



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 30, 2025

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KCEC Wildfire Mitigation Update: April 30, 2025

Taos, NM - Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) continues to face weather and fire advisory alerts in its service territory and throughout New Mexico. Recently, fires in Grants and Socorro, NM, have raised concerns about the severity of the ongoing lack of precipitation, highlighting the need for increased awareness in preparing our communities for potential wildfires.

“When was the last time our communities received significant moisture? Everyone needs to work together to ensure we are ready for fires like those in Grants and Socorro. Our best chance to mitigate the impacts on our communities is through unity and collaboration,” says Luis A. Reyes, CEO of KCEC.

The fire in Grants occurred in a non-forested community, resulting in several homes being lost. KCEC is proactively performing tree trimming and infrastructure maintenance throughout May. Below is a list of the areas where KCEC crews will continue performing maintenance on all circuits (main line and taps). Crews will continue tightening all hardware, which includes hotline clamps, transformer connections, cross-arm braces, and secondary connections to the weather head on service drops. Crews will also get fuse sizing on all taps, OCR sizes, and counts. We will also have a crew to get the sizes and counts of all OCRs installed at the Arroyo Hondo and Talpa Substations. Four OCRs were replaced with Hubbel units, Arroyo Seco CT (one at Hwy 522 at step-downs, one near the Anansi School), LVP (take off), and ER West (Placitas tap). The circuits that will continue in May are:

- Upper Red River
- Ranchitos Circuit (40% complete)
- Valle Escondido (25% complete)
- Taos (Tree Trimming Service Orders)
- Ute Park (10% complete)
- Lower Llano San Juan (60% complete) and Santa Barbara
- Los Pinos (30% complete)
- Ranchos Feeder (LC2) (30% complete)

Area(s) completed fully/partially:

- Tree trimming crew working on various service orders in the Taos area
- Patrol 69 kV from Questa to NA Substation is complete
- Petaca/Las Tablas Circuit (40% complete)
- Lake View Pines (55% complete)
- Twining Circuit (60% complete)

KCEC urges members to report any hazards that may interfere with electrical lines or cause power outages, particularly in these areas. KCEC's electrical system is now operating normally. All protective devices, including fuses, reclosers, and relays, function according to standard procedures. KCEC will continue to monitor and assess the system. Based on extreme weather, KCEC will set certain parts to non-reclose mode and notify members of these changes.

KCEC, Taos County, and the University of New Mexico (UNM) Taos continue to host a series of panel discussions on wildfire prevention in the region. The Enchanted Circle Wildfire Preparedness Series is designed to equip community members with essential resources and information to enhance their preparedness for potential wildfires. We encourage all members to engage and participate to better understand what local and state officials are doing for wildfire mitigation.

Session 2: How to Protect Your Home from Wildfires

Date: May 1, 2025

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: UNM - Taos Bataan Hall

121 Civic Plaza Dr, Taos, NM

Panelists:

- Mike Cordova - Fire Chief, Taos County Fire & EMS
- Garrett Hanson - WUI Coordinator, Taos County
- Craig Sime - Chief, Moreno Valley Fire Department (Colfax County)
- Christopher Martinez - Taos County, Penasco Fire Department and Picuris Pueblo
- Hank Blackwell - Wildfire Resiliency Training Center

Moderator

- JR Logan - Forest and Watershed Health Program Manager, Taos County

As of April 29, 2025, the Carson National Forest Service indicates that the fire danger level remains at MODERATE. The Carson National Forest is open to the public, but officials are actively monitoring the weather for potential restrictions. Those using the forest this summer are encouraged to take preventive measures to avoid starting a wildfire. Please help protect the forest and surrounding communities by following these [fire-safe practices](#).

We encourage you to join us for the upcoming sessions of the Enchanted Circle Wildfire Preparedness Series. Wildfires significantly threaten the northern New Mexico communities within the Enchanted Circle. These fires do not respect jurisdictional boundaries and can adversely affect residents, businesses, governmental entities, municipalities, tribal organizations, hospitals, and other anchor institutions. The more prepared our communities are, the more effectively we can mitigate and respond to the devastation that a wildfire may bring if it occurs in our vicinity.

Information from Taos County and the Town of Taos

"We have received numerous calls about small brush fires near highways and roads. Many of these incidents are linked to vehicles towing trailers with chains and idling for long periods. The chains can produce sparks, and overheated engines can ignite fires if they come into contact with arid brush. We advise everyone to exercise

caution when pulling over to the side of roads or highways", says Eddie Joe Abeyta, Fire Chief for Taos Fire Rescue.

"Taos County is prepared for a wildfire. We take significant steps behind the scenes to ensure readiness for a wildfire or natural disaster. Attached are helpful resources to prepare residents," says Bobby Lucero, Taos County Emergency Management Director.

Members have access to proactive forest fire prevention resources and information. Taos County recommends having "go bags" ready in case of an emergency. A list of resources is available to assist residents of our communities.

KCEC Service Territory Essential Community Resources

ENCHANTED CIRCLE WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS SERIES - The Enchanted Circle Wildfire Preparedness Series is designed to equip community members with essential resources and information to enhance preparedness for potential wildfires.

Taos County Wildfire Plaza Website - Taos County Wildfire Plaza is a place for people to share news, information and resources related to forest and watershed restoration and wildfire risk reduction.

Be Prepared for Wildfires – Ready.GOV - Wildfires are unplanned fires that burn in natural areas like forests, grasslands or prairies. These dangerous fires spread quickly and can devastate not only wildlife and natural areas but also communities.

Taos County Emergency Checklist Information- The following checklists are helpful guides for stocking up on essential items and preparing for emergencies.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WILDFIRES

Wildfire risk reduction steps that can make your home safer during a wildfire

Fire Prevention Programs - Your Personal Wildland Fire Action Guide

Ready, Set Go New Mexico

This page has information about embers, insurance, Ready Set Go, and other aspects of fire prevention and education.

Living With Fire page

Ready Set Go page

These resources can help members prepare for wildfire events and provide steps homeowners can take to protect their properties. KCEC encourages members to review this information and take the necessary precautions for their families and homes. This guidance will also be beneficial when dealing with homeowners' insurance applications or renewals. KCEC encourages members to contact family and friends in rural areas, as many individuals in our communities require medical assistance.

KCEC Green Hydrogen Safety Assessment Project

KCEC Green Hydrogen Project

KCEC Microgrid Project

KCEC owns and operates 20 solar arrays across its service area to ensure system reliability. This June, KCEC will begin constructing its second-largest solar array in Amalia, NM, adding 8.75 MW of solar generation and battery storage. Once completed, KCEC's total solar generation will be approximately 50 MW and 25 MW of battery storage.

KCEC has three battery storage microgrid projects scheduled to begin construction this year, located in Penasco, El Rito West and Taos Ski Valley. These projects will help support KCEC's electrical system during extreme weather events and emergencies.

On April 29, 2025, KCEC announced the launch of the KCEC Hydrogen Safety Assessment project in partnership with ENTRUST Solutions Group. This initiative aims to demonstrate the safety and various applications of hydrogen as a reliable source of electricity, focusing on Questa, NM, Penasco, NM, and the Town of Taos. KCEC is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to construct these hydrogen facilities, emphasizing safety and quality.

Once completed, these clean hydrogen, solar, and battery facilities will significantly enhance the sustainability and resilience of KCEC's entire electrical system, providing affordable, reliable, and safe energy generation. For more information on these projects, please visit [kitcarson.com](https://www.kitcarson.com).

KCEC would like to thank Taos County, the Town of Taos, the Forest Service, NM State Forestry, the Taos County Chamber of Commerce, Taos Ski Valley, Taos Community Foundation and UNM-Taos for their input and collaboration.

For further information, please contact CEO Luis Reyes at lreyes@kitcarson.com or COO Richard Martinez at rmartinez@kitcarson.com. Visit us at [kitcarson.com](https://www.kitcarson.com) for more details.

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