



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1511 14,000 Road, P.O. Box 368, Altamont, KS 67330
866-784-5500
www.twinvalleyelectric.coop

**TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC CO-OP**

NEWS

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FROM THE CEO

We're Here to Serve You

"We're here to serve you." We've all heard this phrase countless times. These words may sound generic, but to us — your local electric cooperative — they mean everything.

Twin Valley Electric was created to serve our members. Back in the day, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good. In our case, it was the only way to bring electricity to our rural area where there was none. In doing so, Twin Valley helped our members improve their quality of life. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread woven throughout our history.

Today, we are continuing to power the TVEC member community. While our focus has remained steady on providing safe, reliable energy to our members, today's energy landscape and consumer expectations are far different than they were decades ago. That's why we're adapting, to keep pace with changing technology, evolving needs and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy adviser means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and information on a broad range of energy topics. For example, if you're looking for ways to save energy, check out www.twinvalleyelectric.coop/energy-savings for energy-saving tips and ideas to increase the energy efficiency of your home. Also, online account access through our website lets you see your daily and hourly electricity usage. This detail allows you to identify opportunities to reduce your usage and keep more money in your pocket.

If you're considering a rooftop solar

installation, we would be happy to give you an unbiased view of the pros and cons. Investing in a solar system is a major decision, and it's important to fully understand the costs, responsibilities and potential energy savings.

Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the impact to your bill. We understand that homeowners must complete their due diligence, and we're here to help you through that process.

In a similar vein, we recognize that members may be considering the purchase of an electric vehicle. Contacting TVEC ahead of time will allow us to determine if an upgrade to your service will be needed. We can also help by estimating the impact EV charging will have on your monthly bill.

So, the next time you hear Twin Valley use the phrase "we're here to serve you," we hope you know that we mean it. Service is deeply ingrained into who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we've found additional ways to serve you and provide more options for you to power your life.

We're here whenever you need us. Connect with us by phone, in person, or online. However you choose to connect, please let us know how we can serve you better.



Angie Erickson

Respect the Heat

Soak up the sunshine but remember summertime heat can get intense. Unlike hurricanes, floods and tornadoes, the dangers of extreme weather strike without much notice. An average of 702 heat-related deaths occur each year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Whether you're out and about enjoying your community, watching children take part in summer sports or simply taking a dip in the pool, watch for signs of heat-related illnesses. In a matter of minutes, situations can go from fun-in-the-sun to alarming.

Heat-Related Illnesses

Hot weather is associated with an increase in heat-related illnesses, including cardiovascular and respiratory complications, renal failure, electrolyte imbalance, kidney stones, negative impact on fetal health and preterm birth, according to the CDC. Death rates increase during and after heat waves, which is why the number of deaths is attributed to heat-related illnesses.

Heat-related deaths result from:

- ▶ Heat stroke and related conditions.
- ▶ Cardiovascular disease.
- ▶ Respiratory disease.
- ▶ Cerebrovascular disease.

Deaths From Heat Events

The National Weather Service (NWS) reports that 105 fatalities per year are directly related to extreme heat (based on a 10-year average). Both the NWS and the CDC agree that extreme summer heat events are increasing in the U.S. Anyone can be at risk of the health effects of heat, but some are more vulnerable, according to the CDC. Those more vulnerable include:

- ▶ Pregnant women.
- ▶ People with heart or lung conditions.
- ▶ Young children.
- ▶ The elderly.
- ▶ Athletes.
- ▶ Outdoor workers.

How to Help Someone Who's Having a Heat Stroke:



- ▶ Call 911.
- ▶ Stay with them until help arrives.
- ▶ Move them to a shaded, cool area.
- ▶ Remove outer clothing.
- ▶ Place cold cloths on the skin.
- ▶ Soak clothing in cool water.
- ▶ Circulate air around the person.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness, as it restricts the body's ability to cool itself. Body temperature can reach 106 degrees or higher within 10 to 15 minutes, according to the CDC.

Heat stroke can cause permanent disability or death if emergency treatment is not initiated. Symptoms of heat stroke include confusion, altered mental status, slurred speech, hot/dry skin or profuse sweating, seizures, very high body temperature and coma.

If someone is experiencing heat stroke, act quickly to treat the person.

- ▶ Call 911.
- ▶ Stay with the person until help arrives.
- ▶ Move the person to a shaded, cool area.
- ▶ Remove outer clothing.
- ▶ Cool the person with water.
 - ▶ Place cold cloths on the skin.
 - ▶ Soak clothing in cool water.
 - ▶ Concentrate on cooling the head, neck, armpits and groin.
- ▶ Circulate air around the person.

Heat Exhaustion

This type of heat-related illness is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually due to excessive sweating. Heat exhaustion is most likely to affect the elderly, people with high blood pressure and those who work outdoors. Symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, thirst, heavy sweating, elevated body temperature and decreased urine output.

If someone is displaying symptoms of heat exhaustion, do the following:

- ▶ Take the person to a clinic or emergency room.
- ▶ Call 911 if medical care is unavailable.
- ▶ Stay with the person until he or she is evaluated.
- ▶ Remove the person from the heat.
- ▶ Give the person liquids to drink.
- ▶ Remove unnecessary clothing, including shoes and socks.
- ▶ Use cold compresses to cool the person's body.
- ▶ If compresses are not available, splash cold water on the head, face and neck.

Other Heat-Related Illnesses

Other illnesses related to heat stress include rhabdomyolysis, heat syncope (fainting or dizziness), heat cramps and heat rash. Rhabdomyolysis is a medical condition associated with heat stress and prolonged physical exertion. The condition causes the rapid breakdown, rupture and death of muscle. People who have this condition and experience symptoms (muscle cramps, weakness, dark urine) should seek immediate care at the nearest medical facility.

Severity Scale

Heat stroke is the most serious, followed by heat exhaustion and heat syncope (both severe), and then heat cramps and heat rash (less severe).

If you suspect someone is experiencing heat stroke, act right away by calling 911. Heat exhaustion also requires medical evaluation and treatment. In both cases, cool the body as quickly as possible.

Get Smart About Home Lighting

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only choice for illuminating our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative and intelligent technologies, which includes smart lighting.

Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers an array of cutting-edge functionality and convenience. Let's look at the main benefits of smart lighting options.

SMART LIGHTING IS ENERGY EFFICIENT. Most smart lightbulbs use LED technology, which is much more efficient than traditional incandescent lighting. Additionally, smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home, ultimately resulting in less energy used for lighting.

SMART LIGHTING PROVIDES CONVENIENCE AND CONTROL. Most smart lightbulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings from anywhere in your home or when you're away. Whether you want to set a schedule for lighting or adjust brightness levels, these smart options offer effortless control from the comfort of, well, anywhere!

SMART OPTIONS EMPOWER YOU TO PERSONALIZE HOME LIGHTING. Bright, warm, purple, green — whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white lightbulbs. If you want to create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for a variety of vibrant colors. The possibilities are endless.

While smart lighting offers convenience and control, keep in mind your wall light switch will need to stay "on" for you to control the smart lightbulb from your phone or via voice command. To use a smart lightbulb, the wall switch it's connected to must be "on" so the bulb receives power, which enables it to connect to a Wi-Fi network.



Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa.

If you need additional options to operate the lights, consider a smart light switch. Today's smart switches tend to play nicely with smart lightbulbs. If you want to control your smart lightbulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches that include a built-in feature that allows both. Many smart light switches include motion detectors as well.

If you're looking to take the plunge and integrate multiple smart lightbulbs to your home lighting system, your best bet may be a kit, like the Philips Hue Starter Kit. Most kits include several bulbs and any additional tools you'll need to get started.

If you're new to smart home tech and looking to start small, try a smart lightbulb in a high-traffic area of your home. It's also worth noting that smart plugs are a great starter option and allow convenient control of lamps or other lighting fixtures that are plugged in to a wall outlet. Smart plugs are inexpensive and simply plug in to your existing outlet. Electrical items that are connected to the

smart plug can be controlled from a smart phone app, just like smart lightbulbs.

Whether you're looking for more convenience, colorful options or better ways to manage energy use, smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling.

You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. (Check out Page 20 in the magazine for no bake recipes this month.) **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



K-State Lands \$1.15M Award to Support Local Food Systems

BY PAT MELGARES, K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS SERVICE

University to champion effort to bolster Kansas local food entrepreneurs

Kansas State University will receive \$1.15 million as part of a five-state project that aims to help underserved populations in rural communities gain access to local and healthy foods.

Rial Carver, a co-leader of K-State Research and Extension's Local Foods Transdisciplinary Team, said the program will be part of one of 12 regional food business centers supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

She said K-State received a sub-award from the Heartland Regional Food Business Center, which is managed by the University of Nebraska program, Rural Prosperity Nebraska. The USDA awarded \$25 million to UNL for this project.

The projects includes supporting small and mid-sized food producers in Kansas by helping them:

- ▶ Access technical and financial assistance.
- ▶ Reach new markets.
- ▶ Overcome barriers to market access.

"The Regional Food Business Center funding program came at an opportune time for K-State Research and Extension," said Carver, who is also an extension specialist with K-State's

Rural Grocery Initiative. "Participation in this program will allow K-State Research and Extension to provide another layer of support to local and regional food businesses."

K-State is one of 32 partners in the Heartland Food Business Center, which is based in Lincoln, Nebraska. Partners include extension offices in Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Iowa; non-profit organizations; tribal and indigenous groups; and others.

The USDA funded 11 other regional projects, covering the United States. K-State will receive \$1.15 million over four years.

Carver said K-State Research and Extension's Local Foods Transdisciplinary Team has been building capacity for local food systems across Kansas, including a recently awarded USDA Regional Food Systems Partnership grant.

Team member Marlin Bates, also a principal investigator in the project and director of K-State's extension office in Douglas County, said "the groundwork laid by the Local Foods Transdisciplinary Team over the past few years has positioned K-State Research and Extension well" to be part of the Heartland Regional Food Business Center.

The Kansas Rural Center and KC Healthy Kids will also be partners in the Heartland Regional Food Business Center. Carver said she anticipates partnerships with other groups, including the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Shop Kansas Farms and the Kansas Small Business Development Center.

"In our experience, local and regional food systems work requires strong partnerships," said Londa Nwadike, a principal investigator on the project and team member who holds dual extension appointments in Kansas and Missouri. "We are happy to incorporate partners from across the state to participate in this project."

Officials with the Heartland Regional Food Business Center said they plan to build an interactive platform where food buyers, sellers, producers, processors and market managers can communicate and collaborate on the local level.

Carver said the Kansas team will begin its work within the next few months.

YOU SCHEDULE YOUR MEETINGS AND LUNCHES ... SCHEDULE YOUR WASHING MACHINE AND DISHWASHER, TOO!

PEAK DEMAND is when energy consumption is at its highest.

In much of the U.S., energy use spikes in summer and winter due to **INCREASED ENERGY DEMANDS** for indoor cooling and heating. In the summer, energy use spikes between mid-to late afternoon and evening. In the winter, energy use is higher in the early morning and late afternoon/evening.

Consider running major appliances during off-peak times to decrease strain on the energy grid and maybe save some money on your bill.

CHANGING THE TIME OF DAY YOU USE ENERGY CAN:

-  Help lower your energy bills.
-  Avoid service interruptions or glitches.

**DO YOUR PART TO USE ENERGY WISELY,
ESPECIALLY WHEN ENERGY DEMANDS ARE HIGH.**