

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.

Our Pledge to Promote Culture of Inclusion

Over the years, you've heard me expound on why and how Ninnescah Electric is different — because we're a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service to the greater good of the community.

Electric cooperatives, including Ninnescah Electric, have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

Equal Access for All

When our electric co-op was founded, each member contributed an equal share to gain access to electricity

that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. Ninnescah Electric was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and consumer-members we serve. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We encourage all members to vote in Ninnescah Electric's director elections every year and we invite all members to participate in co-op meetings to weigh in on discussions that set co-op policies and priorities.

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Ninnescah's Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021.

June 2021						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	19	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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We know members of our community have different needs and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues under consideration by the co-op. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to reflect the needs of all corners of our community.

Inclusion

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In

turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today's world is radically different than it was when Ninnescah Electric was founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain just as relevant today. We recognize that today's co-op members expect more, and my pledge to you — the members we proudly serve — is to promote a cooperative culture of inclusion, diversity and equity for all.

Welcome New Members

Jonathan Novotny – Pratt

Viola & /or Charles Potter – Lewis

Paul &/or Janice C Fellingham – Livermore, CA

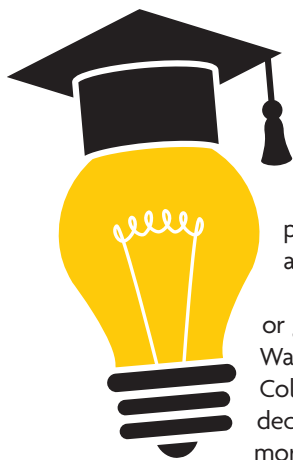
Jared W Dick – Spivey

Sessions Farm & Land LLC – Evergreen, AL

Mike A Price – Mullinville

Jason M &/or Alyson M Rice – Stafford

Kaylee L Brown &/or Bradley A Jacobsen – Pratt



Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative is Awarding 4 — \$1,000 Scholarships

Ninnescah's Board of Directors has decided to award four \$1000 scholarships in 2021 to high school sophomores or juniors whose parents or guardians receive electric service from Ninnescah.

Applications are due in Ninnescah's office by Friday, March 5, 2021. All applicants will receive a student packet to study for a written examination and interviews at Ninnescah's office in April. Winners will be announced at our annual meeting on the evening of June 8, 2021.

Typically, Ninnescah sponsors two trips every year for high school sophomores or juniors whose parents or guardians receive electric service from Ninnescah. One trip is the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and the other trip is to the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the trips have been canceled for 2021. Our board of directors decided to instead award scholarships this year. Please contact Nancy Aschenbrenner at 800-828-5538 for more information.

Application for Scholarships – Due Friday, March 5, 2021

To apply, please complete the application below and return to Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative, at 275 N.E. 20th St., or mail to: P.O. Box 967, Pratt, KS 67124

Applicant Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

School _____ Year in School _____

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) _____

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Phone Number(s) _____

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

I hereby grant permission for _____ to enter the 2021 scholarship competition sponsored by

Ninnescah Electric Cooperative, Inc. SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN _____

Mother Nature's Wrath Can Mean Service Disruptions

Although we work hard to maintain our equipment, monitor power delivery 24/7, and do all we can to keep the lights on, circumstances beyond our control can interfere with power delivery. Winter weather is one example. Winter storms can impact the distribution of electricity due to ice, heavy winds, sleet, and other extreme conditions.

Regardless of the reason, know that when the lights go out — even during extreme weather — we are doing all we can to safely and efficiently restore power. Along with causing outages, wintery conditions can cause hiccups with power delivery that include blinking lights or ebbs and flows in the amount of power that comes into your home. Although blinking lights can be a symptom of other problems such as loose wiring connections or overloaded circuits, they can also be caused by extreme weather conditions.

Wintery conditions include:

- ▶ **ICE/FREEZING RAIN:** Ice accumulation on power lines makes them heavy. A half inch of ice can add as much as 500 pounds to a power line. This added weight can impact power distribution and even bring down a power line. Ice that forms on power lines also increases the line's surface area, which means gusts of wind have more to catch. The weight of ice on tree limbs can cause them to fall on power lines as well.
- ▶ **WIND:** Wind can cause tree branches to brush power lines, which can result in blinking or flickering lights. This is why it's important for us to keep trees cleared around power lines and poles. In addition, heavy winds (or extreme wind plus ice)

can cause lines to move and sway. If they gain enough momentum, they can gallop or jump, causing disruptions in service as the extreme motion can trigger lines to break or make contact with each other.

- ▶ **MELTING ICE:** Melting ice can be extremely heavy, putting extra strain on power lines and causing the lines to touch or rest on one another. Because of this, melting ice can cause outages even though the temperature is rising. Depending on conditions, melting ice can cause as many or more problems than the ice itself.

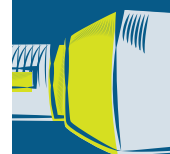
- ▶ **WIND OR ICE PLUS TREE BRANCHES:** In any weather condition (even in calm conditions), tree-related issues cause the most power outages in many service areas. Branches, limbs or even tree trunks can fall into power lines and cause problems. Add wind, freezing rain, or ice to the mix for an increased potential for problems.

- ▶ **ICY ROADS:** Vehicles sliding on ice or colliding with one another can strike a power pole or pad-mounted transformer, causing an outage or other problems.

- ▶ **BLIZZARDS:** Heavy snowfall, icy roads, or reduced visibility can make it more difficult for our crews to get out and fix problems, although we do all we can to address service issues as soon as possible.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. Items to gather include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, hand sanitizer, first-aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, backup phone chargers, extra batteries and toiletries.

POWER OUT?



12 WAYS TO UNPLUG

If you're trying to keep yourself or others entertained during a power outage, save the battery power on your phones and other electronics for emergencies or weather updates, and consider some of these "unplugged" activities instead.

FOR THE KIDS



Make a blanket fort.



Look at old photos.



Tell ghost stories.



Make shadow figures.

GET CREATIVE

- ▶ Write a story or make up jokes.
- ▶ Draw or paint a picture.
- ▶ Set up an indoor bowling alley with plastic cups as pins.
- ▶ Practice a skill such as a second language, sewing, knitting or tying knots.

HOUSE CHORES



Clean and organize.



Rearrange your furniture.



Fold and put away laundry.



Plant seeds or tidy up the yard.

Please Move Over for Roadside Crews

It's polite, and it's the law.

Every year, workers along the sides of roads are injured or killed when a car crashes into the crew's site, even though it's marked with bright cones and warning signs.

There's an easy way to reduce those incidents that harm police officers and other first responders, road construction workers and utility crews. There's a slogan to help remind drivers. There's even a law.

The slogan is "slow down or move over." It's good advice and a decent thing to do to keep people safe. It's also a requirement in all 50 states.

Legislatures first started passing Move Over laws about 25 years ago to reduce the year-after-year statistics of harm to roadside emergency workers. In the past five years, states have started to specifically add electric and other utility projects to their Move Over or Slow Down laws.

It's an addition that's welcomed by your local electric cooperative because we were part of the effort to expand the law to help protect line crews.

Protecting line crews is a top priority for Ninnescan Electric and it's a safety measure everyone can help with. There are slight differences in each state's Move Over laws, but not so much that you can't figure out the right thing to do, even if you're traveling from state to state. Here are the basic requirements:

- ▶ Within 200 feet before and after a work zone, which will be marked with bright signs, marker cones and often flashing lights, change lanes if there's more than one lane on your side of the road so there is an empty lane between your vehicle and the roadside crew.
- ▶ If it's not possible or safe to change lanes, slow down. Many states specify slowing

down to 20 mph below the posted speed limit if it's 25 mph or more. Yes, that means if the posted speed limit is 25 mph, slow down to 5 mph.

- ▶ Drivers must obey all traffic directions posted as part of the worksite.
- ▶ Keep control of your car — yes, that's a requirement in many Move Over laws. And yes, it is more of a general guide than a rule for a specific speed. It means you need to pay attention and respond to weather conditions — heavy rain or a slick road might mean you're required to slow down even more than 20 mph. And no texting, fiddling with the radio or other distractions.
- ▶ Penalties for violating those requirements range from \$100 to \$2,000, or loss of your driver's license.

The AAA Digest of Motor Laws says that Kansas state law requires drivers approaching a stationary emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights, including towing and recovery vehicles traveling in the same direction, to vacate the lane closest if safe and possible to do so, or slow to a speed safe for road, weather, and traffic conditions. The law also applies to waste collection vehicles.

Electric utility crews are special cases to watch out for. A study of utility worksite accidents found that the relatively temporary nature of power line repairs could surprise motorists. A roadside construction operation might close a lane for days or weeks, giving time for people familiar with the area to anticipate the changed traffic pattern. Utility work, however, can start and finish in a few hours, possibly raising risks with drivers who might think they know the road ahead.

Another risk to watch for is when worksites are being put up or taken down. Roadside accidents can happen as crews are setting up signs and traffic cones.

Don't drive distracted. Drive according to the conditions of the road. Be courteous to roadside work crews. Watch the signs and obey them. And certainly, follow laws like Move Over or Slow Down. It's good advice that could save a life.



PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR ROADSIDE CREWS.

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

Together, we can keep our crews safe.