



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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TWIN VALLEY
ELECTRIC CO-OP

NEWS

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FROM THE CEO

Electric Vehicle FAQs



Angie Erickson

You've likely heard or read that most automakers are transitioning many or all their new vehicles to electric-only models over the next 10 years.

Regardless of the type of car you drive today, the electrification of the transportation sector is underway. Here are some commonly asked questions about electric vehicles (EV's).

Q CAN I CHARGE MY EV USING AN EXISTING OUTLET OR DO I NEED A SPECIAL OUTLET?

A: All EVs come with a 110-volt-compatible (Level 1) charging unit which

can be plugged into any standard household outlet. However, level 1 charging is slow and may take longer than practical to fully charge a nearly depleted battery. An eight-hour overnight charge will enable traveling around 36 to 40 miles a day.

If you typically drive longer distances or are in a hurry, a Level 2 charger takes about half the time and provides about 180 miles of range over an eight-hour charging period. A Level 2 charger typically requires a 240 volt outlet.

Q WILL AN EV MEET MY DAILY DRIVING NEEDS?

A: Since EV ranges are now 200 miles or greater, an EV would meet the daily needs of most drivers.

Continued on page 12C ▶

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



KEEP KIDS SAFE AROUND **TREES** AND **POWER LINES**

When kids head outdoors to play, they may be climbing trees. Be sure to scope out the area first to ensure the treetops do not have power lines running through or near them.

Children may reach up to grab a line or accidentally come too close to it when they are playing or sitting high up in a tree.

Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, contact could happen once weight is added to the branch.

Teach kids to fly kites, drones and remote control planes or toys in open areas free from power lines.

If a toy or other object lands in a substation, please call your electric utility to retrieve the item. Never approach the fence or try to enter the area.

Take time to teach children and teens how to respect and identify potential electrical hazards.



Learn more at SafeElectricity.org

Only Certified Workers Can Trim Trees Near Power Lines

Can anyone trim trees near power lines? The answer is no. Tree trimmers certified in utility clearance are the only individuals legally allowed to trim within 20 feet of power lines.

OSHA requires this training because electricity is a serious and widespread hazard to tree workers. According to the Tree Care Industry Association, electricity is the leading cause of death in the tree care industry, causing about 15% of all industry fatalities. Tree care industry workers do not have to directly contact a power line to be electrocuted; about half of all electrocution fatalities are the result of indirect contact.

Qualified line-clearance trimmers must be specially trained in how to safely work in proximity to energized lines. They must understand how an electrical grid functions, the effects of tree growth patterns and tree damage and how to implement directional pruning, as required by the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations' safety standards.

According to OSHA, the duties of line-clearance certified tree trimmers typically include the following:

- ▶ Undergoing annual evaluations by licensed professionals to ensure continuous adherence to industry best practices.
- ▶ Requesting job briefings from employers and other crew members

before starting a job or when environmental conditions change.

- ▶ Properly wearing approved personal protective equipment, including fall protection equipment when needed.
- ▶ Complying with material handling and mechanical equipment requirements.
- ▶ Working with a second line-clearance tree trimmer within voice range.
- ▶ Determining the voltages of lines before work begins or assuming that the line is operating at the highest possible voltage if it is not possible to determine voltage.

Ensuring body parts and any ladders, platforms or aerial devices being used remain outside the minimum approach distance from any energized equipment.

Using only insulated tools and equipment to remove branches and limbs that are in contact with, or are within the minimum approach distance of, energized lines or equipment.

Determining if weather conditions are no longer safe to work in, such as the presence of high winds, ice, thunder or lightning that would make the work hazardous.

Beginning work on storm restoration efforts in the aftermath of a storm if they have been trained in the special hazards involved with this type of work.

Please contact your electric cooperative if you have any questions about line-clearance tree trimmers or tree trimming near power lines.

SAFETY TIP

Do not trim trees/branches within 20 feet of a power line or pole. Only certified line-clearance tree trimmers are authorized to trim near power lines.



Get Your Home Ready for Spring

After months spent largely indoors while harsh elements battered your home's exterior, many homeowners are throwing open the windows and embracing spring's arrival.

Every home requires ongoing maintenance to ensure it's living up to its aesthetic and functional best. This checklist can help you create a comfortable home setting for enjoying the warmer months.

CHECK GUTTERS. During the colder months, debris can accumulate in the gutters, which can be problematic when spring rains arrive. Clogged gutters prevent water from flowing efficiently away from the roof and house. When they're backed up, they can cause water damage in a short amount of time. Faulty guttering can also cause slow leaks that lead to damage you may not discover until major repair work is needed. Properly functioning gutters are clear of debris, flow freely and are securely attached to the home.

INSPECT THE ROOF. Your roof takes a real beating in all kinds of weather conditions. Making it a common practice to carefully inspect the roof with the change of seasons can help you identify potential problems while they're still in early stages, before a big storm hits and major damage occurs. Some roof issues can be addressed with simple repairs you can do yourself while others may require a professional. A roofing expert can help you determine whether any trouble areas can be patched or if a more complete restoration is in order.

REPLACE THE DRYER VENT. Upgrading your dryer vent is an opportunity to conserve energy and prevent flammable lint build-up in your dryers. One option for updating the exhaust system is a paintable version of InoVate's Prime Dryer Wall Vent. Engineered for both vent replacement and new construction, the vent includes features such as a gravity-assist damper, integrated magnets and a drip edge to provide extra protection from the elements as well as pests. A large, clean opening and lightweight angled damper promote exceptional airflow efficiency.

SERVICE AIR CONDITIONING UNITS. Your heating and cooling system works hard to keep your indoor climate comfortable when extreme temperatures make the outdoors unbearable. That's why it's important to have your systems serviced by a professional, and spring is a smart time to do so before they're hard at work throughout the warmer months. Service can correct problems and ensure everything is operating efficiently, which can lead to money savings as well.

REPAIR WINDOW SCREENS. Throughout the winter, your home's window screens can accumulate a layer of dirt and grime that isn't just unsightly; it blows indoors when you open the windows to welcome a fresh breeze. What's more, if your screens have rips and tears, pesky bugs and other critters can make their way into your home more easily. Cleaning and repairing your screens can make your home more secure and help protect your indoor air quality.

Electric Vehicle FAQs

Continued from page 12A ▶



Q DOES THE OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE AFFECT THE RANGE OF AN EV?

A: Outside temperatures, particularly colder weather, can impact the range of an EV. Unlike a gas-powered vehicle, where the heat is mostly coming from the engine, an EV must produce cabin heat and manage an optimal battery temperature with energy that comes from the battery, which can reduce battery range.

Q WHAT KIND OF INCENTIVES ARE AVAILABLE FOR EVS?

A: There are a variety of tax credits, rebates and other incentives available for EV purchases. Visit www.afdc.energy.gov/laws/electric-vehicles-for-tax-credit to learn about federal incentives available through the Clean Vehicle Credit program. Visit www.ksrevenue.gov/prtaxcredits-altfuel.html to learn about state incentives.

Q SHOULD I LET MY CO-OP KNOW IF I PURCHASE AN EV?

A: If you purchase an EV, please let us know so we can better serve you. As more TVEC members buy EVs, it's helpful to know where they're located in our area so we can ensure we have the necessary infrastructure in place to meet charging needs and provide reliable power to our local homes and businesses.

Q WHAT IS TVEC DOING TO ENSURE THEIR ELECTRIC INFRASTRUCTURE WILL ADEQUATELY SUPPORT EV'S?

A: All electric utilities are planning now to ensure they have the necessary electric infrastructure in place to meet future EV charging needs — without jeopardizing the ability to keep reliable power flowing to our local homes and businesses. As your local energy provider, TVEC is ready to advise and help our members and local businesses plan for an EV in their future.

10 Do's and Don'ts When Using Portable Generators

Storm season is upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. So if you're planning to use a portable generator during an outage, Twin Valley reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are misused, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- 1 DO:** Install backup CO alarms on every floor of your home and outside bedrooms.
- 2 DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- 3 DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows, and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.

4 DO: Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.

5 DO: Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the generator's load. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays, or other damage before use.

6 DON'T: Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.

7 DON'T: Open windows or doors while the generator is running.

8 DON'T: Rely on generators as a full-time power source. They should only be used temporarily or in emergencies to power essential equipment or appliances.

9 DON'T: Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Ensure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated.

10 DON'T: Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can back-feed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. So before you use a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 620-784-5500 or visit us online at www.twinvalleyelectric.coop.

Chain Saw Safety

Green yards are on their way again! If you're preparing for yardwork this spring, plan ahead by gathering the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for using a chain saw. Whether trimming trees or clearing brush, wear your PPE including:

- ▶ Safety goggles.
- ▶ Face shield.
- ▶ Hearing protection.
- ▶ Head protection.
- ▶ Protective chaps or leg guards.
- ▶ Heavy-duty work gloves and long-sleeved shirts.

Don't forget to read the owner's manual for safety information and complete appropriate tool maintenance before ever starting your chain saw.

