



# NorVal News

MAY 2022

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Restoring Power Safely & Efficiently

**We do our best to avoid them, but there's no way around it: power outages occasionally happen.**

For most NorVal Electric members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. When major storms hit, like the major winds we had in April that lasted for a few days, outages were unavoidable.

So, when the power goes out, how do NorVal's crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines. These deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Lastly, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. NorVal keeps a supply of extra utility poles, transformers and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage. When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see NorVals's crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire neighborhood. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition to managing vegetation, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

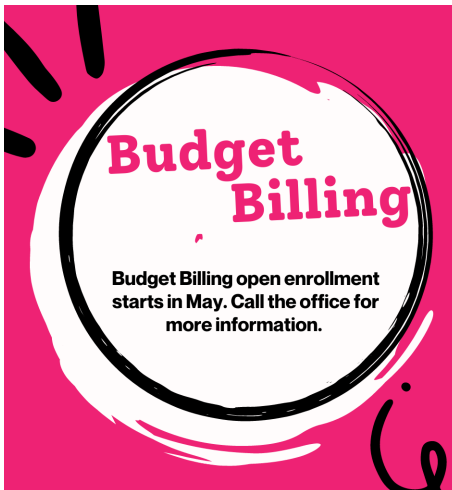
If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and we make it easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is by calling our office at (406) 228-9351, we are available 24 hours a day.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of NorVal Electric Cooperative, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, always ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.



Photo by Terry McGraw



## Nick's Notes By Nick Dulaney, Line Superintendent

At NorVal Electric, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the consumer members we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety. As Line Superintendent, it's my responsibility to keep our co-op employees safe. Additionally, we want to help keep you and all members of our community safe. With safety always at the forefront of everything we do, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips:

1. Frayed wires pose a serious safety hazard: Power cords can become damaged or frayed from age, heavy use or excessive current flow through the wiring. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them, as they could cause shock when handled.
2. Avoid overloading circuits: Circuits can only cope with the limited amount of electricity. Overload happens when you draw more electricity than a circuit can safely handle—by having too many devices running in one circuit.
3. Label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home: Contact a qualified electrician if your home is more than 40 years old and you need to install multiple large appliances that consume large amounts of electricity.
4. Use extension cords properly: Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord. If you "daisy chain" them together, it could lead to overheating, creating potential fire hazard. Don't exceed the wattage of the cord. Doing so also creates a risk of overloading the cord and creating a fire hazard. Extension cords should not be used as permanent solutions if you need additional outlets, contact a licensed electrician to help.

I encourage you to talk with your kids about playing it safe and smart around electricity. Help them be aware of overhead power lines where they are playing outdoors.

Our top priority is providing an uninterrupted energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our community safe around electricity. ⚡

## Energy Efficiency

### Tip of the Month

Even in summer months, adding insulation to your attic can keep your home more comfortable and save energy used by your cooling system. If your attic insulation is level with or below your floor joists (meaning you can easily see your joists), you should add more. If you can't see any of the floor joists because the insulation is well above them, you likely have enough insulation.

Attic insulation should be evenly distributed with no low spots. Make sure the areas along the eaves are adequately covered.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)



Know what's below.  
**Call before you dig.**