GARDNER STRENGTHENS ELECTRIC RELIABILITY AND EXPANDS CAPACITY FOR FUTURE GROWTH

The City of Gardner is making important investments in its electric system through infrastructure maintenance and system expansion projects designed to improve reliability and support future growth. At Substation 1, crews are completing a major maintenance project on the transformer load tap changer (LTC) after routine dissolved gas analysis testing revealed elevated gas levels in the transformer oil. Further inspection by Midwest Transformer identified arcing contacts and a significant accumulation of metal shavings inside the LTC, confirming the need for repairs. The project includes realigning the tap changer mechanism and replacing worn contacts and oil, helping restore the transformer's condition and ensuring reliable operation for years to come. By proactively addressing these issues, the City is reducing the risk of future equipment failures and strengthening the overall reliability of its electric system.

At the same time, Gardner is moving forward with the construction of Substation 4, a major addition to the City's electric infrastructure.

Designed by Olsson and constructed by Capital Electric, the new substation will provide additional capacity needed to serve continued residential, commercial, and industrial growth throughout the community. The facility will be equipped with a 15 MVA transformer and has been designed to accommodate a second transformer in the future as demand increases. Scheduled to be energized in late spring or early summer 2027, Substation 4 will play a critical role in supporting new development and enhancing system resiliency. Once operational, Gardner's total substation capacity will increase to 132 MW across four substations, ensuring the City is well positioned to meet both current and future energy needs while continuing to provide reliable electric service to its customers.

MEMBERS INVEST IN LOCAL SOLAR ENERGY

CITY OF HOISINGTON BUILDS FOR LONG-TERM ENERGY STABILITY

The City of Hoisington has added a new 999 kW AC solar array on 7.2 acres of industrial land south of the city and east of US-281. Expected to generate approximately 2,050 MWh of electricity annually, the project will help diversify the city's energy resources and reduce exposure to rising energy and transmission costs.

The solar farm utilizes single-axis tracking technology that allows the panels to follow the sun throughout the day, increasing energy production compared to traditional fixed systems. The project features American-made equipment, including First Solar modules and Yaskawa Solectria Solar inverters, selected for their performance and long-term reliability.

Federal tax credits covering approximately 60% of project costs helped make the investment financially viable. While the project is not expected to immediately reduce electric rates, it is designed to help protect residents from future market volatility and energy cost increases over its anticipated 30-year lifespan.

CITY OF GIRARD EXPANDS RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

The City of Girard recently completed a 2 MW AC solar farm at 106 Enterprise Drive that is expected to generate approximately 4.7 million kilowatt-hours of electricity each year. The facility strengthens the city's energy portfolio while providing a dependable source of locally generated power.

The project includes 5,524 American-made First Solar panels mounted on tracking systems and 10 Solectria inverters, maximizing energy production while enhancing operational reliability. By spreading generation across multiple inverters, the system can continue operating even if maintenance is required on an individual unit.

Girard's investment was supported by federal direct-pay solar tax credits and the city's ability to utilize property it already owned. The project also helps reduce exposure to energy market volatility, improve power supply economics, and lessen demand on key electric system infrastructure during peak usage periods.

Together, these projects highlight how Kansas public power communities are leveraging local generation resources to build a more resilient, reliable, and cost-effective energy future.

KMEA/KMGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 28-29, 2026

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026

3:15 pm
KMGA Board of Directors Meeting

4:00 pm
KMEA Board of Directors Meeting

5:00 pm
Member Appreciation Reception

6:30 pm
Member Recognition Banquet

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026

8:30 am - 3:00 pm

- General Session Speakers
- Breakout sessions
- Legislative Update
- Keynote Speaker- Caleb Campbell

Former NFL player, Army officer, and West Point graduate, Caleb shares a powerful message on resilience, mental health, leadership, and thriving under pressure. His story inspires audiences to turn challenges into growth and purpose.

REGISTER NOW!

Location: Marriott Hotel Wichita
9100 E. Corporate Hills Dr.
Wichita, KS 67207

CEO & GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN: MEMBER PROJECTS POWERING THE FUTURE

Reflecting on the past few months and looking ahead, I am incredibly proud of how much our members are achieving together. The phrase "Everything Under the Sun" perfectly captures the massive volume of work recently completed or currently underway across our membership.

Harnessing the Sun

At the agency level, we secured a solar purchase agreement with NextEra on the Ninnescah Flats Solar project for 34 members. This project is expecting to begin commercial operations later this month. You can read more in the highlight article.

Even more impressive is how our member cities are capturing the sun to power their local communities. Over the last few years, Baldwin City, Osage City, Osawatomie, and Beloit have all successfully integrated solar.

More recently, Hoisington and Girard completed their behind-the-meter projects. KMEA staff recently attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Hoisington's 1 MW solar project, where it was wonderful to witness the community's pride and the city leaders' deep appreciation for their team's hard work. Girard will host a similar ribbon-cutting event later this month for their 2 MW solar project. Please see additional articles on these two projects.

The solar momentum continues as Anthony kicks off construction on a 2.25 MW solar farm, and Beloit expands its footprint by adding another 3 MW to its existing solar project.

Investing in Reliability and Affordability

Our cities are making substantial upgrades to fulfill the core mission of public power: providing reliable and affordable energy. See highlight article on Gardner in this newsletter as one example of the investment our members are making to improve reliability. There are many other cities doing the same with major line upgrades, voltage conversion, substation improvements and generator additions. The following cities have just recently completed projects or will be finishing projects in the near future:

- New or Upgraded Substations – Augusta, Baldwin City, Chapman, Gardner, Moran & Seneca
- Distribution Line Projects – Anthony, Attica, Augusta, Beloit, Blue Mound, Bronson, Cawker City, Garden City, Gardner, Garnett, Russell, Savonburg & Wamego
- Generation Projects – Cimarron, Colby, Garnett, Girard, Herington, Hoisington, Neodesha, Oberlin, Osborne, Russell, Seneca, Wamego & Washington

I'm sure I've missed some folks in this list, but this list shows the investment our members are making into their systems. It truly takes "everything under the sun" to keep our communities running. Our customers expect reliable, responsible, and affordable energy, and our members are delivering on that promise.

LEGAL AND REGULATORY UPDATE

SSC FILES FOR SIGNIFICANT RATE INCREASE: WHAT MEMBERS NEED TO KNOW

Earlier this year, Southern Star Central pipeline (SSC) filed a rate case with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requesting a significant rate increase.

KMEA and KMGA filed intervention with FERC to monitor the process and participate in the proceeding. As part of this effort, KMEA and KMGA also teamed up with multiple municipal-owned utilities and customer-owned shippers across the SSC footprint (MoKan Shipper Coalition). This joint effort allows us to work with a larger group of similarly situated entities for purposes of evaluating the rate case proceeding, reviewing documents, and sharing costs of FERC attorneys and expert witnesses.

The MoKan group has been actively filing data/discovery requests in order to fully evaluate the requested increase. The new rates are scheduled to go into effective November 1, 2026, but the rates will be subject to refund. Meaning that if at the conclusion of the docket, the amount requested by SSC is more than what FERC ultimately allows to be recovered, then SSC will refund the difference between the requested rate and the settled rate, plus interest.

Below is a table depicting the current rates versus the new, requested rates going into effect on November 1:

		SSC Requested Rates	
Reservation Rates (MMBtu/day)	**Current Rate**	**Primary Case**	**% Incr.**
Production Area Reservation	$0.2761	$0.5411	96%
Market Area Reservation	$0.2150	$0.3052	42%
Storage Deliverability Reservation	$0.0747	$0.0824	74%
Storage Capacity Reservation	$0.0014	$0.002455	75%

The new SSC rate will be reflected on the KMGA & KMEA December billings for November gas usage.

Included in their rate case, SSC also filed a Preferred Case, which includes rates designed utilizing a MMBtu per mile approach. These rates will only go into effect at the conclusion of the docket if FERC approves them. KMEA, KMGA, and the MoKan group will be monitoring this case as we move through the proceedings.

In the event there are refunds issued by SSC upon conclusion of the proceeding, those refunds will be passed along to the membership.

SHARE YOUR STORY

If you would like to share your story, news, accomplishments, or special projects in your community for inclusion in the KMEA newsletter, please contact Tyson McGreer at mcgreer@kmea.com or Katia Mitchell at mitchell@kmea.com to submit details or learn more.

KMGA UPDATE

KMGA AND KMU TEAM-UP IN OPERATOR QUALIFICATION (OQ) EFFORT

All operators of natural gas distribution systems are required to meet the minimum federal safety standards created by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) in 2004. PHMSA is responsible for regulating and ensuring the safe and secure movement of hazardous materials to industry and consumers by all modes of transportation, including pipelines. To minimize threats to life, property or the environment due to hazardous materials related incidents, PHMSA's Office of Hazardous Materials Safety develops regulations and standards for natural gas operators.

The Pipeline Safety Division of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) ensures public safety through compliance of PHMSA's pipeline safety regulations for all natural gas pipelines and systems across the state of Kansas.

Kansas Municipal Gas Agency (KMGA) and Kansas Municipal Utlities (KMU) are teaming up to offer assistance with OQ plans, process, procedures and required training. This effort will require municipal personnel involvement. KMGA and KMU will have meeting on October 28th for all Kansas municipals owning/operating natural systems.

EVENT DETAILS

Marriott Hotel
9100 Corporate Hills Drive
Wichita, KS

October 28, 2026

1:00-2:00 p.m.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR THE OQ MEETING

KMGA
KANSAS MUNICIPAL GAS AGENCY

KMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 2026

3:15 P.M.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

THE MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH KMEA/KMGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MARRIOTT HOTEL WICHITA
9100 E CORPORATE HILLS DR
WICHITA, KS 67207

KMEA MID-STATES

KMEA MID-STATES SALINA FACILITY CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Planning for construction of the Salina Facility began in 2024 and has required overcoming several obstacles. Key milestones included land acquisition, environmental and feasibility studies, selection of the design and construction team, and permitting. Construction is now underway, as shown in the photos taken on September 24. Significant progress has been made since then, despite weather delays and challenges acquiring the buildings.

The design is made up of three separate buildings totaling approximately 18,200 square feet. The first building consists of a boardroom, offices, and a line shop. The second is a fabrication shop and the third is a warehouse.

Some of the features include an emergency shelter in the office building, an overhead crane and paint booth in fabrication shop and plenty of storage in the warehouse.

As you know, projects like this are challenging, but strong leadership and a dedicated team help keep the work moving smoothly. The grading and earthwork began on February 19, 2026, and the current scheduled completion date is May 25, 2027.

ELECTRIC OPERATIONS

NINNESCAH FLATS SOLAR PROJECT

Over the past several years, KMEA staff has worked diligently to bring a large-scale renewable energy project to KMEA members. In Q4 2024, 34 KMEA members contracted for 78.6 MW of the 200 MW NextEra Energy Resources Ninnescah Flats solar project, located west of Wichita in Pratt County, Kansas. KMEA and its participating members entered into a 30-year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the project.

The remaining capacity is contracted to two other Kansas entities: Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo), which contracted for 25 MW, and KCBPU, which contracted for the remaining 96.4 MW of the project. Construction of the Ninnescah Flats Solar Project is progressing toward a potential Commercial Operation Date (COD) of October 15, 2026. The project represents a significant long-term addition to KMEA's renewable energy portfolio and provides participating members with access to 78.6 MW of utility-scale solar generation under a 30-year PPA.

KMEA and its project partners are also planning a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 22, 2026, to recognize the completion of the project and celebrate this significant milestone with participating members.

We proudly recognize Public Power Week and Public Natural Gas Week and thank the dedicated utility professionals who provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to our communities every day.

PUBLIC NATURAL GAS WEEK
OCTOBER 4-10, 2026

KMEA
KANSAS MUNICIPAL ENERGY AGENCY

KMEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

OCTOBER 28 , 2026

4:00 P.M.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

THE MEETING WILL BE IN CONJUNCTION WITH KMEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WICHITA MARRIOTT HOTEL
9100 E. CORPORATE HILLS DR.
WICHITA, KS 67207

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