



For Our Member Systems, Employees and Friends

\$65 million project on time, on budget

Mid-Kansas celebrates Harper-to-Milan transmission project

Mid-Kansas Electric Company, Inc. (Mid-Kansas), celebrated the completion of its high-voltage transmission project with a luncheon and remarks at the Westview Lodge Conference Center in Harper, Kan., on Aug. 23, 2018. Company officials, member-consumers, and elected officials met to applaud the efforts of many in bringing the 138 kV Harper-to-Milan Transmission Project to fruition. The transmission line, which was placed in service on May 25, 2018, is located in Kingman, Harper and Sumner counties.

Local leaders, including county commissioners, Kansas legislators, and city and business leaders were invited to participate in the celebration.

Mid-Kansas provides wholesale generation and transmission services to its six member-owners, one of which is Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., the electric distribution cooperative that serves the area. Operated on the cooperative business model, the mission of Mid-Kansas is to provide reliable service to its six members at the lowest possible cost.

“This project was identified by the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the regional transmission organization to which Mid-Kansas belongs, to support growing demands on the transmission grid,” said Bruce Mueller, CEO of Wheatland. “We strongly supported the project as the existing infrastructure was not adequate to serve Wheatland’s cooperative members at the level of reliability that we aim to deliver and they should expect.”

The three-year project includes 58.9 miles of new line from Harper to Milan, 12.6 miles of new line from Harper to Rago, 5.8 miles of rebuilt line between Milan and the Viola tie, and a new connection to Westar’s Viola Substation. The \$65 million project, completed on time and on budget, also includes the new Bluff Creek Substation and modifications to the Harper and Milan substations. This infrastructure not only improves electric service in the region, but it is also robust enough to handle electric growth in Wheatland’s south central service territory.



Clarence Suppes (left), senior manager of transmission engineering for Mid-Kansas, and David Debes (center), structural design engineer and project supervisor for Mid-Kansas, visit with Sen. Larry Alley (R-Winfield) during the celebration of the Harper-to-Milan 138 kV transmission project at Westview Lodge on Aug. 23, 2018, in Harper, Kan.



Above from left: Dan Bonine, Wheatland Electric board member, Sen. Larry Alley (R-Winfield), Rep. Kyle Hoffman (R-Coldwater) and Clare Gustin, vice president of member services and external affairs for Mid-Kansas, tour the Harper Substation following the luncheon. **Above right:** Giving thanks to those who supported the project, Bruce Mueller, vice chairman of Mid-Kansas Board of Directors and general manager of Wheatland Electric, addresses luncheon guests.



“As with any project of this magnitude, a successful conclusion depends on effort and input from numerous people. Mid-Kansas is proud to have partnered with POWER Engineers and Land Services on the Harper-to-Milan Project, one of our largest transmission projects to date,” said Stuart Lowry, president and CEO of Mid-

Kansas. “I am also proud of the way our staff managed the project and built some phases of the project. Most importantly, I’d like to thank the local landowners and public, for without their support, this project, which will benefit electric users well into the future, would not have been possible.”

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SPP adopts recommendations for local planning criteria

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities. What does that mean for you? It means electric cooperatives always look for ways to keep costs as low as possible while protecting electric reliability and balancing risks.

In recent years, transmission infrastructure build-out has increased, particularly due to the influx of renewable energy in the region and the need to transport the energy to demand centers. Sunflower and Mid-Kansas understand the importance of a robust transmission grid to maintain reliability but believe the build-out must employ best practices to prevent unnecessary redundancy, partly to keep electric rates as affordable as possible.

In the past, entities wanting to build transmission facilities within the Sunflower and Mid-Kansas service territories could do so by applying for project approval from the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the regional transmission organization that oversees the bulk electric system. Often, entities' projects included the addition of expensive duplicate facilities not needed to maintain reliability. For financial advantage, entities requested that the SPP allocate the costs of projects (socialize them) throughout the region, which unfairly impacted the

electric bills of our members and those they serve. These duplicate facilities served as a way for investors to make

“The efforts of the Sunflower staff on this project underscore our commitment to the cooperative difference, one of which is finding ways to be more efficient for our members and the thousands of Kansans they serve.”

—Dr. Al Tamimi
vice president of transmission
planning and policy

a profit. Moreover, these projects tended to be built at a premium cost, not the least-cost option, because the investor of the project had a high potential for recovering the cost of the project from the electricity consumers residing in the geographical area where a project was built.

To address this issue, Sunflower staff have developed local planning criteria to determine essential requirements for reliable service, system upgrades and construction designs. This local planning criteria was filed with the SPP, implemented on April 1 and posted on the public SPP OASIS website. The planning and design criteria apply to all transmission projects built by Sunflower and Mid-Kansas members and third-party customers who use the system. New projects will be built according to a standard design, with options beyond the standard design being funded by the requestor. Also, a project requestor seeking to socialize project costs must now prove a project is needed based on the local planning criteria and/or the SPP planning criteria.

“The local planning criteria, which align with the requirements of other Kansas utilities, were greatly needed to mitigate rising transmission costs,” said Al Tamimi, vice president of transmission planning and policy for Sunflower and Mid-Kansas. “The efforts of the Sunflower staff on this project underscore our commitment to the cooperative difference, one of which is finding ways to be more efficient for our members and the thousands of Kansans they serve.”



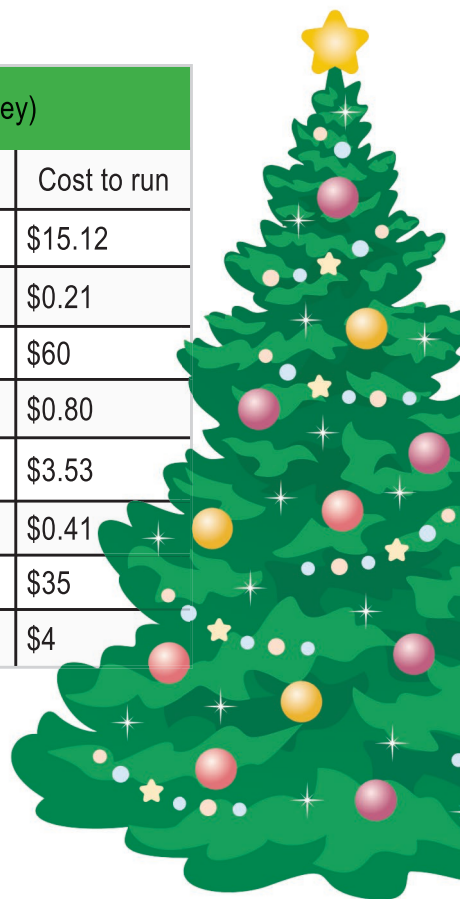
Don't blow a fuse over holiday energy costs

(Choose LED bulbs to save money)

	Type of light	Cost to run
1	string of 25 incandescent C9 bulbs	\$15.12
1	string of 25 LED C9 bulbs	\$0.21
4	strings of 25 incandescent C9 bulbs	\$60
4	strings of 25 LED C9 bulbs	\$0.80
1	string of 100 incandescent minis	\$3.53
1	string of 100 LED minis	\$0.41
10	strings of 100 incandescent minis	\$35
10	strings of LED minis	\$4

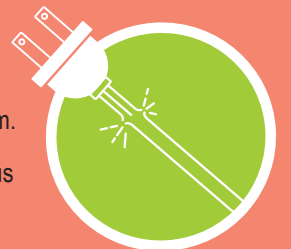
Although LED holiday lights cost more initially, they can save money over the long term.

Source: “What Your Christmas Lights Will Do to Your Electricity



#HolidaySafety

Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Damaged sockets and loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.



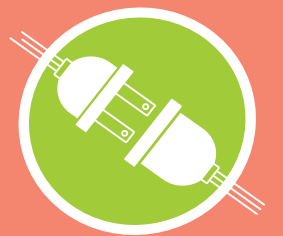
#HolidaySafety

Never mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.



#HolidaySafety

Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing bulbs or fuses.



#HolidaySafety

Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before turning in or leaving home.



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Electric utilities prime target for cyberattacks

Threats require employees to be vigilant

What is at stake if a cyberattacker achieves a take down of the U.S. electric grid? “Everything. From homes and schools to hospitals and military bases, if our electric grid goes down and stays down, if the lights go out and stay out, the consequences of our national security could be dire indeed,” said Mark Menezes, U.S. undersecretary of energy, at a recent U.S. Energy Information Administration conference.

Also warning of the ongoing threat imposed by the increase and sophistication of cyberattacks is Kevin J. McIntyre, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: “The day will not come where we get to declare that we have defeated cybercrime.”

Electric utility employees must be ever vigilant against cyberattacks because they are prime targets. Bad actors know utility employees work in an industry in which a breach of security could make the nation vulnerable. Their tactic is to trick unsuspecting utility employees with phishing emails disguised as important, legitimate company business emails.

To ensure that Sunflower staff practice anti-cyberattack protocols, the Critical Infrastructure Protection

(CIP) team educates employees how to be alert to phishing emails, detect them and report them. To test employees’ readiness to respond to cyberattacks, CIP staff periodically send “test” phishing emails to them. Continued education is provided for employees who fail the random tests. Also, as reminders to keep alert against cyberattacks, employees are required to read periodic CIP announcements, cybersecurity awareness posters are displayed across the system, and relevant articles are posted on the company’s internal website.

Chad Wasinger, CIP department manager, and his team are vigilant in fighting threats that cyberattackers pose.

“Phishing attack prevention continues to be the focus of our cybersecurity practices at Sunflower,” said Wasinger. “Our employees are the first line of defense against these attacks day in and day out. It is critical to our cybersafe culture at Sunflower to continuously provide education and training on phishing awareness and empower and condition our employees to recognize and ultimately avoid phishing attempts targeted at our company.”

Helping neighbors grow communities

The resurgence in American manufacturing has piqued the interest of many rural communities and has them wondering if they will be ready when opportunity knocks.

Central and western Kansas is no stranger to manufacturing and industrial industries. The region is the home to some of the largest beef and natural gas suppliers in the country. We know manufacturing works in this region, so what should or could we be doing to prepare for the reshoring of the manufacturing industry? This is a question the members of Sunflower have been pondering as they think through strategic approaches to rural development.

Currently, Sunflower is developing new tools to support its members’ ongoing efforts to help



communities. Readiness tools can range from planning assistance to educational resources to inventory of assets and marketing assistance.

One tool currently under development is a site certification program for manufacturing and industrial sites. Sunflower’s Certified Sites Program is designed to conduct vigorous due diligence on land sites that might be attractive to industrial and manufacturing industries. Having the “homework” done in advance provides two benefits: it increases the potential for a community to attract a business for the site, and it reduces the risk to a business

looking to expand or relocate in Sunflower’s region.

“There are times when opportunities are missed because communities either do not have the resources to respond to inquiries in the time frame given or the information is not readily available,” said Clare Gustin, vice president of external affairs and member services. “Sunflower’s Certified Site Program is a tool that communities can use to assist with preparedness.”

The Certified Sites Program is just one example of the cooperative spirit at work—neighbors helping neighbors with an unwavering commitment to the communities it serves.

Know how to protect your devices from cyberattacks

Defend Your Computer

- The best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats is to keep your equipment updated with antivirus software.



Lock down Your Log-in

- Create long, unique passwords.
- Use familiar phrases you’ll remember.
- Change passwords regularly and do not share them.



Protect Sensitive Information

- Use encryption to protect sensitive data.
- Limit the spread of any virus or malware by accessing only the files you need.
- Do not put confidential information in email or instant text messages.



Think Before You Click

- Always hover over a link first to be sure it is safe.
- Don’t open suspicious email messages from an unknown sender; delete them from your inbox.



Practice Good Cyber Hygiene on the GO

- Treat all public Wi-Fi networks as security risks and don’t make financial and other sensitive transactions over public networks.



Watch for ‘Red Flags’ to Identify Potential Phishing Attacks

- The mail is unexpected.
- There is a sense of urgency conveyed.
- There is an offer that seems too good to be true.
- There are typos and misspellings.



Mid-Kansas
ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC

neighbors serving neighbors



THE CURRENT

The Current is published three times per year for the member systems, friends and employees of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Mid-Kansas Electric Company.

If you have a story idea or would like to subscribe, please send an email to chertel@sunflower.net or write to The Current News, PO Box 1020, Hays, KS 67601; (785) 259-4822.

Member Memo

EPA proposes new rule to replace Clean Power Plan

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed the Affordable Clean Energy rule (ACE) in August, replacing the Clean Power Plan (CPP). CPP was suspended by a 5-4 Supreme Court decision after a request by 27 states and various companies and business groups to block the plan.

The ACE rule, if adopted, would provide electric cooperatives with a more achievable plan to continue meeting their consumer-members' local energy needs, according to Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

The provisions of ACE include a definition of the "Best System of Emission Reduction" (BSER) and give states and utilities three years to devise implementation plans that apply the criteria to individual generation units. Also, BSER guidelines would be focused on "inside the fence line" improvements, such as heat-rate enhancements to improve the efficiency of coal-based plants. In addition, the rule proposes modifications to the EPA's New Source Review program to make it easier for electric utilities to make efficiency improvements without having to undergo a prolonged and costly permitting process.

"If the ACE Rule is ultimately adopted, it would look and feel much more like previous environmental regulations that we have complied with here at Sunflower," said Mike Thompson, senior manager of generation engineering and environment.

EPA accepted comments on the ACE rule until Oct. 31. The EPA plans to hold a public hearing on the matter and release a final rule early next year.

Sources:

Byers, Dan. "Seven Ways EPA's Affordable Clean Energy Plan Is a Better Approach than the Clean Power Plan." Global Energy Institute. 21 Aug. 2018.

Cash, Cathy. "Clean Power Plan Replacement: How It Affects Co-ops." NRECA. 21 Aug. 2018.

Camaraderie, hands-on learning, fun. . . . Electric cooperatives show support for youth in High Plains Rally

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Midwest Energy and Western Cooperative Electric sponsored the annual High Plains Rally held in Hays, Kan., on Sept. 27 at Frontier Park. Thirteen teams from Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri competed in the event hosted by Fort Hays State University.

The fall race resulted in the following awards:

1st place Solar Class – Great Bend High School; 2nd place Solar Class – Scott Community High School; 1st place Standard Class – Scott Community High School; 2nd place Standard Class – Hoisington High School; and Team Spirit Award – Minddrive, Kansas City

Top right: Student-built electric cars begin the first lap during the High Plains Rally. Lower left: Scott Community High School's Angel Rodriguez leads a pack of cars as he makes his way around the track. Lower right: Wheatland High School's Cauy Meier, left, Colter Allemang, center, and team coach Mark Heier, right, talk strategy with driver Zach Gillespie before the start of a race.

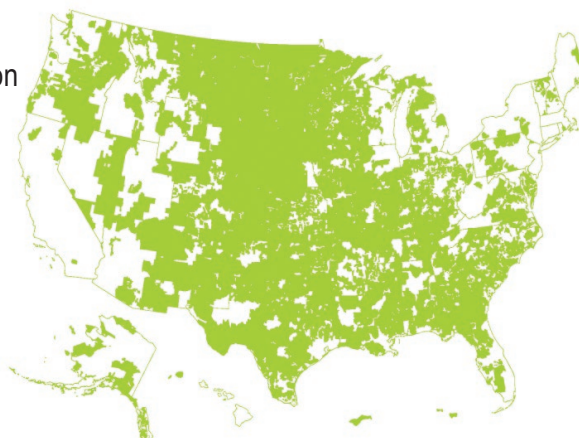


America's Electric Cooperatives

From booming suburbs to remote rural farming communities, America's electric cooperatives are energy providers and engines of economic development for more than **19 million** American homes, businesses, farms and schools in **47 states**.

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