P.O. Box 967, Pratt, KS 67124
620-672-5538 • 800-828-5538
www.ninnescah.com

NINNESCAH RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Watts Ahead

NINNESCAH RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.

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.

FROM THE MANAGER

Make Your Voice Heard at the 2024 Annual Meeting

If you've never attended the annual meeting, we encourage you to participate. Why? Because input from members like you matters and helps drive the direction of the co-op.

At the annual meeting, we report on current initiatives and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. And equally important, this is an opportunity for Ninnescah Rural Electric to hear from you.

You have the power.

This is how we vote for new trustees who will represent you and our community's interests in the co-op. As a member of Ninnescah Rural Electric, you have the power to help shape our community's energy future.

Electric co-ops are democratically controlled by the members we serve, which means you have a say in who governs our co-op. By voting in the annual trustee election, you can weigh in on the leaders who will make important decisions about the future of the cooperative and our local energy needs.

Ninnescah's Board of Trustees are community-minded individuals with different skill sets. We rely on them to help us make more informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments. Ninnescah Rural Electric has nine trustees who live in the co-op's service area. We consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their unique perspective on various local issues.

We want to make voting as convenient as possible for our members, so ballots will be mailed to all members. Please return the ballot by the date indicated in the packet. We hope you'll join us at the **ANNUAL MEETING ON MARCH 19, 2024,** and also cast your vote with your mail-in ballot.

Interested in running for the Ninnescah Board of Trustees? Contact us at 620-672-5538.

If you've never been to an annual meeting or it's been a while, we hope you'll stop by and join us for food, fun and door prizes . All members who attend the event will receive a bill credit.

Ninnescah's team will be ready to answer any energy-related questions you may have. We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting on March 19, 2024.

2024 ELECTION

The positions currently held by the following are up for election:

- **MICHAEL E. CHRISTIE**
  Stafford
- **RONALD R. SCHULTZ**
  Haviland
- **BRUCE E. WARREN**
  Attica

NOMINATING COMMITTEE SELECTED

At the regularly scheduled board meeting held on Nov. 28, 2023, Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees selected a nominating committee. Those appointed were:

- **JACK DEVINEY,** Attica
- **WILBUR K. WOOD,** Haviland
- **MARVIN JANTZ,** Haviland
- **KEN W. LEWTON,** Coats
- **STEVE MOORE,** Stafford
- **MORGAN J. TRINKLE,** Preston
- **JAY A. DERLEY,** Lewis
- **JON M. MCCLURE,** Stafford
- **TERAH LAMBERT,** Sun City

To nominate a cooperative member (either party may be nominated in a joint membership), please contact any member listed above before the nominating committee meeting on **FRIDAY, FEB. 2, 2024,** at 1:30 p.m. at Ninnescah's office. During the meeting, the committee will nominate cooperative members to be voted on by mail-in ballot prior to the annual meeting.

The committee shall prepare and post a list of nominations for trustee at the cooperative office at least 25 days prior to the annual meeting.

Any 15 or more members may make other nominations in writing with their signature not less than 20 days prior to the annual meeting and the secretary shall post in the same location as the list of nominations made by the committee.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Cox Communications KS LLC – *Atlanta, GA*

Brent Newby – *Shawnee*

Aric W &/or Katy L Riegel – *St. John*

Landon Rucker – *Zenda*

Blue Sky Farms LLC – *Friona, TX*

Ninnescah Offers 4 SCHOLARSHIPS

Ninnescah Electric's Board of Trustees is awarding four $1,000 scholarships in 2024 for high school juniors or seniors whose parents or guardians receive electric service from Ninnescah. To apply, please complete the application below and return to Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative, 275 N.E. 20th St., P.O. Box 967, Pratt, KS 67124.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE IN NINNESCAH'S OFFICE BY MONDAY, JAN. 29, 2024.

Applicant Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

School _____

Year in School _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Names _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Phone _____

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true.

_____

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I hereby grant permission for _____ to enter the 2024 Ninnescah Electric Cooperative, Inc. scholarship competition.

_____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

Backyard Birds Need Food, Water During Winter

BY TAYLOR JAMISON, K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

K-State horticulture expert shares tips to attract birds to your winter garden

Outdoor gardening may fall to the wayside in the winter months, but some bird species stick around through the cold. Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham said food is the resource most lacking for birds during the winter, and they will flock to your feeder.

"Different bird species do prefer different grains, but black oil sunflower seed has universal appeal for most species," Upham said. "White proso millet is a second favorite for most species. If you want your feeder to have broad bird appeal, then consider putting out a mix with a high percentage of these seeds."

If you are looking to attract a particular species, listed below are some common birds and their preferred seed. "To really up your bird-feeding game," Upham said, "you may also consider buying multiple feeders for multiple species."

- **CARDINALS, EVENING GROSBEAK, MOST FINCHES:** sunflower seeds, all types.
- **RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE:** white proso millet.
- **DARK-EYED JUNCO:** white and red proso millet, canary seed, fine cracked corn.
- **MANY SPARROWS:** white and red proso millet.
- **BLUEJAY:** peanut kernels and sunflower seeds of all types.
- **CHICKADEES, TUFTED TITMOUSE:** peanut kernels, oil (black) and black-striped sunflower seeds.
- **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH:** oil (black) and black-striped sunflower seeds.
- **BROWN THRASHER:** hulled and black-striped sunflower seeds.
- **RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD:** white and red proso millet, German (golden) millet.
- **MOURNING DOVE:** oil (black) sunflower seeds, white and red proso, German (golden millet).

Upham also noted that winter's cold means that water will freeze, making it unavailable to birds. A heated birdbath attracts birds in droves when all other water is frozen. If the heated birdbath contains a built-in thermostat, the energy usage is far less than people expect.

For more information about backyard birding and birdfeeding, Chuck Otte, a retired K-State Research and Extension agriculture and natural resources agent in Geary County, has provided a series of online guides, available at http://gearycountyextension.com/NRMW.htm.

Upham and his colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes. The newsletter is available to view online at https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/horticulture-newsletter. Interested persons can also send their garden- and yard-related questions to Upham at wupham@ksu.edu, or contact your local extension office.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills. Install weatherstripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV

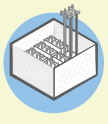
HOW *Electricity* GETS TO YOU

STEP 1 | Generation
Electricity is generated from various sources.

STEP 2 | Step-Up Transformer
Voltage is increased to push the electricity over long distances.

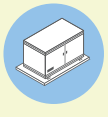
STEP 3 | Transmission Power Lines
Lines carry electricity over long distances.

STEP 4 | Transmission Substation
Voltage is lowered so electricity can travel across the local system.



STEP 5 | Distribution Substation
Voltage is lowered further for safe distribution.

STEP 6 | Distribution Power Lines
Electricity travels across these lines in your community.



STEP 7 | Final Stop
A transformer reduces voltage a final time, and electricity is sent to your home.

Beginner's Guide to the Electric Grid

It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. To make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that spans the country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

THE JOURNEY OF ELECTRICITY BEGINS AT POWER PLANTS

Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo). We work closely with KEPCo to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system.

High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you — to power everyday life. It travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine — and one of our nation's greatest achievements.