

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
1000 South Wind Dr., P.O. Box 5  
Wamego, KS 66547  
785-456-2212

[www.bluestemelectric.com](http://www.bluestemelectric.com)



# Bluestem NEWS

## Bluestem Electric Cooperative

### Board of Trustees

**Richard Ridder**

*President*

**Donald Classen**

*Vice President*

**Bruce Meyer**

*Secretary*

**Mark Diederich**

*Treasurer*

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**Amanda Gnad**

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**Steven Ohlde**

*Trustee*

**Stephen O'Shea**

*Trustee*

**Dan Pollock**

*Trustee*

### Management Staff

**Michael M. Morton**

*General Manager*

**Jason W. Moore**

*Assistant Manager*

**John Bettencourt**

*Power Communications Technician*

**Tim Diederich**

*Operations Superintendent*

**Kevin Heptig**

*Member Services Director*

### Contact Us

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P.O. Box 5

Wamego, KS 66547

785-456-2212 or 800-558-1580

## FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

# Our Pledge to Promote Culture of Inclusion



**Mike Morton**

Over the years, you've heard me talk about why and how Bluestem Electric Cooperative is different — because we are 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 co-ops, including Bluestem 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 cooperative DNA.

### Equal Access for All

When our electric cooperative 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 cooperative matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. Bluestem Electric was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and consumer-members we serve. Membership is open to everyone in our

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## Bluestem's 2021 Annual Meeting Canceled

For the health and safety of our members and staff, Bluestem Electric Cooperative's 2021 annual meeting, which was scheduled for March 2021, has been canceled. The annual report of Bluestem Electric Cooperative will be published in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine.

# What is Demand?

Electric demand refers to the maximum amount of electrical power that is being consumed at a given time, as opposed to energy which is the amount of power used over a period of time.

For example, a typical clothes iron requires, or demands, 1,000 watts of power. If that iron is used for one hour it consumes 1,000 watt-hours or 1 kilowatt-hour of energy.

Using multiple appliances at the same time increases your demand. A typical dishwasher has a demand of 1,200 watts. If you used the dishwasher at the same time as you iron clothes, the total demand for these two appliances would be 1,000 watts plus 1,200 watts or 2,200 watts. If instead you choose to operate these at separate times, the maximum demand for these two appliances would only be 1,200 watts.

In the sample electric bill above, the maximum demand for the month was on Jan. 15 at 11 a.m. with 6.5 kW of demand.

## What Can I Do to Reduce My Demand?

During times of peak demand (3-6 p.m.), here are simple steps you can take to reduce electricity demand:

- ▶ Wait until after 6 p.m. to run large appliances such as washing machines, clothes dryers and dishwashers.
- ▶ Use the microwave or convection oven instead of the oven or range whenever possible.
- ▶ Run your electrically heated above-ground pool pump for just 12 hours per day (between the hours of 10 p.m. and 10 a.m.) instead of around the clock.
- ▶ Turn off all of the unnecessary lights around your home.

Meter Number	Pres Read	Prev Read	Mult	KWH Used	Rate Schedule/Reference/Bill Type
555555	34684	34000	1	684	5/ Single Phase/ Actual
Activity Since Last Bill		Amount	Current Bill Information		
			\$ Amount		
Previous Balance		\$229.24	CUSTOMER CHARGE		
Payments		-229.24	ENERGY		
Adjustments		0.00	DEMAND 1/15/2020 11:00 6.5KW		
			POWER COST ADJUSTMENT @ .0071600/kwh		
			TAXES		
			PROPERTY TAX ADJ @ .0047655 /revenue		
Balance Forward		0.00	CURRENT CHARGES DUE BY 02/25/2020		
			BALANCE FORWARD		
			TOTAL AMOUNT DUE		

In this sample electric bill, the maximum demand for the month was on Jan. 15 at 11 a.m. with 6.5 kW of demand.

- ▶ Set the thermostat on the water heater to a lower temperature during the summer, such as 120 degrees.
- ▶ Use LED lightbulbs. They use 75% less electricity and last 25 times longer.
- ▶ When properly set, your programmable thermostat can help reduce your heating and cooling cost.
- ▶ Use ceiling fans to help circulate the cool air and make you feel cooler when you are in a room. In the summer the blades should rotate to move the air down to help produce a cooling breeze. In the winter, air should be moved upwards toward the ceiling to disperse the warm air that tends to accumulate there and distribute it more evenly in the room. Remember to turn it off when not in the room.
- ▶ If you replace your refrigerator with an energy efficient one, properly dispose of the old one instead of continuing to use it as a secondary refrigerator. If you do use the old one, avoid keeping it in the garage or other locations that get hot and humid. The refrigerator has to work harder in these areas to keep cool.
- ▶ Use an outdoor clothesline to dry items instead of your dryer. It will save you money and make your clothes smell great.

## Bluestem Election Results

Bluestem members of the respective districts elected the following cooperative members for three-year terms on the Bluestem Electric Board of Trustees by mail ballot in December 2020.

**District 1, Position 2**  
BRUCE MEYER, Palmer

**District 2, Position 1**  
GARY BUSS, Leonardville

**District 3, Position 1**  
STEPHEN J. O'SHEA, Blaine

**District 4, Position 1**  
AMANDA GNADT, Alma

# Mother Nature's Winter 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 fluctuations 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.

## The Power of Wintery Conditions

- **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 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 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.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static. Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup. **SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**

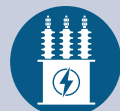
## Staying Safe During an Outage

We work hard to provide the most reliable service possible. Rest assured, if the power is out, we are on it!

The length of time it takes to restore your power depends on several factors, including:



Extent of the storm's destruction



Severity of utility equipment damage



Number and extent of outages



Accessibility to damaged equipment.

### STAY SAFE UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED.

- Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines, which could be live and deadly.
- If you come across a downed line, immediately call 911 to report it.
- Never enter a flooded room; the water could be energized.
- If you are standing in water, do not turn on/off power or flip a switch.

### PREPARE FOR A STORM BY GATHERING THESE ITEMS:

- Bottles of water
- Non-perishable food
- Portable phone charger
- Prescriptions
- Battery-powered radio and batteries
- Blankets and warm clothing
- First-aid kit
- Hand sanitizer



Thank you for your patience during outages. When the lights go off, we are working safely and efficiently to restore power. The safety of our employees, as well as those we serve, is our top priority.

## Our Pledge to Promote Culture of Inclusion Continued from page 16A ►

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 are a member of the cooperative, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to cooperative governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the cooperative.

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

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

# 2021

## Flint Hills HOME SHOW



**Saturday, April 16, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. ■ Sunday, April 17, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.**  
**Manhattan National Guard Armory, 721 Levee Dr, Manhattan, Kansas**

Building a new home? Remodeling your home? Want to lower your utility costs? Stop by Bluestem Electric Cooperative's booth at the Flint Hills Home Show, register for the door prize, and visit with us about your farm and home electrical needs.

- Heating and air-conditions systems
- Water heating
- Attic Report Card and energy audits
- Load control devices
- Outdoor lighting
- Lightning and surge protection
- Outage texting
- Energy saving techniques
- Automatic bank draft
- Level bill payment
- SmartHub
- New construction applications

