

# The CIRCUIT

## Ark Valley Electric Cooperative



\*\*\* Proudly Serving Rural Kansas for Over 84 Years

July 2023

## Vegetation Management to Better Serve You

While trees provide shade and add beauty to our area, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages. That's why we strive to keep the co-op's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas that the co-op uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. This ROW enables Ark Valley to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines.

The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members. Although it is costly and time consuming, proactive spraying, trimming, and clearing of trees to keep lines clear is essential for power reliability and minimizing the risk of outages. It entails on-the-ground, labor-intensive efforts that involve assessing vegetation and overseeing the quality and completion of contractor work.

As spraying is scheduled this year, automated calls are sent to inform members in advance of the contractor working in their area. The spraying that is done targets volunteer trees that are in the ROW in order to keep them from becoming a costly outage in the future. The spray includes an additive that controls drift. It is not a broadcast spraying approach.

Providing reliable power to you is and will always be a top priority for Ark Valley Electric, and vegetation management is just one of the ways to better serve you.

## Savings During Summer Peak Period

"What can I do to lower my bill?" This is a question we get asked by some of our members. The best advice we can provide members in the summer is for them to manage electricity use from 3 to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. This is the time frame of our "peak hours" and during this time there is a peak demand charge.

Some members already take advantage of peak hour savings by adjusting their energy usage during the peak hours, but more members could lower their bill by reducing their demand during the peak period. The demand period is typically when air conditioners have to work their hardest, but you can help to lower your demand charge by not operating appliances like your dishwasher, oven, washer and dryer during the peak time frame.

Power costs for the Cooperative are greater during peak times in June, July, August, and September when demand is high. That is why the Cooperative does what we can to reduce peak demand by operating two diesel generators and purchasing power directly from a solar farm that was installed for the purpose of shaving peak. Special emphasis is placed on July and August, as the registered peak demand for Ark Valley during those two months drives the demand charges from our wholesale power supplier for the following eight months, October through May.

By keeping peak demand to a minimum, whether it is from the Cooperative operating generators or members adjusting their energy use during peak periods, Ark Valley members reap the benefit. Since Ark Valley is a not-for-profit cooperative, all our costs and cost savings are passed back to the members either through electric rates or the allocation of capital credits each year.



### AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- Our employees will never show up to your door and demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our employees have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash re-load cards should immediately raise red flags.
- Spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity, making it appear the call is from Ark Valley Electric, when it is not.

## Summer Energy-Saving Tip

Replace disposable air conditioner filters regularly. We recommend every 30-60 days. If you can see dirt in a filter, it's likely 50% clogged. #saveenergy



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# Cultivating Safety in Agricultural Practices

For many crops in Kansas, irrigation systems are essential to deliver vital water. Ark Valley Electric Cooperative urges proper installation for new systems and regular maintenance for existing systems. Ensure everyone's safety by taking these measures:



Do not store, handle or assemble irrigation pipes under or near overhead power lines.

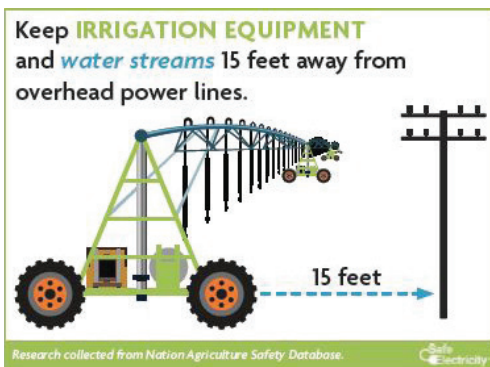
Make sure everyone in the area, including children, understands the danger of moving pipes near power lines. Efforts to free animals from pipes by lifting them upright have proven deadly.

Avoid moving pipes in windy conditions. People have been killed when the relatively light aluminum pipe they held blew into power lines.

Keep pipes at least 10 feet away from the lines above, below and to the sides at all times. If an irrigation pipe makes contact with a power line, stay far away and warn others to stay away. Call 911 and Ark Valley Electric at 620.662.6661 to report the incident and the location.

Have a qualified electrician install your system, and inspect the pump and wiring *prior* to each irrigation season.

Make sure irrigation systems with electric motors are adequately grounded with copper piping. If there's a lightning strike or a short in



the system, having the system grounded provides a safe path for a surge of electricity to ground, rather than energizing the equipment or passing through a person who may come in contact with the equipment. This also prevents energizing the ground around the equipment.

Make sure the system is at least 15 feet way from

power lines when operating, and position the water jet streams so they will not spray power lines.

If water is spraying at the power lines, make sure no one approaches the system. Power lines can transmit electricity to the irrigation system. Ensure the system is off before adjusting jets. For more information on irrigation and electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Summertime Tip

Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling. You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. Get creative in the kitchen (or the backyard) and find new ways to save energy! Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov). #SaveEnergy



## Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Trustees for the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association held its regular meeting for the month of May on May 22, 2023.

The Board reviewed plans to renovate the front entrance of the Ark Valley headquarters. The plan involves removing and replacing the existing concrete walkways and steps and widening the parking lot for ADA compliant access. Construction will be starting shortly. While work is in progress, efforts will be made to accommodate customers. A drop box will be installed next to the front parking for bill payments. Additionally, customers will be able to call the office number, which will be posted by the front parking stalls, and a staff member will assist them as needed.

A new provision was added to the Cooperative's Rules and Regulations. The provision would allow a customer that wants to disconnect a single-phase or three-phase meter to pay a line retention charge in lieu of having the distribution line retired by the Cooperative. The charge would be equal to the normal monthly service charge for that location. This change was made in response to recent customer requests.

The Trustees approved a resolution to set the 2024 Annual Meeting of Members for April 16, 2024. The meeting will be held once again at the Sunflower North building at the Kansas State Fairgrounds.

## Drawing Winner

**LONDON STUCKY** is the winner of our \$25.00 readership drawing.

Landon, to claim your prize, please contact Ark Valley by July 31, 2023 & give us the account number from your electric bill.



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).