



NorVal News

AUG 2021

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**NorVal Electric sends
our best wishes to all our
mini-members (and parents)
for a wonderful school year!**

Affordable Electricity Powers Quality of Life

Most of us use electricity, either directly or indirectly, at almost all times. Because electricity is so abundant and available with the simple flip of a switch, it's easy to take it for granted.

According to the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices. Considering everything that is powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally might wince at our monthly bill. But keep in mind, it's no longer just the "light bill."

Electricity powers quality of life

Electricity powers our quality of life. From the infrastructure of your home (appliances, water heater and HVAC system) to charging your smartphones, computers, TV and Wi-Fi router, your energy bill covers so much more than lighting.

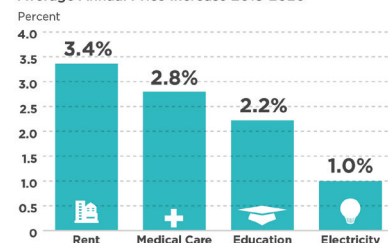
Today, there is more demand for electricity than ever before. At home, in schools and business, and in commercial sectors such as transportation, the need for electricity is increasing.

Typically when demand goes up, so too does the price, as is the case with most goods or services, like cable or even your favorite specialty coffee. However, that's not true with electricity. Let's take a look at how the value of electricity compares to other common expenses.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!


Average Annual Price Increase 2015-2020



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

Over the last five years, the cost of rent increased 3.4%; medical care increased 2.8%; and education increased 2.2%. But the cost of electricity only increased 1%. Considering all the ways we depend on electricity, it still remains a great value.

So, the next time you're enjoying your favorite podcast, TV series or movie, consider the value of electricity and how it enhances your quality of life.

We care about you, the members we serve, and understand that electricity is more than a commodity—it's a necessity. That's why NorVal Electric will continue working hard to power your life, reliably and affordably. 

August is National Wellness Month

"As important as it is to have a plan for doing work, it is perhaps more important to have a plan for rest, relaxation, self-care, and sleep." — Akiroq Brost

Understanding Power Surges and Blinks

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

What's a power surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts—this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

NorVal Electric encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you're experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

What's a power blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

Regardless of the cause, NorVal Electric crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help too! Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling 406-228-9351. 📞

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

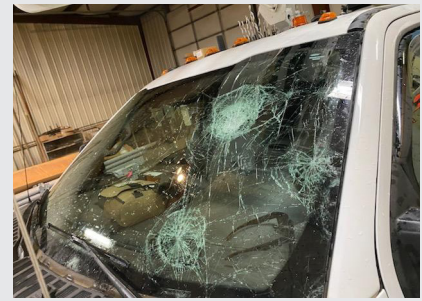
When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts.

Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



NorVal Electric's
Annual Meeting
October 27, 2021
Glasgow Civic Center



NorVal's Unit 32 hail damage from the June 2021 storm.

Nick's Notes

By Nick Dulaney
Line Superintendent

The summer has definitely been very busy for NorVal Electric. The crew worked on installing a few new services in the Fort Peck recreation area. They also installed most of the new underground line along the Fuhrman Road area and were busy transferring the existing service over. They have completed a single-phase overhead line retirement that went into Canada for one service. This was a line that sat idle for many years and was no longer needed. In late July the crew worked on installing a new underground line along Baylor Road.

The month of June brought some severe weather that affected some of our members in the Wolf Point area. This storm brought a lot of high winds and some large hail. When these storms hit our service area, our line crews go to work quickly. Any information you can give us as far as what happened during these events can help the crews sectionalize the problems faster and get the power restored. Never go near downed power lines! Please call our office to report any issues you may see. 📞



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.