



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1511 14,000 Road, P.O. Box 368, Altamont, KS 67330

866-784-5500

www.twinvalleyelectric.coop

**TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC CO-OP**

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Working with Local Legislators



Angie Erickson

“All politics is local.” This observation by the late Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill, Jr., former Speaker of the House of Representatives, means that even national politics

have a local impact, and people care most about issues that directly affect them. Indirectly, this famous adage underscores the importance and value of local politics.

At Twin Valley Electric, we think it’s critical to develop and cultivate relationships with local legislators because they craft, introduce and vote on legislation that impacts the local business climate, the environment and

quality of life for our community. Twin Valley’s leadership, board members and employees live and work right here in the community we serve.

We strive to be an advocate for our community, ensuring that local legislators know, understand and act on the issues that are important to our area.

Providing Industry Guidance and Expertise

As a practical matter, we recognize that most legislators are “generalists,” yet they vote on a wide range of issues. Their expertise may not include the changing energy industry, which is why Twin Valley provides guidance and expertise from subject matter experts who’ve been in the energy industry for many years.

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Interested in Serving on the Board of Trustees?

Twin Valley will begin the search for board of trustee candidates in January. Board members represent the interests of the members in directing the business and affairs of the cooperative. They establish the strategic direction for the cooperative based on their members’ interests, needs and desires.

If you are interested in serving the cooperative on the board, please contact memberservices@twinvalleyelectric.com or call our office at 866-784-5500 for information.

Are Portable Space Heaters Efficient for My Home?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient

but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A WORD ABOUT SAFETY: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and over-



heating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.



Our Crews are Working to Serve You

Help us keep them safe

- ▶ At a job site, don't enter a crew's work zone. Crew members must give the repairs their full attention to ensure safety. Diverting their attention increases the amount of time it takes to resolve the issue.
- ▶ When driving by a utility truck (or any roadside vehicle with flashing lights), please move over and give them space. In a work zone, follow all signage, including speed limits. Drivers who travel through a work zone too fast endanger workers on the ground and up in the bucket.
- ▶ If one of our employees is in your yard or on an easement to address service issues, please secure your dogs. Also keep meters and pad mount transformers (green boxes) free from obstructions.
- ▶ Please be patient as we work on an outage or other issues. Safety is our top priority, for you and our employees.

Working with Local Legislators

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One way we do so is through the Co-ops Vote program. Partnering with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. we bring together co-op trustees and key staff, local officials and our legislators to discuss energy-industry topics and their affects on the quality of life of our communities.

Today's energy landscape is an increasingly complex topic covering not only the traditional engineering and vegetation management aspects of the industry but also encompasses technology, cybersecurity, the electrification of the transportation sector and more.

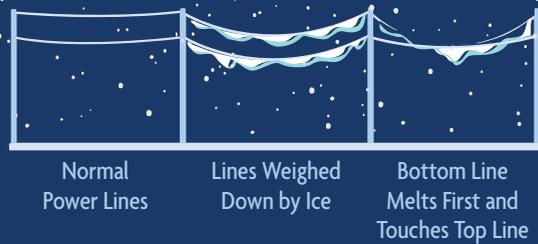
Our experts provide briefings and backgrounders to legislators, committees and staff, often at Co-ops Vote events, and we offer expert testimony for hearings and other legislative or regulatory meetings or gatherings. And because we're involved in economic development and we know local community leaders, we can provide insight on how issues and policies under discussion might impact our region.

Representing Your Best Interests

We strive to be a trusted resource on energy issues. Because of our deep roots in the community, we have a firm understanding of local issues and needs. We will continue looking after the long-term interests of our consumer-members. This means we can cultivate and foster positive, productive relationships with legislators who know and trust us because we're advocating on behalf of the community we serve.

We're proud to power your life and bring good things to the community. We hope you'll continue to advise Twin Valley on matters of importance so we can continue to advocate on your behalf and improve the quality of life for all.

ICE ON POWER LINES A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



Ice is a force to be reckoned with when moving electricity across power lines and into your home or business.

ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30 times heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH THICK POWER LINES

- ▶ 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- ▶ 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- ▶ 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- ▶ Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 inch
- ▶ 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- ▶ Pressure can be caused by a broken tree limb
- ▶ Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages

Sources: Weather.gov, Severe-wx.pbworks.com and Victory Electric Cooperative Engineering



STAY WARM AND TOASTY while Turning Down the Thermostat

Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? Adjust your thermostat 7-10 degrees lower to save up to 10% annually.

Here are some ways to help you stay warm when it's cold outside.



Wear layers and heavy socks.

Get your body moving and stay active.

Use blankets while sitting still.

Caulk windows and door frames that leak.



Replace or update old or inefficient door seals.



Make sure your home's heating system is working properly.

Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly.



Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night.



Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside.)



Keep the fireplace damper closed when not in use.

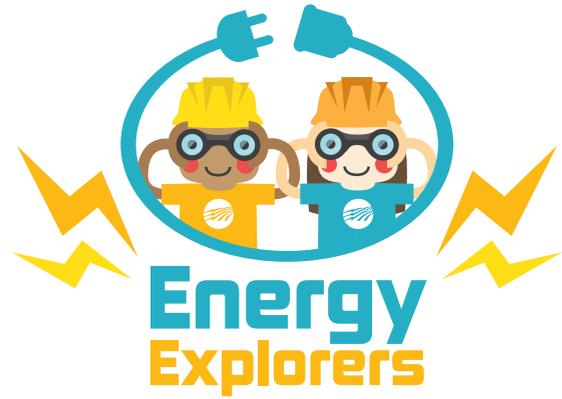
Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer.



Use a portable space heater safely and for short amounts of time. Extended use can cause your energy bill to spike since heaters use a lot of power.

WINTER ENERGY EFFICIENCY CROSSWORD

Did you know there are several ways you can fight the winter chill *and* save energy at home? Complete the crossword puzzle below to learn how to save energy during winter months.



1. Down: Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow _____ in to warm your home.

2. Across: If you have a _____ at home, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.

3. Down: Unplug phone and tablet _____ when they're not in use.

4. Across: Instead of turning up the thermostat, wear additional layers of _____ to stay warm.

5. Down: Always turn off _____ when you leave a room.

6. Across: Ask an adult to check the _____ _____ for your home's heating system. This should be replaced regularly.