




A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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LANE-SCOTT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Connections

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In Case of an Outage

If your electricity is off for more than a few minutes, call 800-407-2217. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After-hours calls will be answered by the dispatch and standby personnel.

24-hour Electrician Service

If you are without electricity or have an electrical emergency on your side of the meter, we have a master electrician on staff available 24 hours a day.

New After Hours Dispatching Service

It's 3 a.m., and it's 10 below. The power goes out. The house is getting cold. It's time to call in the outage. Lane-Scott Electric Cooperative is closed, but you pick up the phone and call anyway. You press "1" to report an outage. Then you hear a voice: "Lane-Scott Electric. This is Mike. How may I help you?" No matter what time of the day or night, Lane-Scott is there to serve you.

At the December Board Meeting the Board of Trustees for Lane-Scott Electric voted to move the after-hours dispatching to **SECURITY AND RESPONSE SERVICES (SRS)**. This action was taken due to the Lane County Sheriff's Department being unable to continue this service for Lane-Scott Electric. This was effective as of December 31.

SRS is a 24-hour dispatching service provided by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND. Basin Electric is the wholesale power supplier to electric cooperatives in the Midwest.

SRS allows members 24-hour access to their electric cooperative, while taking pressure off cooperative employees. SRS employs 38 staff members who are dedicated to after-hours dispatch. During an average night, eight dispatchers work from 4 p.m. until 12 a.m., then five work the remainder of the overnight

shift. Additional staff members are on call should call volumes pick up due to major outages. The dispatch center is also staffed during the day.

"SRS is able to receive the calls from the consumers, do some basic verifying and gather information that can help the linemen troubleshoot the issue. We call the consumer back to verify that the power has been restored so the linemen can continue to assist other members," says Tom Radenz, Basin Electric's SRS Supervisor.

Lane-Scott Electric will send SRS an updated member database nightly so that SRS is equipped with the latest information on each member.

Dispatchers communicate with linemen in the field to get the most updated information on the outage.

"Lineman safety is the number-one goal for SRS. We track linemen from the time they leave the shop until the outage has been restored, and they have returned to the co-op. They check in with dispatch every 90 minutes," Radenz says.

In 2014, SRS took more than 340,000 calls for the 71 electric cooperatives in the region that use SRS. "However, we make four outgoing calls for every call we take in," he says.

Lane-Scott Electric and SRS remain committed to providing safe, reliable electric service, with a friendly voice whenever you need it.



What to Expect When Reporting an Outage After-Hours

If you experience an outage, call the same phone number you would during business hours: 620-397-5327 or 800-407-2217. Instead of speaking to an employee from your electric cooperative, you will reach Security and Response Services (SRS).

First, you will hear an automated message, "Thank you for calling Lane-Scott Electric Cooperative. Your call may be recorded or monitored for quality assurance." You will then hear the following menu:

- ▶ If you're calling to report an electrical outage, press 1.

- ▶ If you have a billing question, press 2.
- ▶ For all other calls, press 0.

Press 1 to report your outage. A dispatcher will answer if available, and you can report your outage to him or her. The dispatcher will ask if you are completely out of power, if your neighbors have power, or if you have checked your outside breakers. They will verify your information and get a good call back phone number if the lineman needs to contact you for more information.

If all the dispatchers are busy assisting other callers, an automated outage system

will assist you.

- ▶ Press 1 to report an outage by using your phone number
- ▶ Press 2 to report the outage by meter number
- ▶ Press 3 to report downed lines or poles or if you have critical information about the cause of an outage.

Once you have completely answered the questions, you will receive a message confirming that your outage has been reported and that line crews have been or will be dispatched.

Why Does the Power Blink? BY SCOTT TURNER, P.E.

At one time or another, we've all returned home or woken up late for work to see a blinking "12:00" on our digital alarm clock. You then have to reset every digital clock in your household that doesn't have a battery backup, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, this state of "eternal midnight" was caused by a "blink" in the electrical system.

While blinks can be annoying, they show that an electrical system is working exactly as designed. And while Lane-Scott Electric Cooperative has taken steps to reduce the number of blinks across its power system, there are measures you can take as well.

Let's look at blinks. These momentary power interruptions can occur anywhere along a power system—from the time electrons are generated at a power plant to being shipped across transmission line to substations, or during distribution from a substation to your home.

Why blinks?

Blinks are created when a breaker, or switch, opens along any portion of the power system. The breaker usually opens because of a large, quick rise of electrical current. This large rise, called a fault condition, can occur when a tree branch touches

a line, lightning strikes, or a wire breaks.

When this happens, a relay senses the fault and tells the breaker to open, preventing the flow of power to the problem site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes. The brief delay, which allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds.

If the fault clears, every home or business that receives electricity off that power line has just experienced a blink. This could include thousands of accounts if the breaker protects a transmission line or a substation.

Reducing the blink's effects

Your co-op employs methods to reduce blink frequency. Tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way, and one area where you can help. Make sure your co-op knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line. Call 620-397-5327 to tell Lane-Scott Electric about potential problems.

Meanwhile, you can reduce the frustration of blinks by purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added

benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink while you are operating a computer, your computer may crash and you will have to reboot, hoping all the while that there will be few corrupted files.

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on your computer can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides you some time to save whatever you were working on and exit your computer properly.

The future of blinks

Lane-Scott Electric operates an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency with which they occur.

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