

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST POPULAR UTILITY SCAMS

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Over the last year, a popular scam across the state targeted members through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, SWRE will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.



We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, SWRE will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle. Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. SWRE will only send you important updates via text if you've signed up for our SmartHub text notifications.

These are just a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent SWRE or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 1-800-256-7973 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to SWRE so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.

SAVE THE DATE!

SWRE's 84th Annual Meeting

August 19, 2021

Wilbarger Auditorium

Vernon, TX

CEO's Message



CEO, Jeff Simpson

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Southwest Rural Electric

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Rebecca Chambless, *Power Source* editor

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SWRE is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Bill Pay Options:

SmartHub App
SWRE.com

1-833-890-9510 (*Automated Line*)

Outage Reports:

1-833-590-0353
SmartHub App

SEE YOU AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

// Most of us lead busy lives. We find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email to keep up with the demands of modern life. Thanks to technology, we can accomplish many tasks electronically and remotely to be more efficient. And with so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time. Invitations to attend in-person meetings and gatherings are weighed carefully as we decide whether or not our time and effort to attend is beneficial. The answer to the question, “what’s in it for me?” must be compelling. You may think attending Southwest Rural Electric’s annual meeting would be easy to lump into the “no benefit to me” category. However, I’d ask you to think again.

SWRE exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its consumer-members (that’s you!). Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of all members and to serve the long-term interests of our local communities. This is where you can help.

As a member of the community, you have a perspective that is valuable—and we invite you to share it with the co-op. At the annual meeting, co-op leaders will discuss priorities and challenges, and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. Annual meeting is also the time to meet the board members who represent you—the members of the co-op. Board members are local consumers, just like you.

SWRE is one of the few local organizations that is uniquely positioned to bring together all members of the community. It is worth noting that the health of the co-op and the well-being of the community are closely intertwined.

Perhaps you may feel that you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to attend the annual meeting. However, every energy bill you pay to the co-op helps ensure better service and reliability for the whole community. Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements that impact the reliability and affordability of your energy, and SWRE wants to hear from you to better inform our decisions as we plan for the future.

While SWRE provides convenient electronic options for bill-paying and communication, there are times when there is no substitute for in-person engagement. When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we improve the quality of life for all in our corner of the world.

If you’ve never attended our annual meeting, or if it’s been awhile, please stop by. Our co-op family looks forward to visiting with you! We’ll have fun and door prizes, so mark your calendar for SWRE’s 84th Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 19, 2021 at the Wilbarger Auditorium in Vernon, Texas. //

Jeff Simpson
CEO

NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON

SWRE is in the process of redesigning and updating our website, SWRE.com. Stay tuned for a new look and a website that is fully optimized for desktop and mobile viewing!

July 2021

VIRTUAL
YOUTH POWER 
ENERGY CAMP

TIPTON & CROWELL STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT CO-OPS & ELECTRICITY



Kara Elliott from Tipton Middle School attended Virtual Energy Camp at SWRE headquarters with Kara McPherson, camp counselor. Ty Halsell from Crowell Middle School attended camp virtually like many of the other campers across the state.

Campers learned all about cooperatives, careers, power lines, gear and more. Mike Wolfe, SWRE Operations Manager, served on a panel of Energy Trails volunteers who shared their experiences in bringing electricity to communities for the first time through our international organization.

Don Proctor, SWRE Trustee, also shared his experience of serving on the board of directors with the whole camp.

On the last day of Energy Camp, 29 eighth grade campers got to meet each other in-person at the Energy Camp Awards Luncheon at the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives Conference Center in OKC.

SWRE's campers, Ty Halsell and Kara Elliott, were recognized for their outstanding essays and received scholarships from the co-op.



Jimmy Westover, a journeyman lineman at SWRE, demonstrated lineworker personal protective equipment (PPE) and we had a relay race to see which Kara could put on the PPE gear the fastest. Kara M. won by only 12 seconds!



Trading Post

For Sale: Spike bed, good condition, for a long-bed dually truck. Also, Black Max Subaru Generator, 5250/6560 watts. Call (580) 471-5304 for pricing.

For Sale: Custom-built, walk-in goat feeder used to secure goats while feeding and working on them. Holds about 12 goats. Located in Mountain Park. Call (580) 481-0751 if interested.

For Sale: Heads-in wheat hay. Ten bales available at \$20/bale. Must pick up in Mountain Park area. Call (580) 301-3952 if interested.

FREE classified non-commercial ad submissions are available for SWRE members only. Submissions must include the account holder's name and account number to be eligible. Ads are also posted on SWRE.com.

Send your ad to the marketing department by mail, e-mail or phone!

MAIL: P.O. Box 310, Tipton, OK 73570

E-MAIL: marketing@swre.com

PHONE: 1-800-256-7973



COWBOY CAVIAR

Serving Size: 12 (1 cup each)

INGREDIENTS:

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|--|--|
| ½ cup olive oil | 15 oz black beans drained and rinsed |
| ¼ cup granulated sugar | 11 oz sweet corn |
| ¼ cup white wine vinegar | 1 red onion diced |
| 1 teaspoon chili powder | 1 green bell pepper diced |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1 red bell pepper diced |
| 1 pound Roma tomatoes seeded and diced | 1 cup fresh cilantro or fresh parsley, chopped, from 1 bunch |
| 1 (15 oz) can black-eyed peas drained and rinsed | |

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, sugar, white wine vinegar, chili powder, and salt.
2. Add tomatoes, black-eyed peas, beans, corn, red onion, and bell peppers. Stir to combine.
3. Stir in cilantro. Cover and chill until serving time.

Source: Full recipe can be found at <https://www.culinaryhill.com/cowboy-caviar-recipe/>. Check the recipe notes for tips on how to adjust the sugar and for substitution ideas. This recipe is great to make ahead the day before your next barbecue.

SWRE

Southwest Rural Electric Association, Inc.

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