

The CIRCUIT



*** Proudly Serving Rural Kansas for Over 75 Years

October 2016



Drawing Winner

JOHN M. SWIGART is the winner of our \$25.00 readership drawing.

John, to claim your prize, please contact Ark Valley by October 31, 2016 & give us the account number from your electric bill.



How Does Ark Valley Compare?

In comparison to some neighboring utilities, it may seem that Ark Valley members pay significantly more when they discuss rates in general with their neighbors. It isn't a fair comparison when rates are generalized, because rates are complex and vary in structure. There are many factors that need to be considered when comparing rates, such as: service charge, kWh charge, block rates, summer and winter rates, energy cost adjustments, demand charges and other charges.

In an effort to calculate accurate electric rate comparisons, Ark Valley searched for rate information for neighboring utilities, but several rate tariffs and additional rate information, such as stabilization, environmental, and surcharge riders, were not readily available. However, we were able to make a comparison of the 2015 residential rates for Ark Valley and Westar. The comparison was based on monthly usage of 1,500 kWh. Of course the result indicated that Ark Valley's kWh rate was higher than Westar, but it was only \$.0242 higher per kWh. An Ark Valley member for this particular comparison would've paid 19% more than Westar in 2015.

Understandably it costs more to serve rural areas than it does urban communities, because there are fewer meters for every mile of line built to distribute electricity. In fact, Ark Valley only has 2.47 meters per mile of line, compared to 24.56 meters per mile of line for Westar. That is 10 times more accounts for every mile of distribution line constructed than Ark Valley, so it may be a little surprising that Ark Valley residential members only pay \$.0242 more per kWh.

Another thing that is worth mentioning and often gets overlooked when comparing rates are capital credits. One of the benefits of receiving electric service from a not-for-profit electric cooperative is that each member receives electricity at cost. Revenue that exceeds expenses (margins or capital credits) are assigned to the members' accounts based on their individual usage for refund at a later date. If the consistent capital credit refunds to members are factored in, the rate comparison would improve drastically.

As a member-owner of Ark Valley, members can be assured their cooperative is committed to providing the best possible rates, because all margins are returned to them.

Outage Reporting Procedure

When you experience an outage, please continue to report it by calling **888-297-9212**. Although outages can sometimes be detected at the office before members are aware of a problem, the system is not monitored constantly. Please continue to call in outages, so your service can be restored as quickly as possible.

October Is Co-op Month!

October is Co-op Month and to show our appreciation for our members, Ark Valley Electric is holding a drawing for an infrared quartz heater during the month of October.

To be eligible, complete this registration form and mail it with your bill or bring it into the office. The drawing will take place at 8:00 am on November 1st, so please have your registration form in before then. Also, throughout the month of October, we will be distributing an Ark Valley Thermo-Tote insulated grocery tote to each member that comes into the office.

2016 AVEC MEMBER APPRECIATION DRAWING

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____



Ark Valley Electric Cooperative
10 East 10th Avenue, South Hutchinson, KS 67505

(620) 662-6661
www.arkvalley.com

Benefits of Electric Water Heaters

As expected, most people don't think much about water heaters. Many take for granted that these appliances make it possible to have hot showers, clean dinner dishes and load upon load of freshly laundered linens. The lonely water heater, tucked away in the basement or a utility closet, is out of sight and out of mind. Until, however, an existing water heater exhausts its lifespan and no longer works ("Brrr. That water is cold!") or when building or renovating a home.



When faced with replacing a water heater, your choice will have implications for energy efficiency, cost of use, the environment, safety and reliability for a decade or two, maybe longer. As a trusted energy adviser, Ark Valley Electric can help you make the right decision and possibly offer you a cash rebate if you install an electric water heater.

As a member of the cooperative, you might already know about many of the advantages and benefits of electric water heaters. First, electric water heaters are safe. There is no threat of carbon monoxide poisoning, combustion or explosion. Electric water heaters are environmentally friendly and capable of using electricity generated from solar, wind, hydro and other renewable sources.

Electric water heaters are also easy to install, requiring no expensive gas lines, exhaust flue or on-site fuel tanks. Compared to other fuels, the cost of electricity is stable.

In addition, electric water heaters are emerging as a building block of the future electric grid. These formerly mundane units are evolving into smart appliances and energy storage units that are helping the grid become more stable and more efficient. By heating water when demand for electricity is low and storing the thermal energy for later use, electric water heaters can save you money.

Not everyone acknowledges the superiority of electric water heaters. In the coming months, you might see television commercials or other advertisements that will try to sell you on the merits of propane water heaters. A propane marketing group is behind the campaign, and there's no telling what kind of claims they'll make.

The fact is that propane is a fossil fuel, and prices tend to fluctuate unpredictably. If you install a propane heater today, you'll live with the consequences and risks for years to come.

If you have questions about water heater options and our water heater cash rebates, call us at 620-662-6661. At Ark Valley Electric, we're here to be your trusted energy source.

Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Trustees for the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association held its regular meeting for the month of August on August 29, 2016.

Last month the Cooperative needed to dispose of obsolete equipment, so it contracted with Purple Wave to have an old bucket truck and pole trailer sold at auction. This was the first time Ark Valley had utilized Purple Wave's services, and by all accounts, it was a success. The 2005 International bucket truck sold for \$13,700 and the pole trailer sold for \$425. These amounts exceeded expectations and were greater than the sale prices the Cooperative had received for similar equipment selling at other auctions.

The Board was updated on the progress of the AMI meter installation project. At that time, 95% of all the new AMI meters had been installed. So far, the installation of the meters has gone very smoothly for the members as well as for the staff. The Cooperative is hopeful that the new meters will allow Ark Valley to run more efficiently and allow it to alter future electric rates in order to give members incentives to cut down on peak demand usage, which will help lower their utility bills.

ATTENTION High School Juniors & Seniors

Ark Valley Electric Cooperative is offering two scholarships and one all-expense-paid trip to the Cooperative Youth Tour for qualified juniors or seniors.

You Could Win:

- ▶ **First Place:** A \$1,000 College Scholarship and a **FREE** trip to Washington, D.C.
- ▶ **Second Place:** A \$500 Scholarship.

Eligibility: The student must be either a high school junior or senior and his/her parent(s) must be a member of Ark Valley. Ark Valley members may nominate students whom they know are eligible.

To Apply: 1. Submit a written copy of a 5-10 min. speech on the present and future value of the electric co-op to its members and community. **OR** 2. Submit a multimedia video or power point on a list of topics provided on the application. Finalists will be asked to present to a panel of Board Members and Co-op staff.

Essays, videos, and power points must be received at Ark Valley by 5:00 p.m. on December 1, 2016.

For More Information: Contact Misty Koonse, Youth Tour Coordinator, at (620)-662-6661 before November 23, 2016.



Brooke McNickle attends 2015 Youth Tour

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, 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.