



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

**TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC CO-OP**

NEWS

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Office Hours

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

Contact Us

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FROM THE MANAGER

Here for You, Even at a Distance



Angie Erickson

COVID-19 — a term none of us had heard five months ago. Yet it has now touched every American in varying degrees. For some it has merely been a

nuisance, limiting eating out to curb-side take-out, and trying to snag the last pack of toilet paper in the store. For others, severe illness, job loss, or loss of revenue of their small business may be life-changing events.

Now, more than ever, we all need to do what we can to help each other.

We are Here for You

We want you, our members, to know that all of Twin Valley's employees are still working full-time everyday, not just to keep the lights on, but also to assist

you in any way possible. Although our lobby is temporarily closed, you can still contact us by phone to report an outage, make a payment by phone, or ask any questions you might have. Members who prefer to pay their bill in person can utilize the payment drop box on the west side of our building.

While we are still here for you, the ways in which we are working are anything but typical. In order to serve our members, our employees must stay well. To prevent their exposure to COVID-19, we have separated our linemen from other employees and even from each other to the extent possible. In most instances, they are working strictly from their trucks so they can go directly to the job site each day without coming to the office. Our linemen will continue to respond to outages, as well as make necessary repairs and perform maintenance to our system.

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MEMORIAL DAY We will be **CLOSED**

In observance of the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 25, our office will be closed.

Annual Meeting Still Postponed

Our co-op's concern for community goes beyond involvement in community activities and the local economy. In an abundance of caution, Twin Valley Electric Cooperative decided last month to **POSTPONE** our annual meeting due to concerns regarding COVID-19. Once the stay-at-home order has been lifted, plans will be made to reschedule.

POSTPONED



Safe Summer Outdoor Lighting

The summer is approaching, and that means we might be able to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends once again. Outdoor electrical string and sphere lighting and outdoor fixtures add ambiance and visual flair to open-air living spaces. Use these tips when using decorative lighting outdoors:

- ▶ Only use strands, globes or other decorative fixtures approved for outdoor use and tested by a reputable safety laboratory, such as UL.
- ▶ Only string together the number of strands recommended by the manufacturer.
- ▶ Outdoor outlets should be protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).
- ▶ Only use extension cords rated for outdoor use and do not overload them.
- ▶ Do not use metal tacks or nails to drape or attach string lights.
- ▶ Planning to add extra outlets/running electricity to a gazebo or shed? Hire a qualified electrician to install them.
- ▶ Use outdoor-rated bulbs.
- ▶ Do not use bulbs that surpass a fixture's maximum wattage.
- ▶ Inspect lights and cords before using them.
- ▶ Make sure everything you are plugging in — decorative lighting, outdoor kitchen appliances, and other electrical items — won't overload the circuit. A qualified electrician can help with this.

Enjoy dining al fresco and entertaining under the stars (and lights). Just select your lighting carefully and use it safely.

Here for You, Even at a Distance Continued from page 16A ▶

To protect our office employees from the virus, those who can are working from home whenever possible. Those who remain in the building are kept safe by eliminating contact with each other. Employees communicate with each other by phone, text and email.

We Want to Help

We recognize that many of you may experience illness and/or loss of income as a result of COVID-19 or the restrictions implemented to slow the spread of the virus. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill, please contact us. Arrangements can be made to lessen your burden.

Annual Meeting

In anticipation of Governor Kelly's executive order prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people, we had elected to postpone our annual meeting and

director election, typically held in April. Due to the uncertainty that remains as to how COVID-19 will progress, or when restrictions will be altered or lifted, we are not able to select a new date for the meeting at this time. Watch your mailbox for our annual report and meeting notice. We will also announce the new date in *Kansas Country Living*, in the message area of our billing statements, on our website, and on Facebook.

Our management team will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely. We will remain in constant contact with the other electric cooperatives in Kansas and with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., which in turn is working closely with our national association, the state legislature, and Governor Kelly.

All the best to everyone. Stay safe and stay healthy!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.

Source: energy.gov



Working on the LINE



Twin Valley was recently received with a No Lost Time safety award. This award honors the 83,577 hours Twin Valley has worked without an accident. Pictured are back row, from left: Jordan Robison, lineman; Tyler Kennett, foreman; Adam Myers, line superintendent; Bruce McAntee, instructor Loss Control Safety & Compliance at Kansas Electric Cooperatives; and Eric Cornell, apprentice. Front row, from left: Kendall Manners, lineman; Ty Lahey, apprentice; Kelly Walker, foreman and Seth Strasser, lineman. Not shown Joe Brooks, lineman.

Don't Trim Trees Near Power Lines

There's really no other way to say it: Trimming branches or limbs near power lines can kill.

If you look the other way, get distracted when deciding which limb to trim next or lose your footing, you could inadvertently make contact with a power line. You might think you have a steady hand, but moving a few inches off course could be the last thing you do. No one is ever perfectly stable on a ladder, especially while carrying equipment.

It doesn't take contact with a wire to cause a fatal shock — electricity will jump to find the quickest path to the ground. Keep yourself, your tools and your equipment more than 10 feet away from lines.

Did you know trimming within 10 feet in any direction of a power line is illegal? Only OSHA-certified line clearance workers are authorized to trim near power lines. So when hiring a tree trimmer to trim near power lines in your yard or on your property, make sure the person you hire is certified to do so.

REMEMBER: Keep yourself safe by hiring an OSHA-certified line clearance worker to trim your trees near power lines. It's the law and helps protect you. Trimming trees within 10 feet of a power line can be fatal or cause serious injuries.

Call us with any questions about trees and power lines at 866-784-5500.



4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS:

Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



ELECTRICAL WIRING:

Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. Homes older than 20 years may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, contact a qualified electrician.



OVERLOADED CORDS AND OUTLETS:

Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, computer and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.

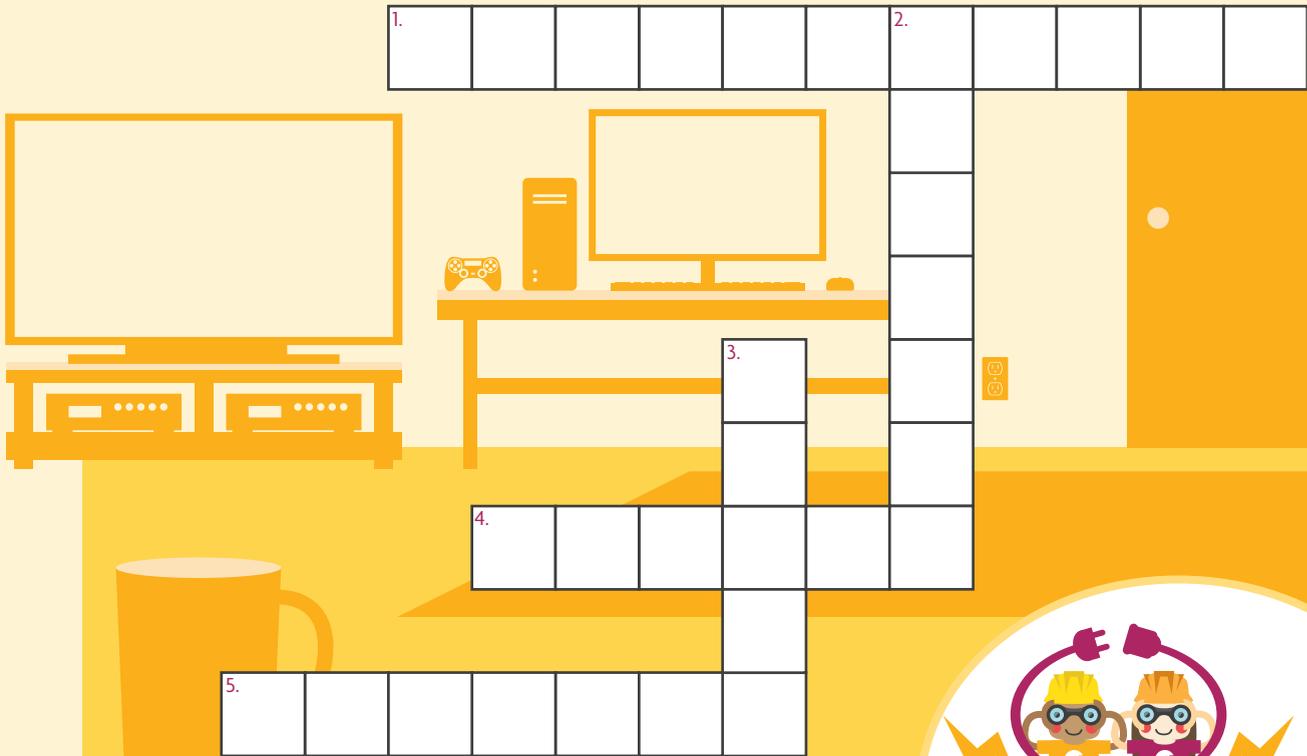


OLD APPLIANCES:

Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



May is Electrical Safety Month!

Read the safety tips below to complete the crossword puzzle.

1. **ACROSS:** Keep all liquids away from _____, like TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
2. **DOWN:** Never overload electrical _____. This creates a greater risk of fire.
3. **DOWN:** Never use electrical _____ that feel warm to the touch or are damaged in any way.
4. **ACROSS:** Smoke _____ should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
5. **ACROSS:** Don't run electrical cords under rugs. This creates potential fire _____.