

TWIN VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS



Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Office Hours

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

FEMA Rebuild Update

As of September 30, we have completed 8% of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) rebuild work.



FROM THE MANAGER

Why Cooperative Membership Matters

I'm often asked why we call those who purchase electricity from Twin Valley Electric "members" and not "customers." The answer is simple.

Some of my friends are members of Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis clubs. My grandson is a member of an athletic club at his high school. You're a member of Twin Valley Electric.

Service clubs have a common mission—together the club accomplishes more than an individual could. The same holds true for high school clubs; they pool resources and work together to help each member succeed.

Membership at Twin Valley Electric offers many of the same benefits as clubs do, but with a big extra. You and the rest of our 2,000 members own the co-op! That means we answer to you, not investors who have never walked our streets or spent time in our schools. This structure harkens back to our origins.

Twin Valley Electric was organized by farmers and

rural residents from this area in 1947, with support from the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA). At that time, investor-owned utilities said there wasn't enough profit to be made to warrant the expense of building power lines into the countryside.

REA offered low-cost loans for bringing electricity to un-served homes and farms. So folks began forming electric co-ops to meet the need. A fee of \$5 was collected from each family—making them co-op members and owners—to generate capital for borrowing. The rest is history.

You should be proud of what Twin Valley Electric has accomplished. We are an economic driver in the communities we serve. A 2009 study funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found electric co-ops across the U.S. employ 130,000 Americans, both directly and indirectly, with revenues topping out at \$45 billion.

Best of all, every co-op operates on a not-for-profit basis. Twin Valley Electric

doesn't offer profits to investors—we return money over and above operating costs to you, our members, based on electricity consumption. Annually, electric co-ops nationwide return \$545 million to members through this "capital credits retirement" process; last year Twin Valley Electric members received \$151,141.

Co-op membership remains as important today as it was in the late 1930s. All of the nation's 900-plus electric co-ops in 47 states share a common mission: to keep energy safe, affordable, and reliable.

Working together through efforts like the Our Energy, Our Future™ grassroots awareness campaign, we're keeping our needs at the top of Congress's agenda. We're part of something special—a nationwide network owned and controlled by people like you. That's why membership matters.



Ron Holsteen

Cold Weather Rule

Some members honestly believe that their electricity can't be disconnected from November 1 through March 31 because of the Cold Weather Rule (CWR), but that is simply not true. The provision for the CWR is to ensure human health and safety are not reasonably endangered during the cold weather months. It is not an excuse to ignore your electric bill!

The co-op will not disconnect a residential service between November 1 and March 31 when the National Weather Service office forecasts the temperature will drop below 35° F within the following 48-hour period unless:

- ▶ It is at the member's request;
- ▶ The service is abandoned;
- ▶ A dangerous condition exists on the member's premises;
- ▶ The member violates any rule of the cooperative which adversely affects the safety of the member or other persons, or the physical integrity of the cooperative delivery system;
- ▶ The member causes or permits unauthorized interference with or diversion or the use of (mechanical bypass), electric service situated or delivered on or about the member's premises.

To qualify for the CWR the member must do the following:

- ▶ Inform the co-op of their inability to pay their account in full;
- ▶ Give sufficient information to allow the co-op to make a payment arrangement mutually agreeable;
- ▶ NOT default on a payment agreement. Once an agreement has been made and those terms are defaulted on the agreement becomes null and void and the member's service will be subject to immediate disconnection.
- ▶ Apply for any federal, state, or local funds for which the member may qualify.

The cooperative will:

Send one written notice mailed first class at least five days prior to termination of service—this notice is your non-payment notice or your regular electric bill which shows any balance not paid on your account when the current bill calculation was run;

The day prior to disconnection the co-op will make at least one attempt to contact the member of record. If the member is unable to be contacted a disconnect notice will be left on the door by a co-op employee;

Inform the member of any known organization where funds may be available to assist with payment of electric bill.

Twin Valley Welcomes New Director

Twin Valley Electric would like to welcome **BRYAN HUCKE** to the Board of Directors.

Hucke was appointed to complete the term for the District 1 seat that was held by Norman Leistikow. He and his wife, Loretta, have two children and live



Bryan Hucke

just outside of Parsons. Hucke has 29 years of farming and ranching experience.

His goal as serving as a Director on the Board is to help ensure that members of the cooperative receive affordable and reliable electricity.

Manners and Myers Join Twin Valley Staff

Recently, Twin Valley Electric hired Kendall Manners and Adam Meyers as Apprentice Linemen.

ADAM MYERS was born and raised in Altamont. He is a 2009 graduate of Oklahoma State University with an Associate's Degree in Applied Science—High Voltage. He served his internships here at Twin Valley while attending lineman school in Okmulgee.

In his spare time, Myers enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with family.

KENDALL MANNERS was born and raised in Labette County on a farm just east of Parsons and is a 2004



Adam Myers (left) and Kendall Manners are now Apprentice Linemen at Twin Valley Electric.

graduate of Pittsburg State University with an Electrical Engineering Degree.

In his spare time, Manners enjoys hunting, fishing and anything to do with the outdoors.

Twin Valley Electric would like to welcome both Myers and Manners to the cooperative family!

Twin Valley Supports 4-H Cottage Renovation

Gordan Hibbard, President of the Kansas 4-H Foundation, recently met with Twin Valley Electric to request support for the renovation of the Co-op Cottage at the Rock Springs 4-H Center.

Over 240 Kansas co-ops provided the funds to construct the Co-op Cottage in 1959. Since then, the cottage has served tens-of-thousands of youth during their stays at Rock Springs. Upon renovation, Co-op Cottage will once again become a high demand facility reflecting positively on all associated with the project.

Twin Valley Electric's Board approved a \$500 donation to the cause.

Twin Valley Electric is proud to be a supporter of this outstanding Co-op Cottage project.

Rock Springs serves as the nation's largest privately funded and operated 4-H center, serving all 105 Kansas counties. It is located in the Flint Hills south of Junction City. The 735-acre facility serves more than 20,000 guests.

The 4-H Foundation is still seeking donations to complete the renovation of the Co-op Cottage.

For further information, please contact Gordon Hibbard, President, Kansas 4-H Foundation, 116 Umberger Hall KSU, 1700 Anderson Ave., Manhattan, KS, 66502 or call 785-532-5881.

When Heating Remember—Safety First

Summer has quickly turned to Fall and Winter is on its way. With the cooler weather, heating equipment will get put to work. Ensure the safety of everyone in your home by considering the following safety tips for heating equipment.



reach from small children and pets.

- ▶ Never use heaters as drying racks.
- ▶ If the heater is running on fuel (gas, kerosene, wood), follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- ▶ Keep chimneys and flues free from corrosion or blockages.

Space Heaters

- ▶ Ensure space heaters are in good repair and certified by an independent testing lab such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- ▶ Do not use an extension cord to power a space heater. Plug it directly into the electrical outlet.
- ▶ Space heaters should have an automatic shut off in the event they tip over.
- ▶ Keep space heaters at least three feet away from flammable materials such as curtains, draperies, loose paper and upholstery.
- ▶ Keep space heaters out of

Electric Blankets

- ▶ Ensure electric blankets are in good repair and certified by an independent testing lab like UL.
- ▶ Do not tuck your electric blanket under the mattress.
- ▶ Do not put anything on top of the blanket.
- ▶ Do not allow pets to sleep on electric blankets.

Outdoor Tools

- ▶ Check cold weather tools like leaf blowers and snow blowers, to ensure power cords are in good repair.
- ▶ Extension cords used for outdoor weather tools should be approved for outdoor use.

The Kansas Army Ammunition Plant Commemorate the End of an Era

The perfect gift for former employees and local collectors

\$6 ea or
2 for \$10

Mugs are Available At these Locations:

- ▶ McCarty's Office Store, 1715 Main
- ▶ Labette Avenue, Oswego
- ▶ Twin Valley Electric, Altamont
- ▶ Labette Community College Bookstore, Parsons



An etching of the administration building is on the front, and a map of the plant with production areas identified is on the back.

The Kansas Army Ammunition Plant was a part of Labette County's history for nearly 70 years. Its decommissioning in 2009 marked the end of an era where three generations of Labette residents made their living, and in doing so, supported the nation's need for military munitions.

It was first named the Kansas Ordnance Plant with the acronym of KOP, then was the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant, with acronyms of KAAP and later KSAAP.

During World War II, peak employment hit 7,358 in a single day. On March 4, 2009, the 13,727-acre facility was deactivated and the property is being redeveloped as the Great Plains Industrial Park.

620-421-1228
1209 Corporate Dr., Parsons
Business Incubator Center, NE entrance



Twin Valley Electric's Payment Options

The following are the authorized bill payment options available to Twin Valley Electric members. There is no fee for use of any authorized option.

- ▶ **Pay by mail**—Enclose your bill payment stub and a check or money order and mail in the envelope provided with your bill. Please allow three to five days for delivery.
- ▶ **Automatic bank draft**—Contact our office by calling toll free 866-784-5500 or our Web site at www.twinvalleyelectric.coop, to download the form for automatic bank draft.
- ▶ **Online bill payment**—Log onto our Web site at www.twinvalleyelectric.coop, and click on "bill pay" and make a bill payment.
- ▶ **Drop box**—Deposit your payment, including payment stub and check or money order in the payment drop box.
- ▶ **Credit, debit and ATM cards**—Call our office at 866-784-5500

or visit our Web site www.twinvalleyelectric.coop to use credit, debit or ATM cards.

All other payment options are considered "unauthorized pay agents." unauthorized pay agents have no contractual requirement with Twin Valley Electric to operate under rules approved by the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). Twin Valley Electric provides no assurance as to the timeliness or accuracy of payments made via unauthorized agents.



Twin Valley Electric offers five different authorized payment options for your convenience.

A Better Way

BY DOUG RYE

Many people think that I am against renewable energy systems, such as solar and wind. I can assure you that I am not.

I admire those who live off the land and use our natural resources wisely. There are, however, only a few in this country who are living “off the grid.” There are a goodly number of others that are generating part of their energy needs from solar, wind or water. In my dreams, I could do that. I could just live at the deer camp and use my little six-inch, 12-volt television while cooking my dinner on a wood or propane stove. I could get my light from a battery or propane-powered lantern and my water from a well with a hand pump.

Actually, I have done that and totally enjoyed it for about... five days. After that, I wondered how the pioneers made it.

Well, in real life, I think one of the most important discoveries ever is electricity. I consider it an absolute blessing.

For the cost of a hamburger, fries and a small drink per day, I can do many wonderful things in our house, such as heat, cool, cook, refrigerate, light and watch football. Make your list and you will agree.

With that said, I do not believe in wasting any of our energy resources. I think that producing some of our energy from solar or wind is a noble thought, but I have a better way.

In the early 1980s, I was working for the federal government to provide low-income housing. In that role, I was responsible for the installation of about 1,000 solar systems. The U.S. government wanted it done and I did it. It was an exciting time. Two of the systems had 220 solar panels each. Everyone was impressed. Folks would say, “Oh boy, Doug has got it going.”

An engineer from Huntsville, AL, had a different view, however. He told me I would see the day when I would not want my name associated with these projects. I thought he was crazy. But, unfortunately, he was right.

Both systems were total failures in less than 10 years. In fact, nearly all of the systems failed in less than 15 years. I thought there must be a better way.



A solar system produced only 409 kWh per month, making the approximate payback on a solar system 84 years.

Just over a year ago, I had the opportunity to work with a company that was willing to purchase, install and monitor a quality solar voltaic system and a quality wind generating system.

The solar system cost more than \$50,000 installed. The system is monitored daily and has produced an average of 409 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month. This would save about \$50 per month on an electric bill. A simple payback would be \$50,000 divided by \$50 per month equals 1,000 divided by 12 equals 84 years. I think there is a better way.

The wind turbine cost \$15,000 installed and has produced about 58 kilowatt-hours a month. This would save about \$7 per month on an electric bill. That would calculate into a simple payback of 180 years.

Now I know I have a better way. And being the nice guy that I am, I plan to tell you about it next month. See you then.

DOUG RYE, is a licensed architect and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show. You can contact Doug at 888-Doug-Rye. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.



Doug Rye

“I think one of the most important discoveries ever is electricity. I consider it an absolute blessing.”