

# The CIRCUIT

## Ark Valley Electric Cooperative



\*\*\* Proudly Serving Rural Kansas for over 83 Years

April 2022

### Surge Protection 101

A power surge is an unexpected increase in voltage, and it can occur from a variety of sources. Regardless of the cause, power surges can damage electronic devices and equipment in your home.

One of the most common causes of a power surge is lightning. When lightning strikes an electrical system, the excess current must be channeled somewhere—unfortunately in many cases, it's sent through a home. Your best bet is to unplug all unused devices and electronics during severe thunderstorms.

Another common cause of power surges is electrical overload. This happens when devices or appliances are plugged into an outlet that can't handle the required amount of voltage, or if multiple devices are plugged into one outlet through an extension cord. If you're experiencing power surges due to electrical overload, it's time to call a qualified electrician to evaluate your home's circuits and electrical needs.

Faulty wiring in a home can also cause power surges. Damaged or exposed wires can cause spikes in voltage, creating a potentially dangerous situation. If you notice signs of faulty wiring, like visible burns on outlets, buzzing sounds from outlets or frequently tripped circuit breakers, your home may be due for electrical wiring repairs and updates.

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### Drawing Winner

**PAT HAYES** is the winner of our \$25.00 readership drawing. Pat, to claim your prize, please contact Ark Valley by April 29, 2022 & give us the account number from your electric bill.

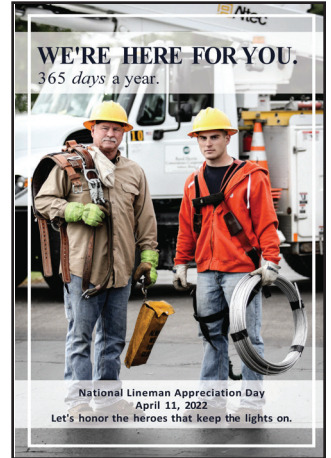
## The **POWER** Behind Your Power

It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough, but you may not know all the technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning required. It can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years) to become a journeyman lineworker. That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Ark Valley's lineworkers are committed to powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They understand the importance of the job to the community and are ready to leave the comfort of their homes and families when needed.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here at Ark Valley, there are seven lineworkers that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 2,100 miles of power lines over portions of nine counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to make repairs. Line crews now use laptops, tablets and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Without the dedication and commitment of these hardworking crews, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life. Lineworker Appreciation Day is being celebrated on April 11th, so the next time you see a lineworker, please join us in thanking them for the work they do to keep power flowing. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power.



April 11-15 is #WorkZoneAwarenessWeek. When possible, please move over for roadside utility crews. #safetyfirst

The top contributing circumstance of work zone crashes is inattention. Others include following too close, too fast for conditions, improper lane change and right of way violation.

Fines are double in all Kansas work zones, whether they are major construction projects or short-term maintenance projects. If you don't slow down, you will pay up.



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# Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Trustees for the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association held its regular meeting for the month of February on February 28, 2022.

The General Manager, Jackie Holmberg, informed the Board the Cooperative was recently subjected to a random audit by the Kansas Department of Labor. The audit revealed no errors in Ark Valley's labor reports to the Department. She also reported that three counties within the Cooperative's service territory (Stafford, Rice, and Ellsworth) qualified for FEMA assistance as a result of recent damage caused by high winds.

The Board reviewed the status of the Cooperative's self-generation efforts. Ark Valley has recently purchased ground near the Huntsville and Medora substations. Smaller scale solar farms, approximately one Mega-watt (1MW) each, will be constructed at each site. The electricity generated will be supplied only to those substations for it to be used by members serviced by those substations, as opposed to having the electricity transported to other electric utilities. Doing so will allow for Ark Valley's members to have a dedicated and affordable supply of electricity and will assist in the Cooperative's continued efforts to lower its peak usage, which will effectively decrease all the members' electric rates. The exact opening of those solar farms is unknown as there will most likely be a supply chain issue obtaining all the necessary equipment for construction in a timely fashion.

## Kansas Weatherization Assistance Available for Qualified Applicants

The Weatherization Assistance Program is a residential energy efficiency program available to income eligible families. If you qualify for LIEAP (Utility Assistance Benefits) TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) or SSI (Supplemental Security Income), you are automatically considered for weatherization services (certain restrictions apply) that SCKEDD (South Central Kansas Economic Development District) provides.

Weatherization improves heating efficiency and fuel savings by ensuring your home holds in heat and air conditioning, while keeping hot and cold air out. At no charge, the clients will receive a comprehensive home assessment which may include repair or replacement of heating systems, insulation and caulking. You are welcome to contact the Ark Valley office for an application, or call the local area SCKEDD office directly at (620) 259-6544.



## Surge Protection 101

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Surges can also occur after a power outage. Sometimes, when electricity is being restored and reconnected, it's common to experience a quick surge in current. Similar to advice for a surge caused by lightning, it's best to unplug sensitive electronics during the outage—then wait to plug them back in after power is fully restored.

Aside from unplugging devices at times when a power surge is more likely, there are two ways you can take additional precautions to protect electronics in your home.

Point-of-use surge protection devices, like power strips, can protect electronics during most surges. But remember, not all power strips include surge protection, so read the packaging label carefully before you buy, and don't overload the power strip with too many devices. You can also install specialized electrical outlets that offer additional surge protection. Talk to a trusted electrician to learn more.

Another option is a whole-home surge protector, which can help protect your home from larger, more powerful surges. In most cases, whole-home suppressors are connected to your home's service panel and include features like thermal fuses and notification capabilities that indicate when a device has been impacted by a surge. Whole-home surge protection prices vary based on the size of the home and suppressor. Whole-home suppressors should always be connected by a licensed electrician, so consider the cost of installation as well.

Occasional power surges are inevitable, but by unplugging devices when you think a surge may occur and using additional levels of protection like power strips or whole-home suppressors, you can better safeguard your sensitive electronics and devices.

**SURGE PROTECTION**  
Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.  
Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- Easy to use (just plug them in)
- Protect electronics plugged into the device
- Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event

**REMEMBER:**  
Not all power strips offer surge protection.  
Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.

The Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).