



# COMMON *Ground*

## NEMAHA-MARSHALL ELECTRIC CO-OP ASSN., INC.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES


- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>David J. Ronnebaum</b><br>President, District 3   | <b>James J. Caffrey</b><br>Trustee, District 2    |
| <b>Melvin D. Kruse</b><br>Vice President, District 1 | <b>Matthew R. Holthaus</b><br>Trustee, District 2 |
| <b>Robert L. Voet</b><br>Secretary, District 1       | <b>David J. Koch</b><br>Trustee, District 2       |
| <b>Dean D. Becker</b><br>Treasurer, District 3       | <b>Tom L. Niehues</b><br>Trustee, District 3      |
|  | <b>Todd A. Sandmann</b><br>Trustee, District 1    |

### STAFF

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Kathleen M. O'Brien</b><br>General Manager | <b>Kimberly R. Broxterman</b><br>Office Manager   |
| <b>Trevor Wohlford</b><br>Corporate Attorney  | <b>Justin R. Burdick</b><br>Accountant            |
|   | <b>Patrick J. Holthaus</b><br>Line Superintendent |

### CONTACT US

P.O. Box O, 402 Prairie Street  
Axtell, KS 66403  
785-736-2345  
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday  
[www.nemaha-marshall.coop](http://www.nemaha-marshall.coop)

 Nemaha-Marshall Electric  
Cooperative Association, Inc.

### COINCIDENT PEAK



**OCT. 3, 2025**  
**AT HOUR**  
**ENDING 5 P.M.**

## FROM THE MANAGER

# Gratitude, Growth and the Gift of Great Service

As we close another year, and as I near the end of my career, I want to express gratitude for you — the members of Nemaha-Marshall Electric — for your continued trust and support. Our cooperative was built on the promise of people coming together to improve the quality of life in their communities, and that promise still guides everything we do today.

Each decision, whether it's about delivering reliable electricity, innovating for the future and advocating for issues that impact our local community, comes back to one simple question: How will this benefit the members we serve?

As a member of a non-profit electric cooperative, you are also an owner. If you take electric service from

Nemaha-Marshall, you are a member-owner. Each year Nemaha-Marshall allocates year-end margins in excess of operating expenses to its members based

on each member's total electric billing for that year. Those allocation notices are mailed in February each year.

Then, in November of each year, the board of trustees evaluates the financial strength of the cooperative and a dollar amount to retire is determined. Nemaha-Marshall uses a percentage method that allows for new and long-



**Kathleen O'Brien**

*Continued on page 12C ▶*





## Bright Lights, Safe Nights

### OUTDOOR HOLIDAY LIGHTING SAFETY

- Use outdoor-rated lights with UL safety labels.
- Plug into GFCI outlets for shock protection.
- Stay at least 10 feet from power lines when hanging lights.
- Don't hang lights with tacks, nails or screws — use clips instead.
- Keep cords away from water and snow.
- Inspect for damage like broken sockets or frayed cords.
- Don't overload extension cords or outlets.
- Turn off lights before bed or when away; a timer makes it easy.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

## Trustee Election Process Begins

Nemaha-Marshall Electric is governed by a board of trustees elected by you, our member-owners. Nemaha-Marshall's service territory is divided into three districts, with each district having three members on the board of trustees. Each

year, three trustee positions become open after their three-year terms expire. The following terms expire as of the Nemaha-Marshall Annual Meeting on Feb. 17.

- ▶ **DISTRICT 1: ROBERT L. VOET**
- ▶ **DISTRICT 2: MATTHEW R. HOLTHAUS**
- ▶ **DISTRICT 3: DAVID J. RONNEBAUM**

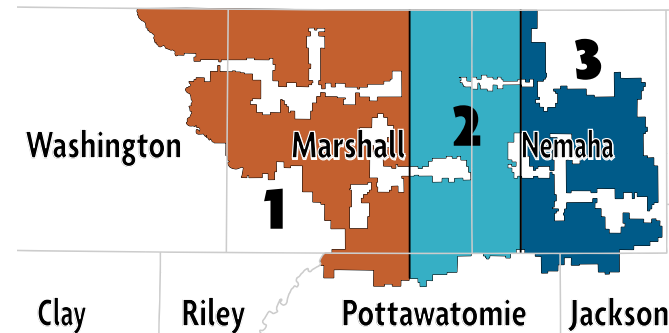
The trustees whose terms expire can either be nominated for reelection or withdraw their names from consideration.

At the same time, other Nemaha-Marshall members who may be interested in serving on the board of trustees can be nominated for election to the board of trustees.

The nominating committee will meet on Dec. 18, 2025. The committee will then present a slate of nominees to the membership at the Nemaha-Marshall Annual Meeting for election.

If you are interested in seeking a

### NEMAHA-MARSHALL DISTRICT MAP



This map shows Nemaha-Marshall's three districts in Jackson, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie and Washington counties.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

#### DISTRICT 1

- ▶ **DOUGLAS D. LINKUGEL**, 785-799-4021
- ▶ **LINDSEY A. HORNING**, 785-562-7808

#### DISTRICT 2

- ▶ **GEORGE D. BERNASEK**, 785-799-4086
- ▶ **RYAN P. SHAUGHNESSY**, 316-648-8776

#### DISTRICT 3

- ▶ **JOHN D. KOHAK**, 785-294-1255
- ▶ **DENNIS VONDEMKAMP**, 787-294-8051

position on the board of trustees, you can either contact the Nemaha-Marshall office or one of the nominating committee members listed above **NO LATER THAN DEC. 17, 2025**.

Questions regarding the nomination and election process can be directed to 785-736-2345.

## SAVE THE DATE

Join us for the 2026 Nemaha-Marshall Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting on **FEB. 17, 2026**, at the American Legion Building in Axtell. We can't wait to see you there!

## Gratitude, Growth and the Gift of Great Service Continued from page 12A

time members to receive the same percentage of their total accumulated capital credits.

Once the dollar amount is determined, capital credits are retired (paid back) to each member in the form of a check. Members who have moved away from our system are still eligible to receive capital credit checks for the years they were members. Nemaha-Marshall mails these checks in mid-December of each year as our way to thank you for your ownership in your non-profit electric cooperative.

As the year winds to a close, I want to thank each of you for your trust in having Nemaha-Marshall provide you with safe, reliable electricity. I want to thank the board for their dedication and our employees for all they accomplished this year. Our system has seen tremendous upgrades out on the line; and in the office there, has been much progress to modernize rates and keep your information safe and accurate.

And as my career winds down, I am confident Nemaha-Marshall will move forward with innovative thinking and member-focused solutions. With the dedication of the employees and the support of our members, I am confident we will continue to achieve remarkable things. May each of you enjoy a blessed Christmas filled with family, food and fun.

### OUTAGES FOR OCTOBER 2025

Occasionally, a part or parts of the delivery system fail and an outage occurs. Below are the larger outages that occurred.

Date	Location	Substation	Number of Consumers	Outage Cause
Oct. 2	15-5-13-13	Goff	168	Grain Cart Broke Pole
Oct. 2	04-3-13-04	Seneca	43	Bad Lightning Arrestor
Oct. 6	28-2-09-10	Snipe Creek	25	Bad Pole Top Insulator
Oct. 6	05-2-06-01	Hanover	11	Fuse Tap Tripped
Oct. 6	32-5-08-12	Frankfort	52	Squirrel Tripped Breaker
Oct. 13	34-1-08-04	Lone Elm	0	Grain Cart Broke Pole
Oct. 17	33-4-08-13	Marysville	0	Grain Cart Tore Down Wires

## Christmas Lights: A History

Long before electricity, people brightened the dark winter months with firelight — from the burning of the Yule log to candles placed around the home. The first recorded candlelit Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1660 and eventually spread across Europe, reaching the United States later in the century.

While the glow of the candles was festive, it also posed a serious fire hazard, so the light could only be enjoyed for a short time.

### A REVOLUTIONARY SPARK

While Thomas Edison invented the incandescent lightbulb in 1879, it was his colleague, Edward H. Johnson, who created the first electric Christmas tree lights in 1882. He hand-wired 80 colored bulbs around a revolving tree in his parlor, all powered by a generator.

Johnson's lights were ahead of their time, as electricity was not yet routinely available, and electric lights were considered expensive. President Grover Cleveland and his wife, First Lady Frances Cleveland, helped boost acceptance

in the 1890s, when the White House Christmas tree was illuminated with colored bulbs to delight their young daughters.

The tradition of outdoor light displays, which we now associate with driving around to view beautifully lit homes and elaborate light shows, began in North America. This expansion was made possible by the development of safe outdoor Christmas lightbulbs and light strings in the 1920s.

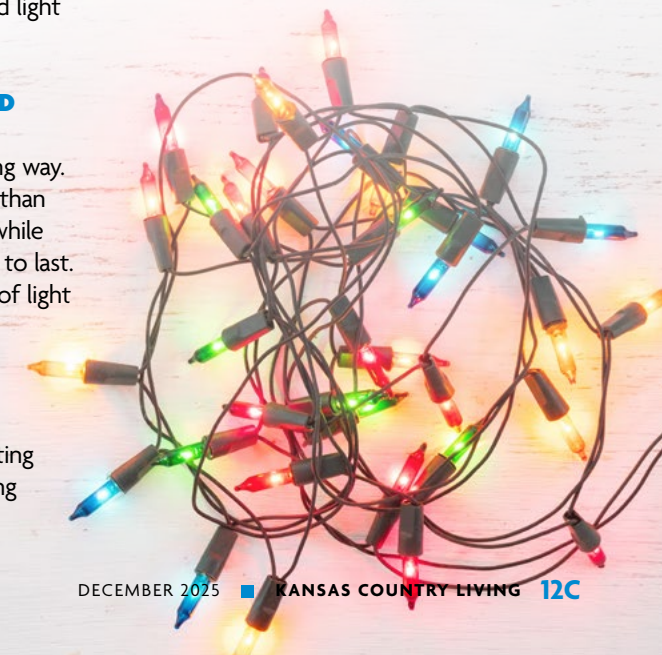
### LEDS, SMART DISPLAYS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Christmas lights have come a long way. Today's LED lights shine brighter than ever, creating beautiful displays while using less energy — they're built to last.

Every holiday season, millions of light sets brighten homes across the country. From twinkling displays set to music to TV favorites like ABC's "The Great Christmas Light Fight," modern holiday lighting turns neighborhoods into dazzling

shows filled with festive "flip the switch" moments.

Year after year, Christmas lights continue to brighten our lives and homes. The evolution reflects our desire to bring light, warmth and joy to the darkest winter days — with a mix of new technology and timeless tradition that makes holiday lights truly magical.



NOW AVAILABLE!

# 2026 Youth Program Applications



**MAKE YOUR MARK!**  
JUNE 13-19, 2026  
COORDINATED BY KEC  
KANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES, INC.  
A Tooelec Energy Cooperative

**MAKE YOUR OWN PATH**  
COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP MEMORIES  
CAMP  
JULY 10-16, 2026  
COORDINATED BY KEC  
KANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES, INC.  
CYLC

**APPLICATIONS DEADLINE FOR THE 2026 PROGRAM IS FRIDAY, DEC. 12, 2025.**

Nemaha-Marshall invests in our youth with opportunities designed to raise awareness of rural electric issues and facilitate growth in personal interactions, with the goal of creating thought leaders who can effectively communicate our rural message in all aspects of life. The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp experiences are all-expenses-paid and will truly be experiences of a lifetime for area youth.

For more information, contact your high school counselor, FFA sponsor, or call the Nemaha-Marshall office at 785-736-2345.

Any high school junior attending school in the Nemaha-Marshall territory is eligible.

Deadline for the 2026 program is Friday, Dec. 12, 2025.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

To maximize your fireplace's efficiency, always keep the damper closed when the fireplace is not in use. An open damper is like an open window, allowing warm indoor air to escape and cold air to enter. Consider installing a fireplace insert, which improves heat output by circulating warm air into the room rather than letting it escape up the chimney. Also, burn only seasoned hardwood to ensure a hotter, cleaner burn. Regularly clean and inspect your chimney to maintain safe and efficient operation. SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV

