits for Homeowners" on the left.



## Too Close for Comfort

If your home is served by underground electric cable, you may be tempted to plant flowers or shrubs to disguise the transformer cabinet on your property. Please don't give in to your temptation.

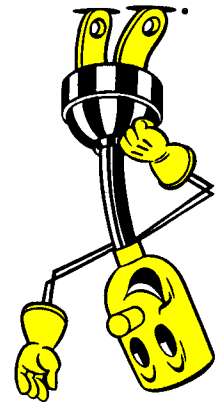
Line crews need easy access to those cabinets to perform routine maintenance and repairs. Shrubs, trees, and flowerbeds can block access or make access more difficult. After the necessary utility work is done, you may be unhappy about the condition of your plants.

It is dangerous to plant or work close to transformer cabinets. They contain high-voltage connections originating from and traveling underground from our distribution power lines. Our most common voltage to these cabinets is 14,400 Volts. Please avoid these cabinets at all times – and teach children to stay away too.

Only trained professional personnel are qualified to work around these cabinets. Additionally, when not being serviced by our line crews, these cabinets should remain padlocked. If you ever notice a cabinet missing a lock or a lock not fully engaged, keep everyone a safe distance away and call Farmers' Electric immediately. This call could mean the difference between life and death.



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**FARMERS' ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**  
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