

The Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

"Owned By Those We Serve"



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Don't Let Electrical Hazards Spook You

Halloween is one of the best times of the year for children and adults, too. Nonetheless, with decorative lights, fog machines, black lights and animatronics, this spooky holiday can be full of electrical hazards if you are not cautious. Check for electrical hazards to avoid the risk of fire or electrical shock. The following tips will help lessen the risk of injuries:

- Inspect electrical decorations. Look for cracked or frayed wires, broken or bare sockets, and loose connections.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, walls or other firm supports. Do not use nails or tacks that could puncture light strings or electrical/extension cords; instead use insulated staples.
- Always provide well-lit walkways and porch lighting for trick-or-treaters. Keep walkways clear as masks can impair vision.
- Don't overload extension cords, circuit breakers or fuses.
- Turn out all lights and decorations before you go out or go to bed. Always have a fire extinguisher available and know how to use it.

The Cooperative Way Keeps Rising Electricity Rates in Check

Many Americans do business with a cooperative everyday. They exist in almost every industry from energy to news reporting to health care. Cooperatives are a huge part of the economy here in the United States and serve some 120 million members, or four in 10 Americans.

While cooperatives may resemble most companies in some ways, they are very different in others. One of the most important differences is that cooperatives are not driven by profit. For-profit companies aim to return a profit to their shareholders. After all, these shareholders have invested their money in the business.

A cooperative's mission, on the other hand, is meeting its members' needs for goods or services. Electric cooperatives are part of this tradition of doing business, one that has a long history going back to 1752 when Ben Franklin started the first cooperative in Philadelphia.

A cooperative, however, is still going to see its operating costs rise when the price of doing business goes up. There's no better

example of this than right now when the cost of fuel to run power plants is at a record high. We work everyday to achieve operating efficiencies as we face these cost increases. We will work with you to make sure you have the information and help your need to use energy wisely. But if we find it necessary to pass along power supply increases, you can trust that the decision was based on keeping the business financially strong on behalf of all members. We are not driven by the profit motive to make money for outside investors.

At a time when Americans' electric bills are going up around the country – in some places by as much as 40 percent – the cooperative way of doing business is an important way to keep costs manageable.

We are not profit-driven and we don't have to impress Wall Street every quarter. Rather, we are service-driven and operate at cost. You can bank on the cooperative difference.



Ron Holsteen



Myers Receives Scholarship

Adam Myers recently received a scholarship award from Twin Valley Electric Cooperative.

Myers worked for Twin Valley this past summer. His job mainly consisted of ground work and assisting the journeyman linemen.

He will be continuing his education at Okmulgee, Okla., where he is pursuing a Journeyman/Lineman degree. He will continue his in-



Adam Meyers (left) accepts a scholarship from Twin Valley Manager Ron Holsteen.

ternship with Twin Valley Electric over the next couple of years. Congratulations!

Energy Usage Myths & Facts

As electric bills start to rise, Twin Valley Electric is looking for ways to help reduce our members' energy usage and save you money.

Although there are a lot of good ideas out there, there are a lot of misconceptions about what really works. Check out some of the most common myths and the facts to set you on the right path.

Myth: I can rotate equipment on 10-minute cycles to reduce demand with no reduced comfort.

Fact: Cycling or using equipment on and then off for 10 minutes can help reduce demand charges, but it will also sacrifice comfort.

Demand charges are based on the average amount of electricity used by a facility during 15-minute increments. For example, if the heating and cooling system is cycled off for 10 of the 15-minute period, the average amount of electricity used will likely be reduced.

However, when a unit is prevented from operating when the thermostat calls for it to operate, comfort will be sacrificed.

Myth: When leaving a room for a short period, it's better to leave lights on than to turn them off.

Fact: For incandescent bulbs, it's always better to turn the lights off. For fluorescent lights, there are some trade-offs. Fluorescent lights use slightly more energy on start-up, but the light needs to be off for only about a second to make up for that surge. The life of a fluorescent light is also shortened by frequent on-and-off switching.

The actual break-even point depends on the cost of the lamp and the local electricity costs and is typically five to 15 minutes. However, a good guideline for fluorescent lighting is as follows: unless you're switching the lights every few minutes, it is generally cost-effective to turn the lights off whenever you leave the room.

Head Off Blackouts, Brownouts by Reducing Energy Usage

With all of today's technologies, computers, printers, air conditioners, TVs, VCRs, and microwaves, consumers are more "plugged in" than ever before.

Twin Valley urges businesses and consumers to be part of the solution. Below are some tips you can follow to easily and comfortably lighten the power load in your home — and cut energy bills too:

- Turn off everything not in use such as lights, TVs, printers and computers and unplug cell phone and battery chargers.
- Reduce utility bills by as much as 30 percent. Look for the Energy Star label, the symbol for energy efficiency, when shopping for major appliances, lighting, windows, and home electronics. Find retailers near you at www.energystar.gov.
- Shift energy-intensive tasks, laundry and dishwashing, to off-peak energy demand hours nights and weekends, and remember to do full loads.
- Install compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). Replacing four 75-watt incandescent bulbs with 23-watt CFLs that use about two-thirds less energy and last up to 10 times longer saves \$190 over the life of the bulbs.
- Switch to cold water washing of laundry in top-loading washing machines to save energy and up to \$63 a year—detergents formulated for cold water get clothes just as clean.