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www.ninnescah.com



NINNESCAH RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Watts Ahead

NINNESCAH RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.

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IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE

If your electricity is off for more than a few minutes, please call 800-828-5538. The office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday. After hours, calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to our on-call personnel.

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL MEETING

86th
ANNUAL

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024
PRATT MUNICIPAL BUILDING

- ▶ Registration at 5 p.m.
- ▶ Dinner at 6 p.m.
- ▶ Meeting to follow.

DON'T MISS THIS YEAR'S EVENTS!

- ▶ Announcement of trustees and scholarship winners.
- ▶ Co-op reports.
- ▶ Door prizes.

BALLOT MAILING

If required, your ballot will be mailed with your annual meeting information. Please mail it back or drop it by our office.



**JOIN US
FOR A FREE
DINNER!**

How Do I Love Thee?

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS, I MEAN DOLLARS.

According to the National Retail Association, more than half of U.S. consumers celebrate Valentine's Day.



It is the third largest spending holiday in America, behind Christmas and Halloween.



The average household spent \$192.80 in 2023.



Individuals spent \$25.9 billion in 2023 on gifts for the holiday.



Close to 67% expect their partners to get them something.



About 36% expect their sweetie to spend at least \$50.



Valentine's Day flower sales account for 30% of total annual flower sales.



Many people, especially millennials, buy gifts for their pets.

VALENTINE'S DAY GIFT GIVERS SPEND \$26B

Top Gifts



CANDY



AN EVENING OUT



CARDS



JEWELRY



FLOWERS

SOURCES: NRF, WALLETHUB, VESTED

Join Fellow Co-op Members at the 2024 Annual Meeting

It's that time of year again; Ninnescah Electric is gearing up for the 2024 annual meeting, which will be held March 19, 2024, at the Pratt Municipal Building. Registration begins at 5 p.m.

The annual meeting is a special time for co-op members to gather, share experiences, and hear from co-op leadership. Ninnescah Electric employees work hard to host this fun event, and we encourage you to attend and exercise some of the many rights you have as a member of an electric cooperative. We know the food and prizes are the best parts of the meeting, but there is so much more to the event.

Did you know the annual meeting is an occasion to discuss and learn more about the issues affecting our cooperative? This is an opportunity to learn more about the topics that impact you and talk about what we as a cooperative can do to address our most pressing challenges and take



advantage of available opportunities.

Ballots will be sent with your annual meeting information unless there are only three names on the ballot, then you will not receive a ballot and the three individuals running will automatically

fill the open board positions according to our bylaws.

Your electric cooperative is not owned by far-away investors, and it is not run by an appointed board of directors. Your electric cooperative is run by a democratically elected board that is given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

So, at this year's annual meeting, not only will you have a blast (and maybe win a prize!), but you will feel good knowing that you had a voice in a very important decision that impacts one of our most vital resources, electricity.

From all of your friends at Ninnescah Electric, we hope to see you in March at the annual meeting.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. They can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet comfy on cold winter days. Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Kent &/or Cynthia Anthony – Sterling

William Mantey – Pratt

Jeremy Nelson &/or Ariel Haskin – Iuka

Chloe &/or Caden Carmack – Pratt

How Severe Winter Weather Impacts Reliability

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. We're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times — in the morning and early evenings — and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Ninescah Electric Cooperative, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region of the country may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid, and Ninescah Electric will inform you about the situation.

Ninescah Electric and our G&T take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- ▶ Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- ▶ Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.

- ▶ Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed. Experts recommend replacing your furnace filter at least every three months or every two months if you have pets or allergies.
- ▶ When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- ▶ Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
- ▶ **PRO TIP:** Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

BEST BETS FOR Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid and lower your energy bills by conserving during peak energy times.

ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS

Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.



USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER

Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before going to bed.



MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT

Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.



LOWER THE THERMOSTAT

Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).



Horses Gallop and so Can Power Lines

How can galloping lines impact power transmission and distribution?

Galloping power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line. This change in airflow can cause the power line to begin bouncing.

They can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground.

Ninnescah Electric can't prevent galloping lines since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. However, some power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line to minimize the motion. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping wind.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- ▶ When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or call 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- ▶ Any utility wire, including telephone or cable

lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the types of lines — stay away from all lines.

- ▶ Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.
 - ▶ Keep in mind that a deenergized line could become energized during power restoration efforts or improper use of generators.
 - ▶ Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional poles or other equipment to collapse.
 - ▶ If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.
 - ▶ Only exit a car or cab near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.
- For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

What is **Backfeed?**

Avoid deadly backfeed and help keep lineworkers safe.

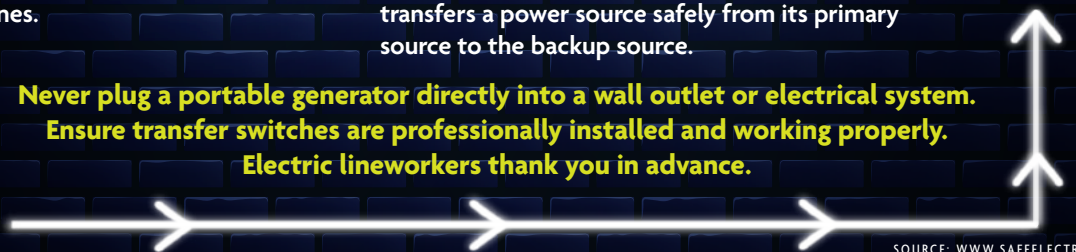
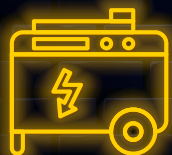
Backfeed is when power flows in reverse. An alternate power source, usually a portable or permanent generator, feeds energy back through a home's electrical system, meter and into the power lines.

Permanent generators should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician and have an automatic or manual transfer switch, depending on the generator. A transfer switch transfers a power source safely from its primary source to the backup source.

Never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet or electrical system.

Ensure transfer switches are professionally installed and working properly.

Electric lineworkers thank you in advance.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRIC.ORG