



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

Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Bryan Coover
President

Larry Hubbell
Vice President

Dareld Nelson
Treasurer

Bryan Hucke
Secretary

Rodney Baker
Trustee

Tom Ellison
Trustee

Diane McCartney
Trustee

Jared Nash
Trustee

Jason Zwahlen
Trustee

Staff

Angie Erickson
CEO

Office Hours

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

Contact Us

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

FROM THE MANAGER

Twin Valley Members Saw Small Savings in 2020

Twin Valley purchases the power we provide to our members. Our power cost covers the generation of the power and the transmission of the power to our substations and metering points. Most of the power cost is relatively consistent and predictable, but a small portion can be quite volatile, rising or lowering throughout the year. Due to the variable nature of those costs, we've implemented a variable rate called the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) to pass these costs on to our members.

When the variable costs are more than expected, the PCA is an additional charge on your bill. When the variable costs are less than expected, the PCA is a credit, reducing the amount of your bill. Typically, the PCA is a small charge each month.

However, in 2020 the variable costs were lower than expected, largely due to lower fuel costs associated with generation. As a result, the PCA was a credit nine months out of the year, resulting in savings for our members.



Angie Erickson

This means that in 2020, Twin Valley actually gave money back to our members through the PCA. This is the first time this has occurred since the PCA was implemented in 2012.

While we can't expect a net credit to occur frequently, we are happy we can pass the savings along to our members in real time through the variable PCA.

If you have any questions about your electric bill or service, please contact us. We're here to help.

Annual Meeting Update

The Twin Valley Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting has been moved to July. With the current pandemic situation, please look for more details in the coming month's *Kansas Country Living* issue!

July 2021

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Please Move Over for Roadside Crews

Every year, workers along the sides of roads are injured or killed when a car crashes into the crew's site, even though it's marked with bright cones and warning signs.

There's an easy way to reduce those incidents. The slogan "slow down or move over" is good advice and a decent thing to do to keep people safe. It's also a requirement in all 50 states.

Legislatures began passing Move Over laws 25 years ago to reduce the harm to roadside emergency workers. Since 2015, states have specifically added electric and other utility projects to these laws.

It's a welcome addition as your electric co-op was part of the effort to expand the law to protect line crews.

Protecting line crews is a top priority for Twin Valley Electric, and it's a safety measure everyone can help with. Our crews already perform

dangerous work to keep the lights on every day. They need their work environment to be as safe as possible.

There are slight differences in each state's Move Over laws, but not so much that you can't figure out the right thing to do, even if you're traveling from state to state. Here are the basic requirements:

- ▶ Within 200 feet before and after a work zone, which will be marked with bright signs, marker cones and often flashing lights, change lanes if there's more than one lane on your side of the road so there is an empty lane between your vehicle and the roadside crew.
- ▶ Drivers must obey all traffic directions posted as part of the worksite.
- ▶ If it's not possible or safe to change lanes, slow down. Many states specify slowing down to 20 mph below the posted speed limit if it's

25 mph or more. Yes, that means if the posted speed limit is 25 mph, slow down to 5 mph.

- ▶ Keep control of your car — yes, that's a requirement in many Move Over laws. And yes, it is more of a general guide than a rule for a specific speed. It means you need to pay attention and respond to weather conditions — heavy rain or a slick road might mean you're required to slow down even more than 20 mph. And no texting, fiddling with the radio or other distractions.
- ▶ Penalties for violating those requirements range from \$100 to \$2,000, or loss of your driver's license.

The AAA Digest of Motor Laws says that Kansas state law requires drivers approaching a stationary emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights, including towing and recovery vehicles and waste collection vehicles, traveling in the same direction, to vacate the lane closest if safe and possible to do so, or slow to a speed safe for road, weather, and traffic conditions.

Drivers should heighten awareness of electric utility crews. A study of utility worksite accidents found that the temporary nature of power line repairs could surprise motorists. A roadside construction operation might close a lane for days or weeks, giving time for people familiar with the area to anticipate the changed traffic pattern. Utility work, however, can start and finish in a few hours, raising risks with drivers who might think they know the road ahead.

Also watch for worksites being put up or taken down. Roadside accidents can happen as crews are setting up signs and traffic cones.

Don't drive distracted. Drive according to the conditions of the road. Be courteous to roadside work crews. Watch and obey signs. And certainly, follow laws like Move Over or Slow Down. It's good advice that could save a life.



PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR ROADSIDE CREWS.

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

Together, we can keep our crews safe.

What Happens Behind the Scenes During a Power Outage?

Here in the U.S., we are fortunate to have an advanced power grid in place. Power transmission and distribution is reliable in our country, and we are proud to deliver the electricity you depend on each day. Excluding outage times attributed to major weather or other catastrophic events, electricity consumers in our country typically experience only about two hours of total power interruptions per year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. When outages due to major events are taken into consideration, the EIA reports the total outage time at six hours a year.

What happens on our end when your power goes out? We swing into action in a safe and efficient manner to ensure your power is restored. How long that takes depends on several factors: the extent of the storm's destruction, the number of outages, and how long it takes for our work crews to safely access the storm-damaged areas. We are careful to follow standard restoration procedures to ensure safety and to get the job done right by:

- ▶ Assessing damage to utility equipment.
- ▶ Addressing immediate safety risks, including downed power lines.
- ▶ Ensuring that essential public health and safety facilities are operational.
- ▶ Prioritizing repairs that will restore power to the greatest number of people first.
- ▶ Assessing and repairing (in this order) substations, distribution lines, and service lines to properties.

In some instances, the cause of the power outage is damage to our power supplier's equipment, which prevents the power from getting to Twin Valley's electric system. In that case, our power supplier will be:

- ▶ Evaluating power plants for damage and restore them to working order.
- ▶ Repairing transmission lines that carry power to large areas.
- ▶ Repairing substations

Thank you for your patience during power outages. Know that in the event of an outage, we are working hard to restore power as safely and efficiently as possible, day and night.

For more information about preparing for outages or storms, or about electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.



STAY COMFORTABLE

Space heating and cooling account for a large portion of the average home's energy use. A programmable or smart thermostat can help you control the temperature of your home and save energy.

Photo Credit: Consumers Energy

Just in Case: Be Prepared for an Outage

Thankfully, lengthy electrical outages do not happen regularly. That does not mean you should not prepare for them, however.

Safe Electricity and Twin Valley Electric Suggest You:

- ▶ Have a storm kit ready that includes flashlights, bottled water, non-perishable food, battery-operated radio, batteries, portable cell phone chargers that are fully charged, hand sanitizer and first-aid supplies.
- ▶ Have an adequate supply of medications on hand in case the weather prevents travel to a pharmacy.
- ▶ Have a backup or portable generator if anyone in your residence requires the use of electric-powered medical devices.
- ▶ Find out where your local storm shelters are and have a plan for getting there if needed and it is safe to do so.

During a Power Outage:

- ▶ Call us to report the power outage.
- ▶ Keep freezers and refrigerators closed to preserve food.
- ▶ Only use generators outdoors and away from windows and doors; do not use them in a garage.
- ▶ Do not use a gas stove to heat your home.
- ▶ Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.
- ▶ If safe, go to an alternate location for heat or cooling.

Remember to check on neighbors, if you can do so safely. This is especially important since cell phone and internet communications may be disrupted and they may be unable to call for help.

WINTER ENERGY-SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

This winter, you can pitch in at home to help save energy! Read the energy-saving tips below, then find and circle the **orange** bolded words in the puzzle.



M	U	S	F	A	K	S	E	R	U	A	Z	T	H	H
B	E	T	M	I	V	L	R	J	C	K	M	T	J	L
B	M	H	F	R	R	H	Q	E	Q	M	S	K	V	W
T	D	G	G	F	W	E	D	G	G	U	N	M	J	L
K	V	I	K	I	B	L	P	X	N	R	V	L	T	Z
V	Y	L	X	L	W	K	S	L	H	Y	A	S	L	P
S	P	N	P	T	K	Q	I	F	A	E	Z	H	H	K
N	J	C	I	E	T	G	V	O	S	C	P	S	C	W
Z	K	M	C	R	H	A	N	U	O	V	E	R	Y	O
G	N	I	H	T	O	L	C	R	U	S	D	M	A	F
G	I	Z	C	I	F	J	B	P	I	N	L	G	F	P
H	M	J	W	O	V	D	B	L	Y	V	I	E	J	V
B	C	Q	K	I	N	W	L	I	N	E	N	B	N	T
H	N	E	W	X	V	R	I	D	V	C	B	B	T	G
C	U	J	M	Q	S	C	Y	M	P	Q	D	Q	K	T

WORD BANK

- ▶ Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow **sunlight** in to warm your home.
- ▶ Instead of turning up the thermostat, add more layers of **clothing** to keep your body warm.
- ▶ If you have a **fireplace**, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.
- ▶ Unplug **chargers** when they're not in use. They consume energy even when they're not charging phones and other devices.
- ▶ Ask an adult to check the **air filter** for your home's heating and cooling system. Filters should be replaced regularly to help the system run more efficiently.
- ▶ Always turn off **lights** when you leave a room.

