A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

201 Dakota Drive, P.O. Box 286
Solomon, KS 67480
www.dsoelectric.com

DSO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

HEADLINER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Mueller
Tampa, President

James Christopher
Falun, Director

Sheila Hummel
Hope, Vice President

Randy Cooper
Gypsum, Director

Bruce Spare
Assaria, Secretary

Ken Hedberg
Marquette, Director

Kenneth Berry
Minneapolis, Director

Mike Richards
Solomon, Director

David Butler
Junction City, Director

STAFF

Timothy J. Power
CEO

Marla Marshall
CFO

Tracy Turner
Operations Manager

Derrick Rutherford
Communications Manager

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday

PAYMENT LOCATIONS

CENTRAL NATIONAL BANK IN WALMART SUPERCENTER
521 E. Chestnut St., Junction City, KS 66441

FARMERS STATE BANK
447 Harrison, Lindsborg, KS 67456

OUTAGE INFORMATION

IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE, CALL 800-376-3533. After-hours calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to standby personnel.

FIND OUT MORE

facebook.com/DSOElectricCooperative

@DSOElectricCoop

FROM THE CEO

High Costs and Increasing Rates

BY TIMOTHY J. POWER, CEO

For the past five years, DSO has managed to keep rates relatively steady for the bulk of its members through various cost-cutting measures. The most impactful cost-cutting measures have been our peak shaving strategies, namely, investing in low-cost solar projects and diesel generators. Combined, DSO's peak shaving saves its members nearly $1 million in power costs each year.

But, over the past three years, the power costs we pay our energy supplier, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo), have increased by over 10%.

In addition, the material and components DSO uses to keep the electrical grid up and running have also increased in price. For example, from 2020-2024, the cost of insulators increased 70%, transformers increased 98%, and primary wire increased 59%*. And the prices DSO pays for items like poles and trucks are still relatively high.

Because of these rising costs, DSO will increase the energy charge for all its members by 7% in March 2026 (see table below).

The meeting notice regarding the rate increase is on Page 12B in this edition of *Kansas Country Living*. The rates are planned to take effect on March 1, 2026. So, any usage prior to March 1, 2026, will be charged at the current rates.

We will continue to do our best to avoid increasing rates further and strongly recommend residential members to consider the Residential-Interruptible Rate, which can save you significant money on your summer utility bills.

*SOURCE: NRUCFC VIDEO SERIES: BEYOND INFLATION: UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE COSTS OF UTILITY EQUIPMENT (WWW.NRUCFC.COOP)

RATE	CURRENT ENERGY CHARGE	PROPOSED ENERGY CHARGE
Irrigation Service – A	$0.140/kWh	$0.150/kWh
Irrigation Service – B	$0.070/kWh	$0.075/kWh
Residential	$0.261/kWh (Red Zone) $0.087/kWh (all other)	$0.279/kWh (Red Zone $0.093/kWh (all other)
Residential – Interruptible	$0.074/kWh	$0.079/kWh
Residential – PrePay	$0.135/kWh (July & Aug.) $0.115/kWh (all other)	$0.144/kWh (July & Aug.) $0.123/kWh (all other)
General Service	$0.1190/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.0990/kWh (all other)	$0.1273/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.1059/kWh (all other)
General Service – Demand	$0.0637/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.0537/kWh (all other)	$0.0682/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.0575/kWh (all other)
General Service – Large	$0.0520/kWh	$0.0556/kWh
General Service – Time of Use	$0.0610/kWh	$0.0653/kWh
RV Campgrounds	$0.115/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.095/kWh (all other)	$0.123/kWh (June-Sept.) $0.102/kWh (all other)

TO THE MEMBERS OF DSO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Notice of Special Member Meeting

JAN. 26, 2026, AT 5 P.M.

The Board of Directors of DSO Electric Cooperative, Inc. will meet on Jan. 26, 2026, at 5 p.m. at the cooperative's headquarters, located at 201 Dakota Drive in Solomon. The sole agenda item is to discuss and vote on a proposed 7% rate adjustment that will be applied uniformly across all cooperative rates, effective March 1, 2026.

This meeting is open to any member who wishes to attend. If you plan to attend or have questions, please contact the DSO office during business hours at 800-376-3533.

EFFICIENCY TIP

Drafty room? Check your home's energy efficiency. Seal air leaks; add insulation where it matters, such as in the attic; use a programmable thermostat and have your furnace serviced regularly.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Winter Safety for Outdoor Workers

Working outdoors in the cold? Here's how to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia this winter.

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 or loose scarves.
- Keep your hands safe. Wear insulated gloves 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

- Numbness or tingling in the affected area
- Skin that turns red, white or bluish gray
- Cold, hard or waxy-looking skin
- Stiff muscles and joints

TREATING FROSTBITE

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Warm the affected area with warm (not hot) water.
3. Avoid rubbing or massaging frostbitten skin, as this may cause further damage.
4. 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

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Call 911 immediately, especially if the person is unconscious.
3. Provide warm fluids, avoiding caffeine and alcohol.
4. Remove any wet clothing and warm the torso with layers of blankets or clothing.
5. Wrap the body and head, leaving the face uncovered.
6. 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.

Save Money With a DIY Home Energy Audit

Want to cut costs and make your home more comfortable? A DIY home energy audit can uncover hidden energy drains, like leaky windows, drafty ducts and inefficient appliances. Identifying trouble spots now can set you up for savings and comfort year-round.

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP EFFICIENCY GUIDE

Before you dive in, grab a few basic tools: flashlight, dust mask, tape measure and something to take notes (your phone works great!). We'll start with simple, no-cost changes you can make right away, then move on to tasks that take a little more effort.

STEP 1: ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT

- Revisit your thermostat settings each season. Lowering the temperature at night or when no one is home is a simple way to cut costs.
- Use a smart thermostat for even greater savings. It automatically adjusts based on your schedule.
- Check with your utility provider for rebates or discounts on smart thermostat upgrades.

STEP 2: LOWER WATER HEATER TEMPERATURE

- Lower your water heater temperature to save money and reduce the risk of scalding burns. Some water heaters are factory-set to 140 degrees, but most households only need 120 degrees.

STEP 3: FIND AND FIX ENERGY VAMPIRES

- Shut off energy vampires — devices that draw electricity even when turned off. This idle load can account for 23% of your home's energy use.
- Unplug appliances when not in use and fully power down devices like computers or gaming consoles.
- Use a smart power strip to shut off multiple electronics at once — it's an easy way to stop energy waste at the source.

STEP 4: CHECK YOUR LIGHTING

- Swap out older bulbs, like incandescent or CFLs, for LEDs. They use less energy and last longer. Lighting can account for about 10% of your electric bill.
- Add dimmers or timers to cut down on wasted electricity.
- Don't overlook outdoor fixtures. Choose LEDs with features like daylight shut-off or motion sensors for even more savings.

STEP 5: REVIEW MAJOR APPLIANCES

- Look for the Energy Star label when buying new. If your refrigerator, washer, dryer or heat pump is more than 10 years old, it may be worth replacing rather than repairing. Newer appliances are more energy-efficient and can often pay for themselves in savings within a few years.
- Check your heating and cooling systems. Their lifespan can range from 10-30 years depending on the type and maintenance. If yours is older, start planning ahead for an upgrade.
- Replace air filters to keep your system running efficiently.

STEP 6: SEAL LEAKS

Air leaks can waste 10%-20% of your home's energy each year, but they're often simple to fix. Here's where to look and how to seal them.

- Check baseboards, floor edges and wall-to-ceiling joints indoors.
- Focus on where different materials meet outdoors.
- Pay special attention to windows, doors, light fixtures, plumbing and outlets.
- Use caulk for gaps around windows, doors and baseboards.
- Add weatherstripping to doors and operable windows.

STEP 7: INSPECT INSULATION

CHECK ATTIC INSULATION:

- Grab your dust mask and tape measure to check the depth of the insulation. It should be at least 12 inches deep, but you may need more depending on the type and your climate. Check www.EnergyStar.gov for recommended R-values.
- Spread insulation evenly. Loose-fill or blown-in insulation should be fluffy and evenly distributed, while rolled batt insulation should fit snugly with no gaps.

INSPECT EXTERIOR WALLS:

- Check insulation by turning off the power, removing an outlet cover or switch plate and shining a flashlight into the cavity.

Many homes built before the 1960s have little to no insulation, and houses from the 1960s-70s often need more. Call a professional to blow in insulation (from the outside or inside) if wall insulation is missing.

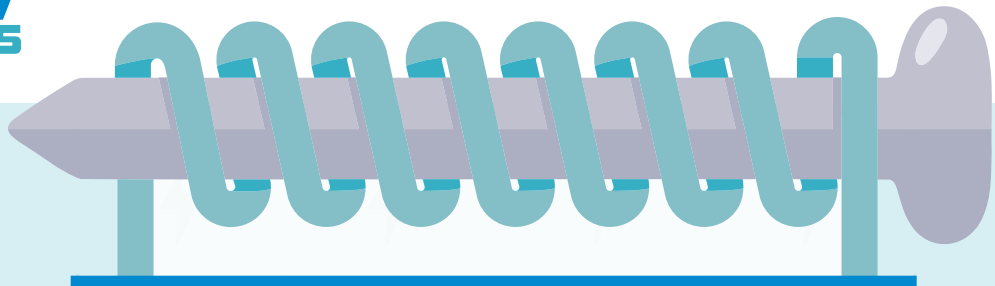
DON'T FORGET THE BASEMENT:

- Ensure rim joists (the area between the top of the foundation and the underside of the first floor) are well insulated in unfinished basements.
- Insulate the underside of the floor between the joists in crawl spaces.
- Add insulation to pipes and ductwork for an extra efficiency boost.

Energy Explorers

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