

TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS



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Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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FROM THE MANAGER

The Value of Being a Co-op Member

Cooperatives are different from other businesses you deal with. We're different because we're looking out for you. Now, more than ever, that's important because we need to work together to keep your electric bills affordable.

Congress did not pass a comprehensive climate bill last year. In January, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began regulating greenhouse gasses. Policies dealing with coal ash, even more stringent controls on other power plant emissions, and renewable energy requirements could also lead to higher costs. It's hard to predict the future, but one thing seems certain: government regulations are going to increase the cost of doing business.

New regulations won't be the only culprit. Our wholesale power costs continue to rise. We are paying over 6.5 percent more for wholesale power than we were one year ago. We will see at least another 2.5 percent increase in those costs in January as the new latan II coal plant comes on line.

Our wholesale power supplier, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo), is meeting our power needs with a diverse fuel mix (47 percent coal, 30 percent nuclear, 21 percent hydro, and two percent other) which means that almost half of our fuel supply does not emit greenhouse gases. Locally, our prices for fuel,

materials, and equipment continue to rise.

We're going to do everything we can to keep your electric bills affordable. Our website, TogetherWeSave.com, shows how little changes like sealing your air ducts, replacing old appliances, or improving your home's insulation can add up to big savings on your electric bill.

Deploying state-of-the-art solutions like our automated meter infrastructure system helps us control operating costs and improve service reliability. We will be making other long term investments in new facilities to improve operating efficiencies and give us some much needed warehouse and garage space.

Costs are rising for all of us, but when it comes to your electric bill our rates are set simply to cover the cost of doing business, not to generate profits for distant stockholders.

In fact, as a not-for-profit organization, we give money back to you when our revenues exceed costs. The bottom line? We exist only to serve you and meet your needs for safe, reliable, and affordable power.

As you can see, we're different. We're working together to keep your electric bills affordable. We're controlling costs through innovation. We're continuing to put you, our members, first.



Ron Holsteen

“No matter what the future brings, one thing is certain—we're looking out for you.”

Kennett's Welcome New Member to Co-op Family



The Kennett family, from left, Halee, Cole, Tenlee and Tyler.

Tyler Kennett, lineman for Twin Valley, and his wife, Halee, welcomed daughter Tenlee Breeze to their family on November 2.

Tenlee weighed 7 lbs, 10 oz, and was 19 1/2 in long. She was also welcomed home by big brother Cole, 2.

Congratulations on your new addition!

FEMA Rebuild Update



As of November 12, we have completed 43% of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) rebuild work.

Holiday Office Closing



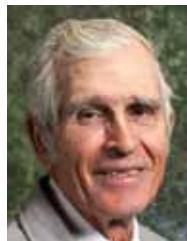
Twin Valley Electric would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays, and also remind members that the office will be closed on December 23-24 and January 3.

Twin Valley's McNickle Achieves Credentials

RONALD MCNICKLE from Twin Valley Electric Co-op has received the Board Leadership certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

McNickle was recognized at NRECA's Region VII meeting for his commitment to education and attainment of the Board Leadership certificate before an audience of electric cooperative officials from four states—including Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming.

Today's electric utility environ-



Ronald McNickle

ment imposes new demands on electric cooperative trustees, particularly increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills, and a working knowledge of the cooperative principles.

The NRECA Board Leadership certificate recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Trustee. Trustees who have attained the Board Leadership certificate have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.

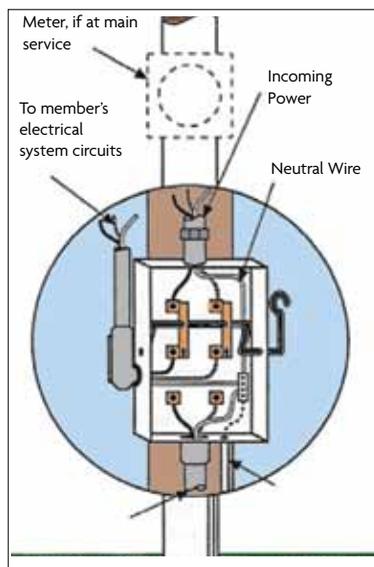
The Double-Throw Switch—An Essential Element

Adding a standby generator to the electrical system of a home, farm or business requires a suitable transfer switch to disconnect the electric loads from Twin Valley's power grid. This is a requirement of both the National Electrical Code and all electric power suppliers for two critical reasons:

- ▶ It prevents the flow of current into Twin Valley's lines during an outage, which could electrocute line workers attempting to restore power.
- ▶ It prevents feedback of power through the generator when regular electric service has been restored, which could destroy the generator.

Any type of generator that serves loads through the permanent wiring system of the home, business or farmstead must use a suitable transfer switch, installed by an experienced electrician.

Double-throw means that the operator can place or "throw" the switch into two different positions. One



position feeds power from the utility system to the load. The other position feeds power from the standby generator to the load.

Such a switch will prevent electricity from flowing simultaneously to the member's home, business or farmstead, and Twin Valley's system. Typically, the transfer switch is located between the meter and the loads to be

served. It should be within 25 feet of the generating unit for convenience and safety.

The size of the transfer switch is determined by the loads to be served. The transfer switch rating must be equal to the size of the main service. A suitable transfer switch, installed by an experienced electrician and approved by Twin Valley Electric, prevents injury to utility personnel and damage to the generator.

If interested in installing a switch, please call Twin Valley Electric. We are still installing these for just \$250.

NOTES FROM OPERATIONS

Use LED Christmas Lights this Season



William Worthy

right, time for the jolly old man in the red suit to make his late night run.

Decorating for Christmas means different things to different people depending on their age and their responsibilities during the decorating.

Children are thinking, "Christmas lights! Santa's coming!" Mom is thinking, "Christmas lights! All the family is getting together!" Dad is thinking, "Christmas lights! Why the heck are they blinking?!?"

Since the 17th Century, people have lit their Christmas trees to sit by its comforting glow. The families of Christmas past attached candles to the ends of the tree's branches using wax or pins; given the fire risk involved with using lit candles, most families decorated their trees on Christmas eve and quickly took them down just after Christmas day.

Just like with everything else, advances in Christmas light technology have come a long way from the lights of yesterday. Safer and more efficient lights are available in the form of LED technology.

LEDs are constructed from tiny solid-state chips. These chips directly convert electricity to light without the use of a filament or glass bulb. Standard incandescent bulbs create light by transmitting electricity through a resistant filament which creates heat, a bi-product of the heat created is light.

LED lights encapsulate solid-state chips in solid (and nearly indestructible) epoxy plastic that can be made into a variety of shapes and sizes. LED

Ah, Fall in Kansas. Chill in the air, leaves are changing, the smell of fireplaces burning, and judging from the displays in the stores, we know what is coming up. That's

lights are used and installed just like standard Christmas lights. They operate off standard 120v household power outlets and have a male plug at one end and a female plug at the other end.

LED lights are up to 99 percent more efficient, last up to 50,000 hours, are extremely durable, and create very little heat. The cost of LED string lighting varies because different semiconductor materials are used to create the different colors. Some materials cost more than others, so the cost to manufacture the product varies depending on the type of semiconductor used. White LEDs are the most expensive because red, green, and blue are combined together to make a white LED.

Environmentalists encourage us all to reduce our waistlines around the holidays. Most of the green solutions revolve around reducing and reusing packaging and holiday wrap. However, the most holiday energy is consumed by Christmas lights and decorations, and the easiest way to conserve in your home during the holidays is to monitor your energy consumption.

For comparison, the old incandescent lights size ratings are C9, 8-9 watts; C7, 6-7 watts; and mini 0.5-1 watt, these lights generally last 2,000 hours. The average LED Christmas light is .05 to .07 watts.

The average Christmas light display using incandescent can add up to \$100 to your electric bill, this is based on an eight-hour night for 30 nights.

I hope this sheds some light on the new technology out there. As always, your Twin Valley personnel will be available 24/7 through the holidays to make sure your Christmas decorations stay on.

Please remember the true reason for our Christmas season and from the Twin Valley Electric family have a very Merry Christmas.

Take Advantage of these Local Discounts with Co-op Connections



- ▶ **Altamont Grocery, Altamont**—Free 20 oz. drink with a \$20 purchase
- ▶ **Big Chief, Oswego**—10% discount
- ▶ **H&D Tire & Battery Co., Altamont**—Save 2% with cash purchase
- ▶ **KABE's, Altamont**—Free 20 oz. fountain drink with any purchase of sub sandwich
- ▶ **Labette Avenue, Oswego**—Save \$6.50 on regular subscription, just \$30 with card.
- ▶ **Lavender Landscapes Nursery, Altamont**—Spend \$75 receive a five ounce candle free
- ▶ **Oswego Locker, Oswego**—10% discount on processing
- ▶ **Peterson Hardware, Altamont**—10% discount on any purchase
- ▶ **Reliable Medical Supply & Rental, Inc, Altamont**—15% off any retail purchase
- ▶ **Riggs Drug Store, Chetopa**—10% discount on over the counter medications
- ▶ **Sonic Drive-in, Oswego**—99 cent Route 44 drink
- ▶ **Vail's Automotive, Oswego**—\$5 per tire discount on all new tires

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Lavender Landscapes Nursery & Gift Shop

Lavender Landscapes Nursery and Gift Shop is owned and operated by **ROGER AND CYNDA LAVENDER**.

The couple decided to open their own nursery after visiting many other nurseries looking for unique and unusual trees for their yard. It was very difficult to locate new and exciting trees that would not always be found in other yards.

They decided they would have a better chance of locating these plants if they had access to all the horticulture suppliers across the country. The idea turned into a dream and then became a reality when Lavender Landscapes Nursery and Gift Shop opened their doors to the public in the fall of 2001.

Both, Roger and Cynda work hard to find and select nursery stock not always found at other nurseries or “box” stores. Cynda is the annual and perennial buyer while Roger purchases the trees and shrubs. If there is something you are looking for they will do their best to locate it and get it put on a future order.

Lavender Landscapes Nursery and Gift Shop is still growing, and each year they try to improve on facilities and layout of their retail location. They continually strive to add more diversity to their product line to meet the demands of their growing customer base.

Shortly after they started the business, they decided to open a gift shop so that they had items to offer year round. Cynda enjoys decorating the gift shop for the different seasons. It usually takes several weeks, however, the finished product is always rewarding. The gift shop is usually busiest during the fall and winter, with the day after Thanksgiving starting the Christmas rush.

Lavender Landscapes Nursery & Gift Shop has something for everyone in every season and tries to specialize in items more unique than your average chain retail store.

With spring and summer comes rising temperatures and people get the itch to get outside and purchase trees, plants, flowers, grass, and bulk mulch. Lavender Landscapes also offers several different pieces of ceramic pottery, as well as bird baths to spruce up your yard.

As fall arrives, people are ready for the cooler temperatures and are excited to shop for pumpkins, mums, gourds and autumn décor.

Last but not least, the cold of winter brings customers out in search of the perfect Christmas gift. Lavenders has great winter décor, candles, Christmas gifts and ornaments. You can even purchase a fully decorated tree. During any season you will find a great selection and great items to decorate either inside or outside your home.

When you visit their store, you will also notice an older home sitting out front. That home was built over 100 years ago and is a Sears & Roebuck Company home, Model 115. During the early 1900s, people would



Lavenders offers an assortment of candles for the holiday season.

often purchase “mail order” homes and pick up all the lumber and materials at the closest railway depot to build themselves. In the future, Roger plans on updating the home and turning it into the gift shop.

Roger is currently working on a landscaping project behind the Core building in Parsons. This project was made possible from a private donation to Labette Health and Lavender's were contracted to complete the work. They are creating a therapeutic garden for the rehabilitation clients, which will use the garden to walk on different textures along numerous paths, as well as work stations for hands-on rehabilitation.

If you have a yard or business in need of landscaping, Roger and Cynda would be more than happy to turn your yard into a beautiful garden. Lavender's does custom landscaping to your desire and can do anything from planting a tree to transforming your yard.

Roger and Cynda are members of Twin Valley Electric and live outside of Altamont.

If you would like to visit Lavender Landscapes Nursery & Gift Shop (14076 HWY 59, Altamont, KS 67330, ½ mile North of the 160 Hwy & 59 Junction or 10 miles South of Parsons) Their hours of operation are Wednesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. At Lavender Landscapes Nursery & Gift shop “together we'll grow.”



Lavenders offers a variety of Christmas decor.