

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

CMS ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.

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LIGHTBULB WINNERS

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- ▶ Natalie Adame
- ▶ Viola Alvidrez
- ▶ Bill Baker
- ▶ Taylor Bayne
- ▶ Kristopher Black
- ▶ Sandie Bonsall

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!

NONDISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Working Together to Lower Demand

When outdoor temperatures drop, electricity use naturally rises. Colder weather drives us indoors, where we rely more heavily on home heating systems, lighting and household appliances. Heating systems run longer and more frequently to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. Combine that with the fact that most people use electricity at the same times — typically in the mornings and early evenings — and the result is significant pressure on our electric grid.

CMS Electric works closely with Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, to plan for these seasonal weather patterns and changes and ensure you have reliable power every day of the year. This partnership involves detailed resource and infrastructure planning to make certain electricity is available whenever you need it. However, it's important to remember that our local system is part of a much larger regional and national electric grid.

During the winter months, when homes and businesses across the country are using more electricity simultaneously, overall demand can approach — or occasionally exceed — available supply. This is especially true during severe weather events, such as ice storms, sudden temperature drops, or equipment malfunctions that reduce generation capacity. In rare cases when demand threatens to outpace supply, the regional grid operator, Southwest Power Pool, may call for temporary, controlled outages — often referred to as rolling blackouts — to prevent broader system failures. If such a situation arises, CMS Electric will provide timely updates and information to members through our Facebook page and www.cmselectric.com.

To prepare for these scenarios and minimize risks, CMS Electric and our G&T partner take proactive measures to strengthen reliability year-round. These include routine system maintenance, investments in grid modernization and comprehensive disaster response

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Winter weather can cause your home heating system to work overtime. Check for air leaks and drafts around doors and windows, then seal them with weatherstripping or caulk. Close fireplace dampers when not in use, and consider installing insulating curtains to help keep warm air inside. You can also save energy by lowering your thermostat a few degrees. Even small adjustments like these can reduce heating costs and improve comfort during the coldest months.

SOURCE: NRECA



2026 CMS Scholarships AVAILABLE

APPLY
BY
FEB. 13

The CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. scholarships are six \$1,000 scholarships awarded annually to eligible applicants.

PURPOSE

To support development of effective leaders through educational opportunities.

OBJECTIVE

To provide financial assistance to make it possible for six high school graduates, based upon scholastic and extracurricular achievements, to continue their education.

SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Current high school seniors whose parents/guardians are members of CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., are eligible to apply for these scholarships. Each applicant must intend to enroll as a full-time student in an accredited university or college, including junior, community, vocational or technical college. All applicants for the CMS Electric Scholarship shall be considered on the above criteria without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender, national origin, or existence of physical handicap.

SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA

Scholarship merit is based on three categories: scholastic achievement, school extracurricular activities, and community activities

HOW TO APPLY

Students who wish to apply should contact the CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. office, or a CMS board trustee from within the district in which they reside to obtain application forms, or visit www.cmselectric.com. Completed applications must be postmarked and/or returned to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. **BY FEB. 13, 2026.**

Mail applications to:

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO BOX 790
MEADE, KS 67864**

Questions about the scholarship program should be directed to Kirk A. Thompson, CMS general manager, at 620-873-2184 or 800-794-2353.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Selection is made by the scholarship committee of CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. Applicants must be willing to be interviewed by the committee, if necessary. Decisions made by this committee shall be final.

Runners-up will be selected in the event that the recipient forfeits rights to the scholarship.

PAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarship recipients shall provide proof of college enrollment satisfactory to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. The cooperative will then pay the institution. Should the recipient withdraw from college, payment of scholarship monies shall cease and reimbursement of unused monies shall be made to CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc.

CONDITIONS

In the event the scholarship recipient receives financial assistance from other sources, which would constitute a full scholarship, the recipient shall notify CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc. and relinquish rights to the scholarship. The money shall then be awarded to the runner-up, provided that person continues to meet all criteria.

Winter Safety for Outdoor Workers

When the temperature drops, so does your body's ability to stay safe. Outdoor workers — and those who enjoy outdoor sports like hunting, fishing or hiking — face added risks and must take extra steps to guard against frostbite and hypothermia.

Follow these tips and have a plan to stay safe when working outdoors:

- ▶ **WATCH THE WEATHER.** Monitor the temperature and wind chill. Take frequent breaks indoors.
- ▶ **STAY WARM AND DRY.** Dress in loose, warm layers. Wear a moisture-wicking base, an insulating mid-layer, and a protective outer layer (flame-resistant/arc-rated if required for your work). Use warm socks and waterproof boots. Remove any wet clothing as quickly as possible.
- ▶ **PROTECT YOUR HEAD AND FACE.** Use a hat, hood or hard-hat liner. When required for your job, choose FR/AR-rated liners or balaclavas. Avoid bulky hats.
- ▶ **KEEP YOUR HANDS SAFE.** Wear insulated gloves or mittens to guard against frostbite. When working with electricity, always use voltage-rated protective gloves with approved liners — never substitute regular winter gloves for necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).
- ▶ **FUEL YOUR BODY.** Drink warm fluids, stay hydrated and eat high-energy foods.
- ▶ **KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS.** Watch for frostbite (numbness, skin color changes) and hypothermia (shivering, confusion, slurred speech).
- ▶ **BE PREPARED ON THE ROAD.** Keep a winter emergency kit in your vehicle with blankets, traction aids, and extra PPE.

RECOGNIZING FROSTBITE

Frostbite happens when skin and tissue lose circulation and freeze, commonly affecting fingers, toes, ears and nose.

SYMPTOMS OF FROSTBITE

- ▶ Cold, hard or waxy-looking skin

- ▶ Stiff muscles and joints
- ▶ Numbness or tingling in the affected area
- ▶ Skin that turns red, white or bluish gray

TREATING FROSTBITE

- ▶ If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
- ▶ Warm the affected area with warm (not hot) water.
- ▶ Avoid rubbing or massaging frostbitten skin, as this may cause further damage.
- ▶ Seek medical attention for severe frostbite or skin with blisters.

RECOGNIZING HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia occurs when body temperature drops dangerously low.

SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHERMIA

- ▶ Shivering
- ▶ Confusion or slurred speech
- ▶ Drowsiness or exhaustion
- ▶ Slow, shallow breathing

TREATING HYPOTHERMIA

- ▶ If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
- ▶ Call 911 immediately, especially if the person is unconscious.
- ▶ Provide warm fluids, avoiding caffeine and alcohol.
- ▶ Remove any wet clothing and warm the torso with layers of blankets or clothing.
- ▶ Wrap the body and head, leaving the face uncovered.
- ▶ If layers are not available, add body heat.

Cold weather brings icy roads and freezing winds that make outdoor work even more hazardous. Lineworkers and other outdoor professionals face these risks daily to keep essential services running.

When temperatures drop, look out for one another and take steps to stay safe. Prevention matters — limit your time in the elements, wear proper protective clothing, and stay alert.

WORKING TOGETHER TO LOWER DEMAND

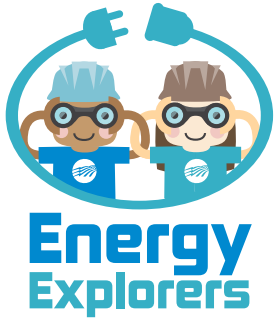
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planning. These proactive steps include tree trimming and infrastructure maintenance to make sure our portion of the grid remains resilient even under extreme conditions. Yet, maintaining a reliable electric system requires a collective effort — and every member plays an important role in lowering demand when the grid is under stress.

You can help by taking simple actions during periods of high electricity use, especially on the coldest days of winter:

- 1** Lower your thermostat slightly. Even reducing the temperature by a few degrees can help.
- 2** Delay using large appliances during peak hours. Run dishwashers, washing machines and dryers during off-peak hours — typically midday or late evening.
- 3** Adjust your water heater. Setting it to 120 degrees and spacing out showers helps conserve both energy and hot water.
- 4** Unplug unnecessary devices. Power used for lighting and electronics adds up and accounts for a significant portion of home energy use. Disconnect unused items to reduce energy waste.

Understanding how winter weather impacts electricity demand is key to maintaining system reliability. By practicing simple energy conservation habits at home, you not only save money on your monthly bill — you also help strengthen the resilience of the grid that powers our community. Together, through small actions and shared awareness, we can ensure that our homes remain warm, our lights stay on, and our local grid continues to serve us reliably throughout the season.



POP QUIZ ELECTRICITY TERMS

How well do you know terms related to electricity? Test your knowledge! **Read the definitions below. Then, look at the word bank to match the correct terms to the definitions.** You can only use the words once, so choose carefully. Check your work in the answer key.

WORD BANK

Conductor

Circuit

Insulator

Volt (Voltage)

Static Electricity

1. A complete path that electricity flows through.

2. Something that allows electricity to pass through, such as metal or wire.

3. The standard unit of measurement for electricity.

4. Something that does not allow electricity to pass through easily, such as rubber.

5. Electricity build-up caused by rubbing two surfaces together.

Answer Key:
1. Circuit
2. Conductor
3. Volt (Voltage)
4. Insulator
5. Static Electricity