

NorVal

News

FEBRUARY 2024



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**WE WILL BE CLOSED
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19
IN OBSERVANCE OF
PRESIDENT'S DAY**

How Extreme Winter Weather Impacts Reliability

Did you know when outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases?

That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At NorVal, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region of the country may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid, and NorVal will inform you about the situation.

NorVal Electric and our G&T take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temp and the outdoor temp

- Pro tip: Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers.
 - Pro tip: Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
 - Pro tip: Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
 - Pro tip: Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
 - Pro tip: Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also each contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

Congratulations, Kyle!



NorVal Electric would like to congratulate Kyle Barras on completing his 4th year of the Merchant Apprentice Line Program. He is now a certified Journeyman Lineman.

The Merchant Program provides over 144 hours of academic training and 8,000 hours of on-the-job experience.

Pictured is Kyle Barras (left) receiving his Journeyman Card from Line Superintendent, Nick Dulaney (right).

NICK'S NOTES

NICK DULANEY Line Superintendent

Construction update as of December 31, 2023

Miles of Line Installed:

- Single Phase Overhead: 0.22
- Three Phase Overhead: 0.14
- Single Phase Underground: 18.55
- Three Phase Underground: 3.49

Miles of Retired Line:

- Single Phase Overhead: 20.22
- Two Phase Overhead: 0.22
- Single Phase Underground: 0
- Three Phase Underground: 0

Number of New Services: 39

Number of Service Upgrades: 14

Number of Retired Services: 12

Meter Upgrades: 45

We made it through the year with the limited supplies we had on hand; however, the supply chain is not looking to be any faster. If you have a project in mind, please get on our list for 2024 as we are starting to get preparations made for this year's construction season. Please talk to myself or Joe Brent to get a quote made for your upcoming projects.

2024 started off similar to 2023. We had frost the first part of January and a four day cold snap right after. Our crews were out battling the cold and frost long into the night and weekend. The crews were ready to go right away the next morning in order to get the power restored to those who were out. We want to thank all of the people who called in to give kind and encouraging messages to the crews. Those messages really mean a lot to them and they keep them going on these difficult days.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Youth Tour Representatives Announced

NorVal Electric Cooperative would like to congratulate our two Youth Tour Representatives, Kimber Dulaney and Remington Toavs!

These two students have won a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to go on a free trip to Washington D.C. to meet with our State Representatives, see old battlegrounds and many other monuments along the way.

Kimber Dulaney is the daughter of Nick and Heather Dulaney. She is currently a Sophomore at Glasgow High School. Kimber is involved in Student Council, track (Academic All-State 2023), cross-country (Academic All-State 2022), Vice President of District 2B (2022-2023), Honor Band, High School Hockey (Academic All-State 2022-2023), and an Ambassador for Special Olympics. Kimber's essay was selected to move on to the statewide essay contest for a chance to earn a free trip to Washington D.C. from the Montana Electric Cooperative's Association (MECA).

Remington Toavs is the son of Scott and Jessica Toavs. He is in his Sophomore year, homeschooled in the Wolf Point area. Remington is a life-long attendant at Gospel Fellowship Church, and has recently joined the local Trap Club. In his free time, he enjoys target shooting and hunting, working with horses and cattle on his family's farm/ranch, and spending most of the summer driving truck and tractor.

We want to celebrate these students and their accomplishments thus far in their academic careers. Congratulations, Kimber and Remington!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors.

Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.