

HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

The Beacon

JUNE 2021



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Our mission is to provide our members with reliable, high-quality electricity and other needed services, which will improve their economic and social well-being and provide significant long-range benefits for our communities, our state and our nation.



HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER



Touchstone Energy®

SIX MONTHS WITH AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE

BY TADIUS HUSER MANAGER OF MEMBER SERVICES

I drive an electric vehicle now — daily, in fact. After six months of ownership, I wanted to give our consumer-members an update on my experience in the world of EVs. It has been a great experience, but range anxiety is real. My early commutes were during cold and windy winter weather. Cold and wind negatively affect the range regardless of what you are driving, and it certainly did for my 2015 Nissan LEAF. With a range of 70 miles and a commute of 39 miles, I figured I would have plenty of range since I can charge at home and at our new charging station at the Highline Electric Association office in Holyoke. That range is based on average conditions, such as topography, temperature, wind, driving speed, and accessory use, such as the heat or air conditioner. Head winds in freezing temps meant I drove with minimal heating and reduced my max speed to 60 mph to make it to and from work. However, once temps were above freezing, I was able to stay comfortable with range to spare. With over 5,000 miles in the saddle — all in colder months— I can manage my range and comfort with great success.

The good news for consumers is that EV technology has made leaps and bounds in a short time. For instance, my 2015 LEAF is an antique compared to models even two years newer. Look no further than the Chevy Bolt introduced in 2017, which has a range of 240 miles. Rejoice! EVs, as well as internal combustion engines (ICEs) for that matter, react to the same issues with cold, wind, elevation, etc. With more than triple the range of my already obsolete car, however, range anxiety for typical commuter usage is a thing of the past.

With range anxiety behind me, I can now enjoy the primary reason I made the leap to an EV: cost of ownership. As part of my research, I wanted to understand potential fuel savings. The vehicle I replaced got an

average of 25 miles per gallon, which cost me \$140 per month at \$2 per gallon. Based on Nissan's data and my average cost of electricity at 10 cents per kilowatt-hour, my estimated fuel cost would be closer to \$55 per month. With six months of actual charging data, I can confirm that my fuel costs about a third of what my prior ICE vehicle cost. And with pump prices pushing closer to \$3 per gallon, my savings are piling up even quicker. Beyond fuel costs, I no longer have oil and filter changes, and brake maintenance intervals are reduced due to regenerative braking technology. Reduced maintenance costs push the total cost of ownership even lower compared to the ICE equivalents.

There are more and more companies entering the EV space, including the tried-and-true domestic names we are loyal to (bring on the EV pickups!). After six months of satisfied ownership, I feel it is simply a matter of time before EVs become commonplace. We are here to help answer your questions and identify any rebates and tax incentives available to you. Please allow us to serve as your trusted EV advisers. When you are curious about making the transition, I encourage you to call me at 970-854-2236 or email me at thuser@hea.coop.



TADIUS HUSER

Employee anniversaries

Congratulations to the following employees who observed an employment anniversary in June:

Rance Ferguson.....28 years
Joni Kinney.....9 years
Alex Astley.....7 years

2021 Rebate Product Guide

- Eligible rebates must be submitted within 120 days of purchase.
- Rebate amounts under \$25 will be issued as a credit on the Highline account. Rebate requests must include itemized payment receipts (including product model number) and Energy Star verification documentation.

Product	Eligible Rebate
Electric Outdoor Power Equipment	25% of cost up to \$150 for electric mower or snow blower. 25% of cost up to \$50 for electric blower, chainsaw, pruner and trimmer. 25% of cost up to \$150 for electric bicycles. Maximum yearly outdoor equipment rebate of \$300 per member account.
Energy Star LED Bulbs	50% of lamp/bulb cost – Capped at \$8 per lamp/bulb. 500 lumens or greater. Cap of 50 lamps/bulbs per HEA account per year.
Energy Star Refrigerator/Freezer (min. 7.75 cu ft.)	\$60 per unit. Additional \$120 if old unit is recycled. Proof is required to receive the freezer and refrigerator recycling credit. A form can be downloaded at hea.coop or available upon request. Freezer and refrigerator rebates are limited to a max of two recycles per member, per year.
Energy Star Dishwasher	\$40 per unit.
Energy Star Clothes Washer	\$80 per unit front load. \$60 per unit top load.
Energy Star Dryer	\$80 per unit. \$180 heat pump unit.
Ground Source Heat Pump	\$850 per ton for new installation. \$425 per ton for existing unit replacements. Minimum 3/4 ton. Energy Star-rated.
Air Source Heat Pump	\$500 per ton for units rated from 15-17 SEER. \$750 per ton for units greater than 17 SEER. Not to exceed 50% of equipment cost. \$100 per additional unit with controlled ETS backup. Excludes window units. \$85 per unit for package terminal units (through wall heat pumps).
Air Conditioner — Whole Home System	\$200 per unit for units rated 16 SEER and above. Excludes window units. Minimum 1 ton, Energy Star-rated.
Electric Water Heater	\$80 per unit for replacement. \$180 per unit for new or conversion. 30 gallon minimum. \$375 per unit for Energy Star-rated heat pump water heaters above 30 gallons minimum.
Marathon Electric Water Heater purchased through HEA	\$125 per unit for replacement. \$225 per unit for new or conversion.
Motors (10-1500 hp)	\$8/hp for commercial and industrial motors. \$10/hp for irrigation motors and \$1.50/hp wiring assistance if motor replaces fossil fuel or is a new install. Contact HEA for form.
Variable Speed Drive (VSD)	Contact HEA for details. Soft start kits added to existing motors are not eligible.
Irrigation and Industrial/Agricultural Auditing	Contact HEA for details.
EV Level 2 Charging Station	50% up to \$500 without network capability or \$1,000 with network capability.
Commercial Lighting	
LED/Induction Street Lighting	25% of total LED head cost. Project cap of \$20,000.
LED Refrigerated Case Lighting Retrofit	50% of total LED fixture cost. Project cap of \$3,000.
Commercial Lighting New/Retrofit/Replacement	Contact HEA for details. One project per member account per year.

Banaka Retires from HEA



Highline Electric Association Lineman Jerry Banaka retires from HEA after nearly 38 years of service.

We are both delighted and disheartened to announce that Highline Electric Association Lineman Jerry Banaka retired from HEA after nearly 38 years of service. If you contacted HEA within the past three decades after hours during an outage or talked to a lineman out in the field, chances are you've talked with Jerry.

Jerry joined the cooperative family on August 22, 1983, as a tree trimmer. Before coming to HEA, Jerry did a little bit of everything, including working for an RV park on the West Coast, building parks and doing maintenance from Washington to California. He worked at Jack's Bean prior to working at HEA. "My wife came home

from work and said, "There's a job open at Highline and you need to apply." I did... and then for the next two weeks I called every day to see if they had made a decision," he said with a laugh. He was a tree trimmer for four years before moving into his current position as a lineman. His tasks as a lineman change daily, with everything from chasing outages and repairing underground line to teaching the younger linemen how to safely do hot work. Through his mentorship, some of Jerry's trainees have moved up to supervisory roles.

Jerry has been a listening ear for many over the years. He recalled one notable experience in which he spoke with an upset member who was in a tough situation and was being disconnected for nonpayment. Jerry was able to diffuse the situation by being an excellent listener during their 10-minute discussion where the issue was resolved in a calm manner. "The best part about my position is the people: employees, consumers, all different kinds of people. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience I've been given," Jerry said.

In his retirement, Jerry is looking forward to having time to do the things for his wife that he's been promising her for years. "Thanks to everyone for this awesome privilege, the experience and adopting me into the cooperative family," Jerry said.

We at HEA thank Jerry for his nearly 38 years of service and dedication to keeping the lights on. **Please join us in wishing Jerry farewell as he embarks on this new adventure.**



Have You Driven a Tesla?

Now's your chance!

Highline Electric Association is electrified to offer its consumer-members the EV Experience with a Tesla Model 3. Beginning this month, you can schedule a test drive at Highline's Holyoke office.

Call 970-852-2246 or email info@hea.coop to reserve your 30-minute EV Experience. Must be 21 years or older and have a valid driver's license and insurance. **Schedule your test drive today!**

For consumer-members near the Sterling and Ovid offices, we will schedule a date once interest is expressed in those areas.

Join us for an EV Event!

Join Highline Electric, Star 92.3 and the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce on June 23 from 12 - 1:30 p.m. at HEA's Holyoke office.

At this special event, you can enjoy a root beer float, take a closer look at the Tesla Model 3 and schedule your EV Experience test drive for a later date.

We hope to see you there!

Attention Load Control Participants

Irrigators are reminded that, if you are signed up for load control for the 2021 year, it started in May. Please be aware of which option you signed up for. Control dates for all options include May 12-31, June 21-30 and September 1-10. If you chose 1A or 2A, this will include one day per week in July and August as well as the aforementioned. If you chose option 3, this will only be one day per week in July and August.



▲ Pictured left to right: Dennis Herman, Highline Electric general manager, presents Imagination Library start-up funds to Imperial Community Foundation Fund representatives Brianna Pribbeno (with her daughter Pearl) and Doug Gaswick. *Photo courtesy of The Holyoke Enterprise.*

Chase County Imagination Library

There is no greater gift for a child than the gift of learning from their own books. That’s why Highline Electric Association, your Touchstone Energy cooperative, is proud to partner with the Imperial Community Foundation Fund to bring Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to Chase County, Nebraska, and to our youngest co-op members. Through matching funds from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Highline was able to secure \$2,000 to cover the first-year costs of the program. This amount is an estimation based on the number of children projected to enroll.

The Imagination Library, a book-gifting program administered by the Dollywood Foundation, mails one book each month to children from birth to age five at no cost to the families who register.

At Highline Electric Association, we believe every child should have the opportunity to succeed and can think of no better start than ensuring the children in our communities grow up in homes filled with books that inspire a passion for reading and lifelong learning.

Parents can register online at www.imaginationlibrary.com or contact Beth or Lisa at 308-882-4754 for a registration form.

Chase County is the second county in Highline’s plan to help communities throughout the electric co-op territory start Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

Tri-State Immediately Reduces Wholesale Rates

The Tri-State Generation and Transmission Board of Directors, which includes a representative from each of the power supply cooperative’s utility members, approved a proposed settlement of its wholesale rate and contract filings made with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Under the terms of the settlement, which requires FERC approval, Tri-State will immediately reduce its wholesale power rates 2%, followed by another 2% wholesale rate reduction in 2022.

The board’s action advances two goals identified in Tri-State’s Responsible Energy Plan (REP), including reducing wholesale rates for its utility members and ensuring each member has a voice in Tri-State’s rate regulation by establishing FERC as its exclusive, independent wholesale rate regulator.

“Our Responsible Energy Plan makes Tri-State even more competitive for our members, with a cleaner power supply, more power supply options and lower wholesale rates,” said Tri-State CEO Duane Highley. “As we pursue ways to lower wholesale rates, all of our members across four states have had the opportunity to participate in the FERC’s rate regulation process.”

Tri-State’s proposed settlement will be filed with FERC and, if approved, will go into effect retroactively to March 1, 2021. The additional 2% wholesale rate decrease would go into effect in March 2022, and Tri-State would have a moratorium on any rate increases until May 31, 2023.

“Tri-State is deeply appreciative of the time and involvement of our members, FERC staff and stakeholders in the settlement process,” Highley said. “As a cooperative, we are committed to continuing to work with our members to consider other rate-related issues before our next FERC rate filing.”

Over the past several years, Tri-State’s members worked together in rate design and contract committees to develop recommendations that were accepted by the Tri-State board. In 2019 and 2020, Tri-State filed with FERC its wholesale rate, wholesale electric service contracts and board policies related to the terms for wholesale power service to its utility members. These filings were accepted by FERC, subject to refund, and were set for settlement and hearing procedures. The settlement, if approved by FERC, would avoid further hearings on nearly all of the issues designated for further proceedings.

Tri-State indicated as it rolled out its REP in 2020, that one of its many goals was to reduce wholesale rates. Highline was faced with a possible rate increase for 2021, but in light of the REP’s near-term goal of reducing wholesale rates, the Highline board decided to hold rates flat from 2020 into 2021. This recent news from Tri-State allows Highline to maintain flat rates through the remainder of 2021.