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.

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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 5 p.m., Monday–Friday. After hours, calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to our on-call personnel.

Make Your Voice Heard

There's an old political saying, "if you're not at the table, you're on the menu." This adage is the perfect answer to the question, "why vote?" It's a blunt description of what happens when you don't engage in the political process.

If you don't vote, you're not only missing the opportunity to support a candidate that shares your views and concerns, you're allowing others to chart a course that impacts your future. That's why we're encouraging all Ninnescah members to recognize National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 22, 2020. Whether you're registering yourself or others to vote or helping members of our community get organized, there are many ways to get involved.

Your Vision, Your Vote

While local elections may not be as exciting as the high-profile presidential election, they are just as critical. Local elections have a direct impact on your community and on your quality of life.

Like the national level, local elections represent who we are as a community, and more importantly, where we want to go. Whether it's an election for a mayor, sheriff, state representative, school board, or an electric co-op board member, your vision for the community is tied to your vote.

Voting keeps elected officials accountable. Elections are a direct and tangible source of feedback. For example, Ninnescah board members provide strategic guidance on the direction of the co-op and how it serves the community. Local board members embody the voice and identity of the community.

Staying in Sync with the Community

Ultimately, the role of the co-op board is governance. While day-to-day decisions are made by our employees, bigger decisions are made by the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the members we serve. Ninnescah board members provide their perspective on community priorities, thereby enabling us

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FARM SAFETY POWER LINE AWARENESS

Make sure everyone is trained in safe practices around electricity. Use these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.

- Keep equipment at least 20 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Know all power line locations on your farm and routes between fields.
- Always use a spotter when moving equipment near power lines.
- Don't completely rely on autosteer or GPS to detect and clear power lines or poles.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact your local electric cooperative.

If your equipment does hit a power line, pole or guy wire, do no leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

Make Your Voice Heard

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to make more informed decisions on long-term investments.

However, boards are not perfect, and we need you, the members of the co-op, to help keep the system in check. We depend on you and your neighbors to vote so that we can stay on course and ensure we are in sync with the community we serve.

A strong voter turnout shows investment in the community and ensures diverse views are represented. The whole community benefits when more people participate in the process because greater numbers reflect a consensus on the direction of the future and the will of the people.

By voting in national, state, and local elections, you are serving as a role model for your family, friends, and colleagues. The act of voting demonstrates your support for the community and helps officials chart a course for the future. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Research candidates, learn about issues on the ballot, and get out and vote!

To learn more about National Voter Registration Day or to get involved, visit www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org.

Control Your Controlled Burn

Don't let your controlled burn get away from you

It's called a controlled burn for a reason. If you don't plan your controlled burn in advance and keep it under check, it can quickly spread putting life in danger and utility and other equipment at risk.

If you are considering implementing a controlled burn (also known as a prescribed fire) to address vegetation or weed management, be sure to follow several precautions to stay safe:

- Don't start a controlled burn without advance planning.
- Certain groups should be notified: check with your town office, notify your local fire department, let your neighbors know your plans.
- Obtain all necessary permits.
- Check the forecast for weather conditions, such as wind direction and speed and humidity. As a general rule, relative humidity should be 40% or higher.
- If there are power poles in the planned burning area, clear all vegetation and weeds at least 4 feet around the base of the pole.
- Wet the base of the pole with water before beginning your burn.

Even with the best-laid plans, a utility pole could catch on fire during a burn; however, planning in advance can decrease the chances. Fire damage to a power pole is usually evident by blackening and scorch marks, but even slight discoloration can cause serious problems. Sometimes the poles burn from the inside out, and the damage is not immediately apparent.

Before burning, check the property for electrical equipment and power poles to avoid damage and potential outages.

Take the time to plan ahead or your controlled burn could get expensive. The person who causes damage to a utility pole is responsible for the fees associated with replacing it.

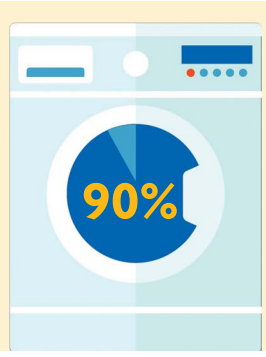
There are many other safety considerations; check with local authorities and fully research all aspects of a controlled burn before setting fire to your land.

To inquire about controlled burns near power lines and poles, contact Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative.

Saving Money in the Laundry Room

A washer and dryer inside the home is a luxury many enjoy. There's no waiting for a machine, no coin slots, and no one taking out a wet load from the washer if you aren't there when the cycle ends.

Although it's cheaper per load and much more convenient to do laundry at home, there's a somewhat hidden cost to consider, and that's the energy it takes to run your washer and dryer.



About **90% OF THE ENERGY** used by washing machines goes to heating the water.

SAVE ON ENERGY COSTS by using cold or warm water.

Source: energystar.gov

What appliances in your home use the most energy? The water heater costs the most to run. Right behind it is the washer and dryer's combined energy use. (Although not considered appliances by many, heating/cooling tops the list, followed by the water heater.)

A dryer requires more energy to run than a washer, but there are ways to reduce your washing costs, too (think hot water versus cold). To save money in your laundry room, consider these tips:

- Select the right amount of water for the wash load — that is, don't select the "extra-large" setting when doing a small load. In fact, consider waiting to do laundry until you have full loads to conserve water.
- Use cold water to save the money you would spend heating water. Some laundry detergents are designed to tackle stains in cold water.
- Cut a load's energy use in half by using warm water instead of hot, and using cold water will save even more, according to energy.gov.
- Use the moisture sensor option on your dryer if it has one.
- Use dryer balls, which help separate clothes and get more air to them, cutting drying time.
- Run the dryer at its lowest setting. Even if your dryer runs longer, you'll use less energy and be less likely to over-dry your clothes.
- Clean the lint out of your dryer between loads and scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.
- Put like items together since lighter-weight clothes take less time to dry. Drying towels and heavier cottons take longer.
- Wear clothes more than once between laundering them (although don't wait until your jeans can stand by themselves).
- Purchase an Energy Star® a dryer, which uses 20% less energy than a conventional model.
- Energy Star-certified washers use about 33% less water than regular clothes washers.
- Thoroughly clean your dryer's vents and duct system at least twice a year.

To learn more about how much you are spending to run your washer and dryer each year, refer to energy.gov's appliance energy use calculator.

Welcome *New Members*

Phillip Freeman – *Pratt*

Bryce Yost – *Greensburg*

Bobby J &/or Kelly A Hittle – *Hugoton*

Karlea E &/or Zaackery Hyman – *Haviland*

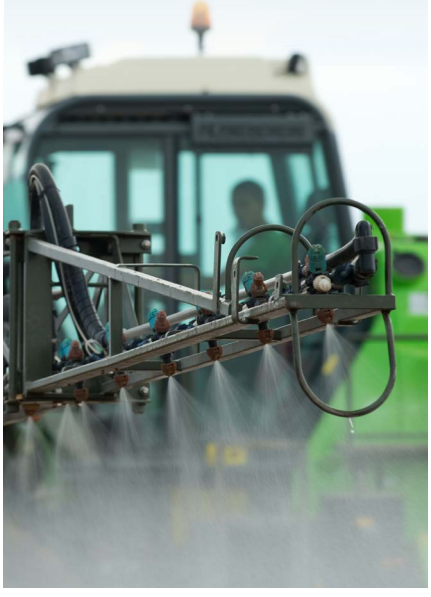
Ray W. Boone – *Pratt*

FARM SAFETY EQUIPMENT REACH

Make sure everyone is trained in safe practices around electricity. Use these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.

- Know the dimensions of any far-reaching equipment, such as chemical sprayers, tillage equipment, other extensions or augers.
- Machinery extension dimensions include the length when extended horizontally and upright for transport.
- Always use the lowest (shortest) setting for extensions when moving loads.
- These power line safety principles also apply to arms, booms, truck beds, ladders and other items or mechanisms that extend or are far-reaching.

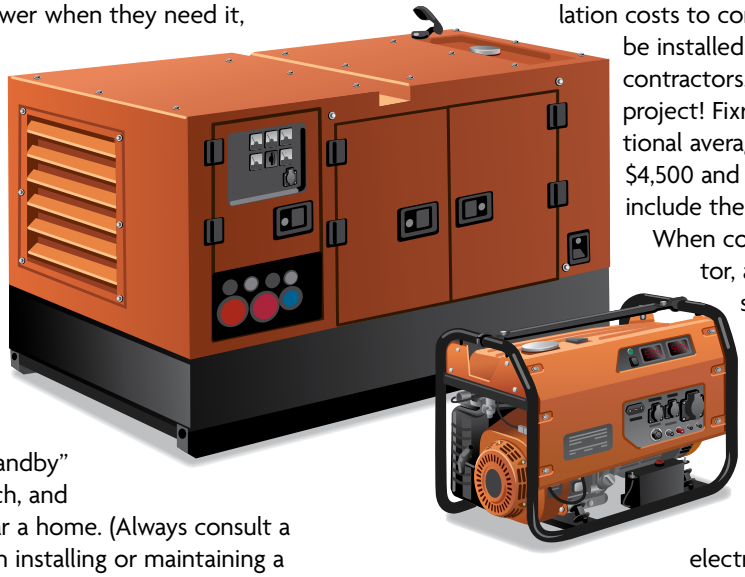
If your equipment hits a power line, pole or guy wire, do no leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



'Standby' Me: Installing a Backup Generator

Many businesses and massive buildings rely on standby power when the power goes out — for the safety of their employees and customers and to power essential items.

More and more home generators are being installed so families can have backup power when they need it, whether to power appliances and essential medical equipment or simply for convenience.



There is more than one type of permanent generator. One has a transfer switch that must be manually "thrown" before turning on the alternate source of power, which is wired into a house. This type of generator is permanent but not considered "standby" because of the manual switch, and it should not be located near a home. (Always consult a professional electrician when installing or maintaining a permanent generator.) Not throwing the switch can result in backfeeding, which sends electricity back into power lines, and can seriously injure or kill electric lineworkers or others working to restore power.

Another type of fixed generator is permanently housed in a metal box and is usually located close to the house. It is the most expensive permanent generator — a standby version that is permanently and professionally installed to power most of the appliances in your home.

When needed, a standby generator automatically transfers the power source from the electric grid to the generator. The cost of this type of permanent generator varies depending on how much backup power you want.

Besides the cost of the system, there are also installation costs to consider, since it will need to be installed by licensed and bonded contractors. This is definitely not a DIY project! Fixr.com estimates the national average installation cost between $4,500 and $9,000, which does not include the price of the unit.

When considering a standby generator, a representative from the supplier you select will assess your home's energy needs and should ask you what you would like to power in the event of an outage. Other required steps include preparing a site near your current electrical meter and pouring a concrete pad.

The contractor(s) will install a new subpanel and automatic transfer switch. Your generator supplier should also create a detailed plan of which appliances and electronics should not be supplied with power during an outage since the generator's power supply can fluctuate and possibly damage sensitive items.

To inquire about how permanent generators should be safely used and installed, contact Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative at 800-828-5538.

TAMPERING WITH OR ATTEMPTING TO FIX BROKEN METERS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IS A DANGEROUS GAME.

- **DON'T TAMPER** with your electric meter for any reason. Tampering with your meter is illegal in many states, but more importantly, can cause electrocution and fire, resulting in injury and damage, even death. If you think there may be a problem with your meter, call your local electric provider — don't try to fix it yourself.
- **ELECTRICITY THEFT** and tampering with meters can not only cause injury and potential death but also carries serious fines.
- **YOU MAY UNKNOWINGLY** feed energy back into the power line. This is dangerous for linemen working on a power line they believe is de-energized.
- **DON'T POST FLYERS OR POSTERS** on electric poles. Damage to the poles can create a dangerous situation for utility crews and cause outages affecting many more. Posters, nails, and staples make it dangerous and sometimes impossible for linemen to climb the poles. Protruding nails can puncture safety equipment resulting in electric shock to workers.