A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC CO-OP
NEWS

FROM THE MANAGER

Time of Use Matters

Did you know you can help lower energy costs by simply glancing at the clock? The key to that help is a term used in the energy industry called "time of use."

Electricity follows the basic economic laws of supply and demand—when a lot of people want something, it's expensive; when they don't, it's cheaper. Energy is more expensive during certain times of the day when people use more of it because power plants and equipment have to be built large enough to meet that demand.

The role you play can be as simple as washing and drying your clothes a couple of hours earlier or later than usual. Why would you want to do that? One reason has to do with the fact that as a co-op member, you and your neighbors own Twin Valley Electric. By helping to reduce Twin Valley's cost of power, you help yourself and your neighbors.

Peak Times for Power

Helping with time of use can translate to real dollars. To understand that, it helps to go to the basics of time of use, which involves the routines of our daily life. Generally, people wake up in the morning, they turn on their coffee makers, they take showers, they get ready to go to work, they go to work, then all the computers and buildings are powering up, and there's this demand for electricity that has to be met that is significantly greater than during the overnight hours when energy use is low.


Angie Erickson

The peak time of energy use is typically in the late afternoon and early evening. That's when people go home, cook dinner, do laundry, turn on their lights and use other electronics. During hot or cold times of the year, even more energy is used as air conditioners and heaters use more power. A little later in the evening, that demand for energy starts to lower.

Twin Valley Electric pays more for electricity during peak times because one of two things must happen to meet that demand. Either power plants must be built larger than otherwise necessary to make sure enough electricity is available, or they pay more to purchase electricity from another utility with excess power at the time.

You can help level out that pattern of energy peaks and valleys by simply adjusting when and how you use electricity. Being mindful not to run several major appliances at the same time, and by minimizing energy use when your air conditioner is working its hardest, help to level out energy peaks and valleys, reducing energy costs for Twin Valley and its members.

Electric COOPERATIVE Youth Leadership Camp STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

1. Nearly 100 students from four states gather for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.
2. Caleb Haggard and friends enjoy the view on Lookout Mountain outside of Denver.
3. Haggard with a falcon that was one of many raptors on display during Hawk Quest's presentation at camp.
4. Haggard (right) with fellow campers touring Craig Power plant.
5. Students from Kansas and Oklahoma travel to camp in a tour bus.

COMMUNITY | LEADERSHIP | MEMORIES

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

Haggard Attends Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

CALEB HAGGARD was selected to attend the 43rd annual Cooperative Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, from July 12-18. Joining their peers from across Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming, approximately 100 youth learned about the cooperative principles at the weeklong educational retreat.

"Twin Valley is proud to be a participating sponsor of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and send our local youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills," said Angie Erickson, CEO. "Through this trip, we hope our students take time to learn how electric cooperatives work and how co-ops and their employees support the communities they serve."

The Kansas and Oklahoma participants met as they boarded the bus along its route to Colorado. When the bus arrived in Denver, the group was treated to an indoor skydiving experience and STEM educational lab at iFLY. When the group arrived at Glen Eden Resort, nestled in the Rocky Mountains, the campers immediately organized into their own cooperatives, starting daily membership meetings where a general manager, board of directors and committees were selected. The weeklong experience also gave participants an authentic camp feel with a hike to Fish Creek Falls, river rafting, a volleyball tournament, swimming, a dance and a talent show.

Several demonstrations and presentations enhanced students' knowledge on the cooperative business model and on operations at their electric cooperative. Campers competed to build a model transmission line out of craft supplies, toured Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant and watched a high-voltage safety demonstration. The campers also raised $293.13 to donate to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International Foundation. The money will be used to purchase backpacks and school supplies for students who attend school in Sillab, Guatemala.

When asked, what memory will you always have with you from this trip? Haggard said, "All these great people to share this trip with and knowing I can go home and change things to make our town better."

At the end of the camp, participants elected ambassadors from their group of peers who will return to camp next year as junior counselors. Haggard was elected to serve as a 2020 ambassador. As an ambassador, the students will facilitate camp leadership activities and serve as role models for the students selected to attend camp next summer.

Overall, the campers said they left CYLC with a new sense of leadership and an understanding of how their local electric cooperative operates and how they contribute to improving the communities they serve.

"I learned how not to give up or stop trying when something doesn't work," Haggard said.

What Causes a Transformer to Catch Fire?

Transformers decrease voltage from high-powered to lower-powered lines.

GETTY IMAGES/LAURA_LEE_COBB

Before we talk about what can cause a transformer to catch fire, let's take a step back and consider the transformer itself.

The last time you drove by a substation, you may have wondered what all is in there. Or, if you have an inquisitive 4-year-old, he or she probably asked all about it on the way to preschool.

Part of all that metal equipment behind the substation fence includes transformers. In your neighborhood or on your street, the transformer is either located in a barrel-type housing high atop a power pole or in the green utility boxes called pad-mounted transformers every fifth yard or so.

Transformers are used to "step down" or decrease voltage from high-powered to lower-powered lines.

Transformers can malfunction and let the world know it with a bang. They can explode and catch on fire for two major reasons: from a lightning strike or from damaged wires or equipment somewhere else on the electrical pathway.

Although transformers have built-in protective devices, they may not trigger fast enough to prevent an explosion. (Protective circuits are fast—they respond almost immediately—but they are not as fast as lightning.)

The result, especially for the large substation transformers, is often a bluish-green flash that can be seen from far away at night. The event can also interrupt electrical service to any homes or businesses fed by the transformer.

After a transformer catches on fire:

- Stay away!
- Please be patient until we can restore service. Our crews must shut down the incoming line first and then repair the destroyed hardware.
- If a transformer near your home catches on fire, DO NOT try to put out the fire yourself (water and electricity don't mix). Call 911 to report the fire.
- Power not directly impacted by the transformer fire may need to be shut off temporarily during repairs to prevent stress on the electrical system.

For more information about power line or transformer safety, contact us at 620-784-5500. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

COOKWARE TIP: Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees and your meal will cook just as quickly. **Source: energy.gov**

Working on the LINE

Eric Cornell (above) is lowering Seth Strasser (below) to safety during a recent bucket truck rescue training session at Twin Valley.