

P.O. Box 967, Pratt, KS 67124  
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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 5 p.m., Monday–Friday. After hours, calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to our on-call personnel.

## 83rd Annual Meeting June 8



Join us for a FREE dinner!

At the Pratt  
Municipal Building

### Ballot Mailing

Your ballot will be mailed with your annual meeting information. Please mail them back or drop them by our office.

Ninnescah Electric  
Cooperative's

**83rd  
Annual  
Meeting**

Tuesday, June 8

Registration at 5 p.m.

Dinner at 6 p.m.

Meeting to follow

### Don't Miss this Year's Events

- Announcement of Trustees & Scholarship Winners
- Co-op Reports
- Door Prizes

Each member in attendance will receive a credit on their electric bill!

# AVOID LADDER MISSTEPS

**At the workplace and at home, many injuries are preventable. A well-thought-out work plan, setting aside enough time for the task at hand, and committing to safety can all play a role in preventing injuries.**

Injuries and deaths associated with ladder use are no exception. Thousands of ladder-related injuries and about 100 fall deaths happen each year.

In addition, always look up and look out for power lines before transporting a ladder outdoors. Carry the ladder horizontally instead of vertically.

According to the American Ladder Institute, the five most common mistakes people make when using ladders are:

- ▶ Overreaching.
- ▶ Missing the last step when coming down.
- ▶ Not keeping three points of contact on the ladder at all times.
- ▶ Using the wrong type or size ladder for the job.
- ▶ Placing the ladder on uneven ground.



## Tree Trimming Improves Service for All

One of the things I love best about our rural community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our rural area for many of the same reasons.

At Ninnescah, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a “right of way” is and how it may impact you. A right of way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights of way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. Ninnescah must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our rural community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

### Safety

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated

and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

We also want to ensure member safety by completing the tree trimming near power lines by using certified tree trimmers. Trimming tree limbs near power lines is a dangerous job and has many hazards. We do not want our members attempting to trim any limbs near power lines.

### Reliability

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability.

### Affordability

As you know, Ninnescah is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our rural community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our rural community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.

## Welcome NEW MEMBERS

Jesse Drake – Zenda

Clinton R &/or Rebecca L East – Wichita

Shawn E &/or Paige N Brack – Mullinville

Brandon McNerry – Cunningham



## Improving Your Yard? Know What's Above and Below Before You Start

When the temperature warms to signal the arrival of spring, many of us begin planning improvements to our outdoor spaces. This could include adding or maintaining a swimming pool, building a deck, adding a patio or assembling play equipment for your family to enjoy. However, it is important to plan for safety prior to adding an outdoor structure or improving your yard.

### Power Line Awareness

Being aware of power line locations near your home is vitally important for your and your family's safety. Even drop-down lines — the lines that bring power to a home — have voltages running through them and can be dangerous. Always look up and around for power lines, while also recognizing electricity can jump or transfer even without direct contact. Also, know what's below before starting any digging job. Ninnescah Rural Electric Co-op and Safe Electricity urge you to consider the following before working in your yard:

- ▶ Assume all power lines are always energized and keep at least 10 feet between a power line and you or any item you are holding.
- ▶ Perform a hazard assessment of the work area, noting all power line locations.
- ▶ Call 811 or your state's underground utility locator service to mark underground utilities as part of planning and before any digging. The service is free.
- ▶ Utility locators do not mark private lines, however. Private underground lines — typically installed by the homeowner or a contractor — include, but are not limited to:
  - ▶ Irrigation or septic system lines.
  - ▶ Lines that service outbuildings (electric, gas, water, communication).
  - ▶ Lines to other outdoor items like grills or hot tubs.
  - ▶ Lines between the meter and your home.

- ▶ Private lines need to be marked by an independent locating service.
- ▶ Once underground utilities are marked, the 811 "Call Before You Dig" service recommends that the area within 18 to 24 inches of either side of the marked lines be dug by hand with a fiberglass-handled shovel, not by machine.
- ▶ Do not install tree houses, playsets or swing sets, pools or decks and any associated structures within 25 feet of a power line. Consider the height and reach of play equipment (including the arc of a swing) and all deck and pool structures in relation to power lines.
- ▶ Educate your children about power line safety and how electricity can jump. Teach them to never touch a power line or get too close to one — either directly or with a toy or object — before sending them outside to play. This is especially important if they climb trees, fly kites or use remote-control (RC) devices, such as an RC airplane or drone.
- ▶ Use extreme caution when moving ladders and operating long-handled tools, such as pool skimmers, around trees and power lines.
- ▶ Also, use extreme caution and look up and around for power lines when you are elevated, whether it be on a ladder, a boom lift, scaffolding or your roof.
- ▶ When planting and trimming trees, keep in mind that specialized tree trimming experts certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in utility clearance are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines. Please contact us with questions about specific power line clearance recommendations concerning decks, pools and play structures in your yard.

## Understand Basic Essentials of Electrical Safety

### Basic Home Electrical Safety Essentials

- ▶ Check for loose-fitting plugs, which can be a shock or fire hazard.
- ▶ Ensure ground fault circuit interrupters are installed near water supplies and outdoors.
- ▶ Use extension cords **ONLY** on a temporary basis.
- ▶ Match lightbulb wattage to fixture requirements.
- ▶ Do not overload your home's service capacity. A qualified electrician can determine the appropriate service requirements for your home.



### Signs of Electrical Wiring Problems

- ▶ Dim or flickering lights
- ▶ Burning smell, smoke, shocks or discoloration when using an electrical outlet or switch
- ▶ Frayed wires
- ▶ Breakers that trip
- ▶ Rodent damage

### When Do I Get an Electrical Home Inspection?

If your last inspection was:

- ▶ **MORE THAN 40 YEARS AGO** — an inspection is overdue.
- ▶ **10-40 YEARS AGO** — an inspection is recommended, especially if your electrical demands have increased or you've noticed warning signs of an electrical problem.
- ▶ **LESS THAN 10 YEARS AGO** — an inspection isn't essential unless you've noticed warning signs of an electrical problem.

REMEMBER AND HONOR

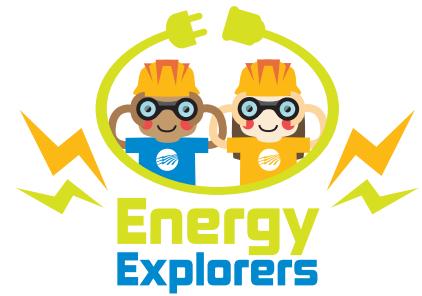
# MEMORIAL DAY

Our office will be closed Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH WORD SEARCH

May is Electrical Safety Month!

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle all the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



E	J	E	Q	L	V	T	S	O	K	F	A	B	T	T
L	S	R	Y	S	D	E	D	D	E	H	N	Y	X	J
E	D	A	M	A	G	E	D	B	I	J	L	G	E	V
C	N	V	J	L	H	W	M	E	B	U	R	I	T	O
T	S	C	N	K	R	W	C	D	M	S	Q	A	N	A
R	B	M	Z	D	G	D	S	R	R	N	R	I	Q	I
I	J	Z	O	F	Y	D	F	O	C	O	D	O	L	F
C	S	C	Y	K	R	Z	D	O	V	N	U	V	I	D
A	Z	U	T	O	E	F	Q	M	T	T	B	R	B	Q
L	K	Y	C	K	X	A	P	N	L	A	E	J	B	W
K	I	M	W	A	Q	A	L	E	Z	R	N	L	Y	E
E	Z	K	T	A	L	M	T	A	I	G	P	X	I	D
D	R	A	Z	A	H	S	Y	S	R	F	J	J	I	J
E	F	E	B	A	S	P	K	L	V	M	Z	H	L	M
E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	S	S	N	W	T

## WORD BANK

- ▶ Do not use any electrical **cords** that feel warm to the touch or are **damaged** in any way.
- ▶ Remind parents or adults in your home to test **smoke alarms** every month. Alarms should be installed in every **bedroom**, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- ▶ Do not overload electrical **outlets**. Overloading creates a potential fire **hazard**.
- ▶ Keep all **liquids** away from **electronics**, including TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
- ▶ Do not run **electrical** cords under rugs or carpet. This creates a **fire risk**.