A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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TWIN VALLEY ELECTRIC CO-OP

NEWS

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The Power of Political Engagement

Co-op leaders converged on Washington, D.C., for annual Legislative Conference, April 27-30

American families expect the lights to stay on at a cost they can afford. But with the demand for electricity skyrocketing and the supply of always-available power sources at risk, the need for smart energy policies that bolster reliability and affordability are more critical than ever before.

As your electric provider, Twin Valley Electric is committed to reliably powering our service area. Beyond routine maintenance and updates that improve the reliability of the grid, we work in other ways to ensure our members' needs are addressed. One of the ways we do this is through proactively engaging elected officials to ensure our members are well represented in Washington, D.C.

In April, hundreds of electric cooperative leaders from across the country, including Kansas, traveled to Washington, D.C., for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Legislative Conference.

Angie Erickson

They met with elected officials on Capitol Hill and discussed key energy issues and priorities that impact our members back home.

They focused on telling our own unique story of how Kansas electric cooperatives are ensuring reliable and affordable power for our communities

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ELECTRICITY 101

To stay safe around electricity, start with these **SEVEN** basic tips:

1. **DON'T OVERLOAD OUTLETS OR CIRCUITS**
Plugging in too many items or drawing too much power on a circuit can cause overheating, fire and damage to devices.

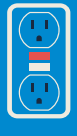
2. **DON'T USE FAULTY ELECTRICAL CORDS OR PLUGS**
Do not use cords that look frayed, worn or cracked. Do not use broken plugs. Never remove the grounding pin from a three-pronged plug.

3. **HAVE YOUR ELECTRICIAN'S NUMBER IN YOUR PHONE**
Most electrical repairs or installations are not DIY projects. Hire an expert to avoid serious injury or wiring problems.

4. **BE CAREFUL AROUND H_2O**
Never use electricity while standing in damp or wet conditions. Keep all electrical devices away from water, including cellphones that are charging.

5. **EVALUATE YOUR APPLIANCES**
Do not use appliances in disrepair. Older or broken appliances can overheat, start a fire, and cause serious injuries.

6. **TEST YOUR GFCIS**
Outlets near a water source should be equipped with GFCIs, which help prevent shock and electrocution caused by ground faults. Test monthly to make sure they are working.



7. **MAKE SURE YOUR HOME IS UP TO CODE**
Your home should be properly wired and electrically sound. Contact a reputable electrician to evaluate your home.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

The Power of Political Engagement

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through a diverse supply of energy resources to meet the growing demand for electricity.

As they met with members of Congress, they detailed the need to improve environmental permitting processes and cut costly and burdensome regulations — like the EPA Power Plant Rule — to accelerate deployment and maintenance of essential electric infrastructure. They also highlighted the importance of federal hydropower resources as well as the need to pass legislation to facilitate co-op vegetation management efforts and reduce wildfire risks.

An additional focal point of our discussions with policymakers included ensuring federal programs and resources that support electric cooperative energy projects as we invest to meet the unique needs of our communities. This includes tools such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service electric loan program and the New Empowering Rural America co-op loan and grant program, energy tax credits with an elective (direct) pay option for co-ops, and recently funded Department of Energy infrastructure programs.

While there is much work to be done, we are encouraged to see President Trump's swift actions to address many of these issues. We look forward to working with the Trump administration and members of Congress to implement a pro-energy agenda that prioritizes reliability and affordability and strengthens our nation's grid.

While you may not consider it on a daily basis, electricity is essential and underpins nearly every aspect of modern life. Understanding today's evolving energy landscape is important as it shapes how electricity is produced, delivered and consumed.

Advocating for reliable, affordable power on behalf of Twin Valley's members is a critical part of our commitment to you. We enjoyed meeting with our members of Congress in April and discussing the important energy issues that impact us here at home.

SAFETY TIP

Grass and brush fires can occur from lightning or downed power lines, but 85% of wildfires are caused by humans. Common causes include burning debris, using hot equipment on grass, improperly discarding cigarettes and leaving campfires unattended.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

11 Electrical Safety Tips for Seniors

Electrical safety is crucial for everyone, but especially important for seniors. Adults over the age of 65 are at the greatest risk of death from fire and this risk increases with age, according to the National Fire Protection Association. As we age, our reflexes slow down, eyesight decreases and senses become less acute, making it essential to take extra precautions when handling electrical appliances.

Here are 11 ways for older adults to maintain a safe living environment:

1 Ensure that electrical appliances are in good working condition. Regularly inspect cords and plugs for damage or wear and tear.

2 Don't overload sockets or extension cords. Plugging too many appliances or devices into a single outlet can cause overheating and increase fire risk.

3 Limit the use of carpets and rugs, which are tripping hazards, and avoid placing extension cords under them to prevent overheating. To help prevent trips and falls, cords should not stretch across a room. For a safer and more permanent solution, consider having an electrician install additional outlets where needed.

4 Unplug appliances when not in use and before cleaning or repairing them.

5 Keep electrical appliances away from water and wet surfaces to prevent electric shock.

6 Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which are designed to prevent electric shock by shutting off power when a ground fault is detected. Install them in areas where water and electricity are in close proximity, such as kitchens, bathrooms and outdoor spaces.

7 Ensure proper lighting in all areas of the home, especially in hallways and staircases, to prevent trips and falls. Consider installing nightlights in bedrooms and bathrooms for better visibility.

8 Set water heaters to lower settings to prevent scalding.

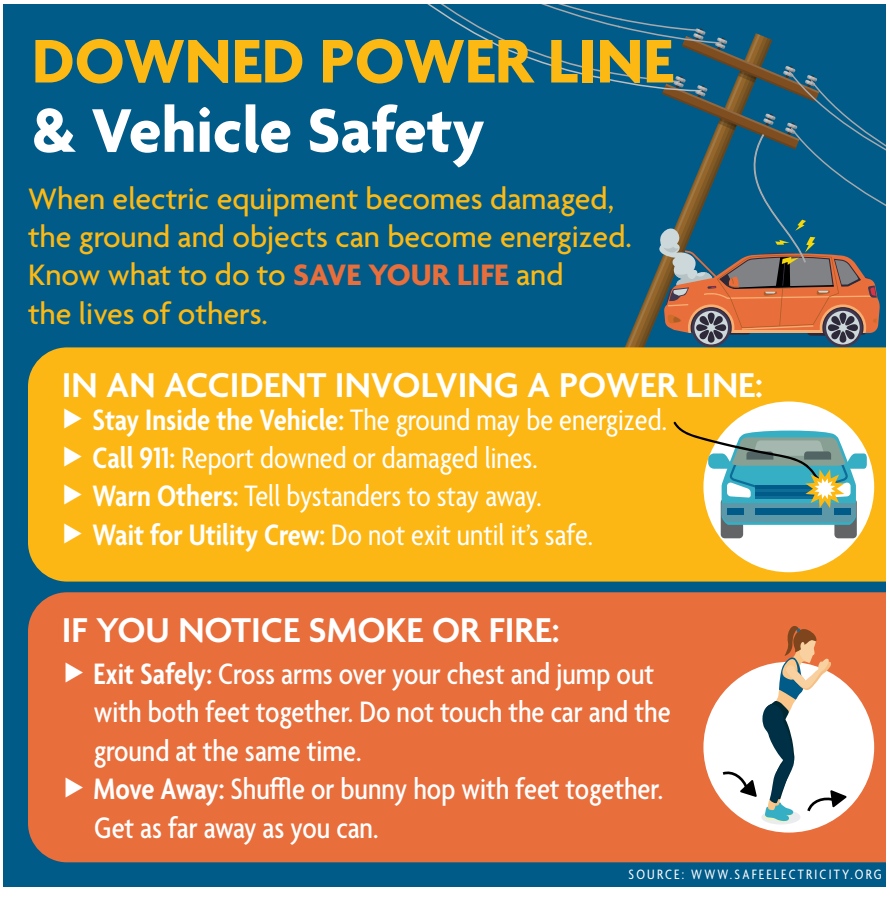
9 When cooking on the stove, never leave pots and pans unattended, and avoid wearing loose clothing when cooking. Never open the oven door if something catches fire inside the oven. Consider using toaster ovens and small appliances that come equipped with an auto shut-off feature for added safety and convenience. This feature is designed to turn off the appliance automatically after a set amount of time or when a task is completed, reducing the risk of overheating or fire.

10 Use space heaters with caution. Space heaters can offer added warmth to a senior, who may get cold due to circulation issues that are common with aging. Use space heaters with built-in safety features such as an automatic shut-off switch. Keep space heaters on a steady surface and at least 3 feet away from flammable objects such as curtains, bedding or furniture. Plug them directly into an outlet — do not use an extension cord or power strip — and unplug them when not in use.

11 Install smoke detectors on every floor and carbon monoxide detectors near all bedrooms. Test and replace the batteries twice a year — once in the spring and once in the fall.

BONUS TIP: If someone in the home uses a medical device that requires electricity, have a backup power source ready in case of a power outage and be sure to alert your local electric utility.

By following these safety measures, seniors can significantly reduce their risk of electrical accidents. Family members and caregivers can assist older adults in implementing these precautions to ensure their homes are safe and comfortable.



Don't Let Summer Heat Up Your Utility Bill

- Seal cracks around the house with weather stripping or caulk to keep warm air out.
- Change the air filter on your cooling unit.
- Wash your outdoor AC unit and have your HVAC unit inspected.
- Clear the air vents throughout your house.
- Install a programmable thermostat. Leave it on a higher temperature when you are away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.
- Update your insulation to keep cool air in your home and warm air out.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Keep Your Home's Second Floor Cool in the Summer

Are you struggling to keep the second story of your home cool on these sizzling summer days? As heat and hot air rises, so does the temperature in the upper level of your home. Keeping it cool can be a challenge, even if you have an air conditioner. The key is to limit heat gain and to keep the air circulating.

These steps can help cool down your upper floor, as well as keep your entire home cool through the end of the season. No sweat!

- **KEEP BLINDS AND DRAPES CLOSED.** Close blinds or curtains when the sun is shining to reduce solar heat. Remember that light-colored window coverings are most effective at blocking heat energy from the sun. Consider investing in thermal blocking drapes or insulated shades to keep your rooms cool and reduce demand on your air conditioning (AC) system.
- **LIMIT HEAT BEING CREATED UPSTAIRS.** Devices such as computers and hair dryers emit hot air. Use them downstairs to help reduce heat upstairs.
- **USE CEILING FANS.** Ceiling fans make you feel cool by circulating air and providing a cooling sensation on your skin. Be sure to set ceiling fans to rotate counterclockwise in the summer to push cool air downwards and turn them off when you leave to conserve energy.
- **ADJUST THE DAMPERS.** Control airflow by adjusting dampers up and down to restrict or increase airflow. If the second floor is warmer in the summer months, keep dampers on second-floor vents fully open, and only partially open the vents on the first floor to force more cool air to the second floor.
- **CHECK FOR AIR LEAKS.** EnergyStar.gov estimates that between 25% and 40% of the money spent on cooling and heating homes is lost due to air leakage problems. Identify air leaks in your home and use caulking, weatherstripping and insulation to seal the gaps.
- **TURN THE FAN FROM AUTO TO ON.** Use "on" instead of "auto" to keep your thermostat fan on and maintain air circulation throughout the home. This allows the entire house to stay cool, whether or not the air conditioner is running.
- **EVALUATE DUCTWORK.** Check your ductwork for leaks or improper sizing to ensure even air distribution in every part of your home. If you don't feel cold air coming from second floor vents, or you see old and cracked seals in your ductwork, it could be time for maintenance.
- **CHECK YOUR AIR FILTERS.** Regularly change your air filters to optimize airflow — dirty filters decrease air movement.
- **ADD PORTABLE AIR CONDITIONERS.** Use portable AC units in specific rooms that need extra cooling. They are relatively easy to install, effectively remove heat and provide a cool environment for sleeping.
- **ADJUST HVAC SYSTEMS.** Consider a zoned HVAC system, with thermostats on each floor, to control the temperature on each floor separately.
- **KEEP HEAT-GENERATING APPLIANCES OFF DURING THE HOTTEST HOURS.** Your dryer, oven and television produce heat, causing your air conditioner to work harder. Limit use of these appliances to early morning or evening when possible and consider grilling outdoors if you plan to cook.
- **DON'T FORGET THE ATTIC.** If your roof and attic area are not properly insulated, heat will seep in through the roof and heat the second floor. You can also have an attic fan or vents installed to help remove hot air from the attic.