



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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Contact Us

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Time to Ditch Your Old Space Heater

If you can't remember when you purchased your space heater, it might be time to replace it. Just as the flip phones of yesteryear have progressed into today's modern cell phone, portable space heaters have come a long way too. Most of today's models have built-in safety features, such as non-exposed coils and sensors that detect overheating or touch, as well as an automatic shut-off feature in case it gets tipped over.

Regardless of whether your space heater is fresh out of the box or several years old, it should be used safely. Most home heating fire deaths (86%) involve using one, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In fact, heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires, right behind cooking.

Along with using a unit that is in good working order, be sure to keep clothing, papers, rugs and other flammable items at least 3 feet away from a space heater. More than half of the heating-related home fires start when

items are too close to the heat source, according to the NFPA, including upholstered furniture, clothing, mattresses or bedding.

Safe Electricity and Twin Valley Electric recommend these additional space heater safety tips:

- ▶ Read all instructions and only use as recommended.
- ▶ Do not leave a space heater unattended.
- ▶ Plug it directly into an outlet; most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by a space heater cycling on and off.
- ▶ Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- ▶ Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
- ▶ Do not use a heater in disrepair or with a frayed cord or damaged plug.
- ▶ Place them on flat, level surfaces and never place on furniture, counters or carpet, which can overheat.

For additional safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Replace standard power strips with advanced power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load). **SOURCE: WWW.NREL.GOV**



Small Investment Opportunity Harvests Clean Energy

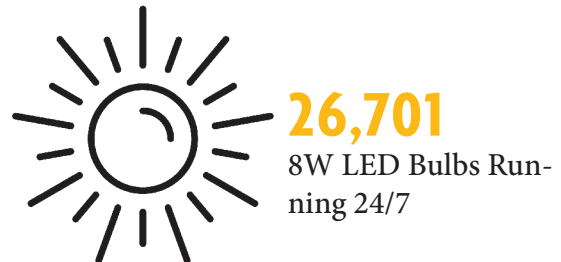
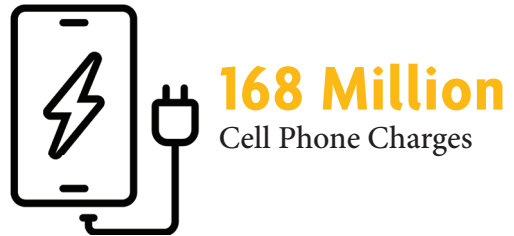
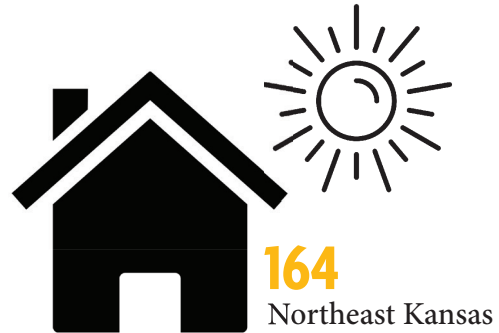


Caption

Powering Up

FreeState will be building two 10-acre, 1-megawatt (MW) solar farms, which is a significant power producer.

So what exactly does that mean? Well, 1 MW can power:



The estimated annual production of 1,869,088 kWh from FreeState's solar farm is equivalent to the amount of energy found in:

- ▶ 51,068 gallons of gasoline
- ▶ 69,225 gallons of propane.
- ▶ 63,791 therms of natural gas.
- ▶ 1,280 tons of coal.

Harvesting energy from
the sun is also cleaner!

There is no such thing as 100% safe ice.

You can't judge the strength of ice by its age, thickness, air temperature or its appearance.

Strength is based on all these factors, plus:

- ▶ the depth of water under the ice,
- ▶ size of the water body,
- ▶ water chemistry and currents,
- ▶ the distribution of the load on the ice, and
- ▶ local climatic conditions.



Brought to you by the
electric cooperatives of Kansas.

Winter Weather Can Bring Power Lines Down

Stay Where You Are

You've just been in an accident involving a downed power line. Your first instinct might be to get out and run, but that could cost you your life. In most cases, the safest place to be is inside your vehicle. Wait until electric utility workers de-energize the power. If your car is on fire or you see smoke, escape as safely as possible by jumping out without touching the vehicle and hopping away with both feet together as far as you can. Warn others not to approach the scene.

You Should Know:

- ▶ Downed power lines are extremely dangerous and even deadly.
- ▶ Electric current can travel through the ground and anything touching the ground.
- ▶ Stray voltage spreads like ripples on a pond.
- ▶ If you step from one "ripple" (voltage) to another, you could be electrocuted.
- ▶ Downed lines could be hiding under standing water, ice or debris.



How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for nearly 40% of electricity consumption in American homes.

