



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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www.twinvalleyelectric.coop

TWIN VALLEY ELECTRIC CO-OP

NEWS

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Monday-Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CONTACT US

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FROM THE CEO

Understanding Your Electric Bill

August is typically one of the warmest months of the year, and that means air conditioners across our community are working overtime to keep homes comfortable. During periods of extreme heat, many members may see an increase in their electric bills and wonder what factors contribute to the cost of electricity.

At Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, we believe understanding your electric bill is an important part of being an informed member. While the total amount due may seem like a single number, it actually reflects several different costs associated with delivering reliable electricity to your home or business.

The largest factor is often the amount of energy you use. Electricity is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and the more energy your household consumes, the higher your bill will

be. During the summer, air conditioning is typically the largest driver of increased energy use. When temperatures climb into the 90s or higher, our cooling systems run longer and more frequently, consuming significantly more electricity than they do during milder weather.

Another major factor is the cost of generating or purchasing electricity. Like many Kansas cooperatives, Twin Valley purchases power from Kansas Electric Power Cooperative. The cost of producing electricity fluctuates based on fuel prices, including natural gas, coal, and other energy resources



Angie Erickson

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HAPPY LABOR DAY

In observance of the holiday,
our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7.

Understanding Your Electric Bill Continued from page 12A ►

used to generate power. Changes in wholesale power costs influence the price of electricity delivered to members.

Transmission costs also play a role. Before electricity reaches your home, it must travel across a network of high-voltage transmission lines that connect power plants to local distribution systems. Transmission equipment requires ongoing maintenance and upgrades to ensure reliability, especially as electricity demand continues to grow.

Closer to home, Twin Valley maintains the local electric distribution system — utility poles, power lines, transformers, substations and other essential equipment that safely delivers power to members. Maintaining this equipment is covered through the monthly customer charge. This is a flat monthly fee all members pay, regardless of how much electricity they use. This fixed fee ensures all members pay a fair share of the basic, operational costs required to keep the power grid reliable and ready to serve your home or business. Whether a member uses a little electricity or a lot, we must maintain infrastructure and have crews, equipment, and resources available to provide electricity around the clock.

Summer temperatures can also influence costs in less obvious ways. When the demand for electricity is high across

a region, wholesale power prices can increase. Utilities and grid operators must ensure enough generation is available to meet peak demand, and those costs can be reflected throughout the electric system.

The good news is that simple steps to lower energy use can make a meaningful difference. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher when you're away, replacing dirty HVAC filters, using ceiling fans, sealing air leaks, and avoiding the use of major appliances during the hottest parts of the day can help reduce energy consumption, lower your bill, and reduce strain on the local grid during peak demand.

Twin Valley's mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity while being transparent about the factors that impact energy costs. We understand every dollar matters, and we are committed to making smart investments that keep the lights on and support the communities we serve.

If you ever have questions about your electric bill or co-op programs designed to help you save, please reach out. We're here to help you make informed decisions that work for your household.

Thank you for allowing Twin Valley Electric to serve you.

BE AN ENERGY-SAVING DETECTIVE

Can you spot ways to save energy at home? With help from an adult, search for energy-saving clues. Check off each one you find.



LIGHTS OUT

Ask if older lightbulbs can be replaced with energy-saving LEDs. Remember to turn off lights as you leave a room.



WINDOW WATCH

Are windows and doors closed to help keep heated or cooled air inside?



FAN CHECK

Are fans running in empty rooms? If so, turn them off because fans cool people, not rooms.



THERMOSTAT DETECTIVE

Find the thermostat and ask about ways it can help save energy.



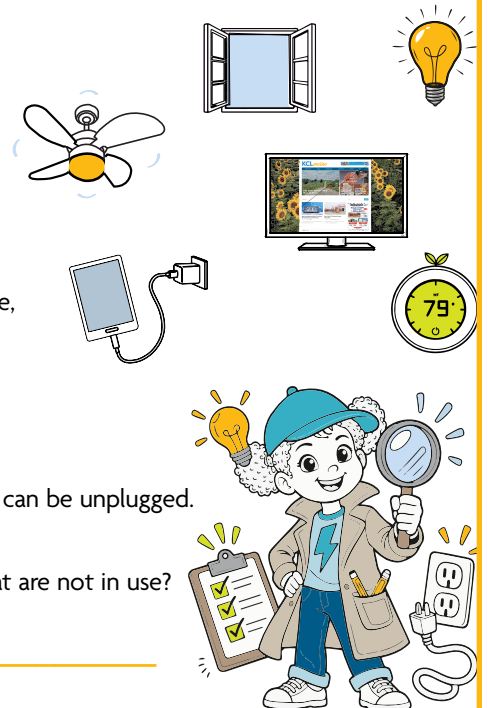
CHARGING CHECK

Look for chargers, phones and electronics plugged in but not in use. Ask if any can be unplugged.



TV AND SCREEN SEARCH

Count how many TVs or monitors are plugged in. How many are turned on that are not in use?



How many energy-saving actions did you find today? _____

CONGRATULATIONS ON BEING AN ENERGY-SAVING SLEUTH!

Understanding NERC, the Watchdog for a Reliable Electric Grid

BY CATHY CASH, NRECA

The country's electric grid, with its hundreds of thousands of miles of high-voltage powerlines, is often described as a bowl of spaghetti. Yet 99.9% of the time when you flick a switch, the lights come on.

So, who is the bulk power system's chief detangler?

That would be the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, the official watchdog of the North American bulk power system. The international non-profit known as NERC sets mandatory reliability standards for all users, owners and operators of the electric transmission grid.

To maintain reliability, NERC oversees and evaluates grid conditions with support from six regional reliability organizations that serve as its on-the-ground partners in identifying potential problem areas. Each summer and winter, NERC releases seasonal grid assessments that evaluate whether the electricity supply is sufficient to meet expected demand and highlight regions at risk of shortfalls.

These periodic reports analyze conditions that can increase demand, such as heat waves and severe cold, as well as factors that can constrain generation, including fuel or equipment shortages. They also include recommendations to address current risks and help prevent future problems. When unforeseen threats emerge, NERC issues special assessments as needed.

Every year the organization also provides a long-term grid assessment looking ahead 10 years at what innovations or circumstances may impact the reliability of our interconnected electric energy transmission network.

Providing the electric power industry with timely insight into grid reliability, potential power shortfalls and strategies to address them is essential to keeping the lights on.

But wait, there's more.

NERC holds workshops and technical conferences, and trains industry personnel on how to maintain a secure grid and audits owners and operators of the bulk power system to ensure they meet all reliability standards.

NERC also operates the 24/7 Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC) that provides the power industry with the latest information on cyber threats, trends and possible solutions with alerts and advisories. E-ISAC develops and executes GridEx, the largest cyber and physical grid security exercise in North America.

Overall, NERC has come a long way from its humble beginning as an industry-led, voluntary grid watchdog. The big Northeast blackout of 1965 that impacted 30 million people led electric utilities to establish the entity to better coordinate grid dynamics.

Today, NERC is the nation's Electric Reliability Organization that oversees the operation and planning of the grid throughout North America. Empowered by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, NERC develops mandatory, enforceable reliability standards backed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Utilities like Kansas' electric cooperatives, for the most part, are not regulated by NERC. State agencies oversee the distribution power lines that deliver electricity to your home and surrounding communities. But NERC's authority over the bulk power system is critical to maintaining reliability in every part of the country, including the most rural areas.

Electric cooperatives that participate in NERC activities advocate for regulations that enable co-ops to plan, maintain and operate a reliable grid.

So how does NERC impact you as a member of an electric cooperative?

NERC helps ensure the electric grid remains reliable, secure and resilient for the millions of people who depend on it every day. By developing and enforcing reliability standards, monitoring the bulk power system and identifying emerging risks, NERC plays a critical role in supporting the safe delivery of electricity across North America.

For electric co-op communities, the work that NERC conducts means greater confidence that homes, schools, farms and businesses will have reliable power around the clock.

CATHY CASH writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the **National Rural Electric Cooperative Association**, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



CHRIS JOHNSON

NERC holds workshops and technical conferences, and trains industry personnel on how to maintain a secure grid.

LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SAFETY AT HOME



Lithium-ion batteries power phones, laptops, e-bikes, tools and toys — storing a lot of energy in a small space. Learn how to buy, charge, store and recycle batteries safely to help prevent fires.

USE LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES SAFELY

- ▶ Buy nationally recognized safety-certified batteries and chargers.
- ▶ Use device-specific chargers and follow manufacturer's instructions.
- ▶ Avoid overcharging.
- ▶ Charge on hard, flat surfaces.
- ▶ Store batteries at room temperature away from anything that can catch fire.
- ▶ Have repairs conducted by a qualified professional.
- ▶ Do not use a damaged battery or charger.
- ▶ Charge in areas that don't block exits or create tripping hazards.

Stop using a battery if it smells unusual, gets very hot, makes popping sounds or changes shape or color.

WHAT IF BATTERIES HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO WATER?

- ▶ Do not charge lithium-ion batteries that have been submerged or damaged.
- ▶ Place exposed devices or batteries in noncombustible containers. Store them outside, away from buildings until recycled.

RECYCLE BATTERIES THE RIGHT WAY

- ▶ Don't throw them in the trash or curbside recycling bins.
- ▶ Contact local waste department or visit www.batterynetwork.org to find a recycling site.

Cool a lithium-ion battery that is overheating or on fire by flooding it with water or submerge it in water.

SOURCE: NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION;
WWW.SAFELECTRICITY.ORG

Earn Straight A's in Lithium-Ion Battery Safety

Prevent e-bike and e-scooter battery fires

As students head back to school, e-bikes and e-scooters are becoming as common as backpacks. They are popular ways for students to get to class, work and activities. These devices are powered by lithium-ion batteries — the same type used in laptops and smartphones. A few smart habits can help prevent battery fires and keep riders safe.

CHARGE SMART

Improper charging is one of the leading causes of lithium-ion battery fires. Help reduce the risk by using these tips:

- ▶ Use only the charger that came with the device or one approved by the manufacturer.
- ▶ Charge the battery on a flat, dry surface away from anything that can catch fire.
- ▶ Plug a charger directly into a wall outlet. Avoid extension cords and power strips.
- ▶ Avoid charging batteries near doors, in hallways, or anywhere they could block an exit or create a tripping hazard.
- ▶ Charge one high-powered device per outlet to reduce the risk of overheating.
- ▶ Unplug the battery when it's fully charged or set a timer to remind you.

STORE BATTERIES SAFELY

- ▶ Keep batteries at room temperature when possible.
- ▶ Avoid charging or storing batteries in extreme temperatures, below 32 degrees or above 105 degrees.
- ▶ Never leave batteries in direct sunlight or inside a hot car.
- ▶ Store e-bikes, scooters and batteries away from exits and flammable materials.
- ▶ Recycle responsibly
- ▶ Never put lithium-ion batteries



Stay safe this school year by practicing smart e-bike and e-scooter battery habits and help prevent fires before they start.

in the trash. They can spark and start a fire and potentially injure sanitation workers.

- ▶ Take used or damaged batteries to a certified battery recycling location. Contact your local waste department or visit www.batterynetwork.org to find a recycling site near you.

STOP USING YOUR BATTERY IF YOU NOTICE:

- ▶ Unusual odors.
- ▶ Changes in color or shape.
- ▶ Smoking or leaking.
- ▶ Strange noises.
- ▶ Loss of charging capacity.
- ▶ Unusual heat.

Damaged or defective batteries can overheat, catch fire or explode. If a lithium-ion battery starts to smoke or catch fire, move away and call 911.

Stay safe this school year by practicing smart battery habits and help prevent fires before they start. Find more back-to-school safety tips at www.SafeElectricity.org.

SOURCE: NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION