

FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2017



Happy Thanksgiving!

The Farmers Electric Cooperative office will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23-24 for Thanksgiving. We wish all our members a safe and happy holiday!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient:

Unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. Also, various retailers offer plug adapters or power strips that only use power for a pre-set time (like 3-6 hours). When the time is used, the gadgets turn off automatically. You could save \$10-\$20 per year. *Source: U.S. Department of Energy*



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EMPLOYEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Oder Earns Journeyman Lineman Title

Congratulations to Josh Oder on completing the Merchant Job Training & Safety (MJTS) Program!

The MJTS Program most commonly serves as related technical instruction for use in an apprenticeship program leading to journeyman certification when coupled with structured on-the-job training. It is one of the most recognized distance-learning courses and exceeds the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship minimum requirement of 144 hours of related instruction per year or nearly 600 hours of study.

After completing four years of instructional material, Josh took a comprehensive examination to test his knowledge. Successful completion of the MJTS Program concurrent with a structured on-the-job training program demonstrates that the trainee has the knowledge and experience



Josh Oder, left, receives a certificate of completion from Line Superintendent Pat Amrstrong.

necessary to become a journeyman lineman. Farmers Electric is proud of Josh for his hard work and dedication to serving our members!



Need an Electrician?

Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc. no longer has an in-house electrician. If you need wiring such as grain bins, machine sheds, heat meters, or water heater installations, the Iowa Department of Public Safety has a searchable index of electricians by county.

Visit www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/electrician.

Knowing What to Do Can Save Your Life



Knowing what actions to take to stay safe in a car accident can make the difference between life and death.

"After any car wreck, it is natural for people to want to get out of the car to assess the damage for themselves as well as the vehicle. However, when the wreck involves power poles and lines, that is the exact wrong thing to do," says Farmers Electric General Manager Charlie Dunn.

Car accidents can range from fender benders to life threatening situations, and when one happens, chances are electricity is the last thing on your mind. You're likely more concerned about whether anyone was injured or how badly your car was damaged. But dismissing electrical safety after a car collision can be a deadly mistake.

If you're in an accident with a utility pole, your vehicle may already be charged with electricity. If this is the case and you step out of the car, you will become the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted. Loose wires and other equipment may be in contact with your car or near it—creating a risk for electrocution if you leave the vehicle.

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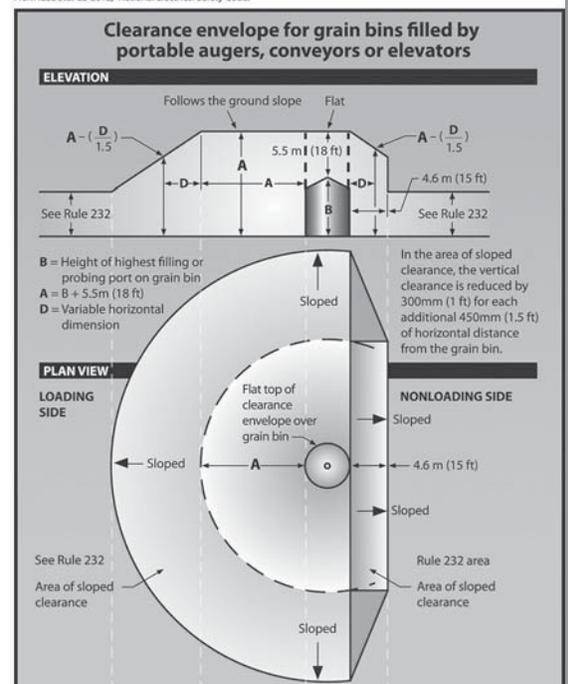
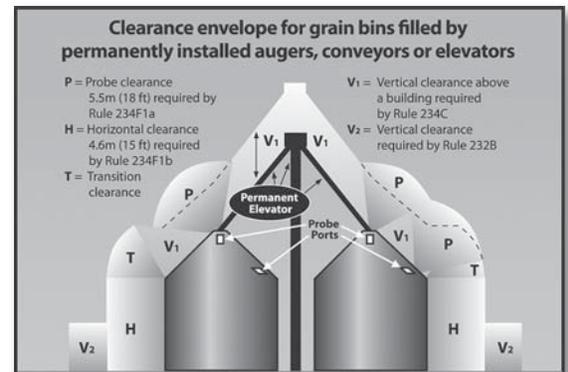
Grain Bin Notice

If you're considering a new grain bin this spring, remember that it's important to first contact Farmers Electric Cooperative.

Your cooperative will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

The drawings on this page show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions, please call Farmers at (800) 397-4821.

According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b.: An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2012 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator



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Preparation is Power

An inconvenient outage during very cold weather can create challenges and safety concerns. Preparation now is the key to ensure you're not left in the cold when the next one happens.

Safe Electricity recommends assembling an emergency "kit" with essential items and more, such as:

- Flashlight, portable radio and extra batteries
- First aid kit and essential medicines
- Non-perishable food
- Bottled water
- Basic tools and related materials
- Extra blankets and clothing to dress in layers
- Outerwear at the ready, including hats, gloves and scarves
- Rags or duct tape to seal air leaks

Additionally, if you have a wood stove or fireplace, have plenty of extra wood on hand; and if you have a fuel-based heater, have extra fuel and the means to vent the fumes.

"It's also a good idea to connect with Farmers Electric on our Facebook page," said Holi Weston, Director of Member Services and Communications. "In the event of an outage, we will post regular updates on our restoration efforts so you can anticipate how long you'll be without power."

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Look Out for Scammers

With the holiday shopping season upon us, it's important to remember that not everyone is as benevolent as they may seem. Scammers are active this time of year. One scam to be aware of is a caller who threatens to turn off the power to your home.

Fortunately, Iowa's Attorney General Tom Miller is on the frontlines when it comes to protecting Iowa residents from scams and is proactive in seeking justice for victims.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of the electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. They may tell you that you owe your utility company an overdue balance, and must make an "electronic payment" within a matter of hours or the company will shut off your power. Don't fall for this. Here are a few tips should you suspect you're being scammed:

- Farmers Electric Cooperative will never demand immediate payment via prepaid debit cards or threaten immediate disconnection. We will never ask for personal financial information over the phone. If you have any

doubts about your bill, just give us a call at (800) 397-4821.

- If someone comes to your home claiming to be a Farmers employee who needs to collect money from you or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they aren't, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.
- Do not provide or confirm personal information or financial information to anyone who calls.
- You don't need to report the scam if you simply received a call. But if you lost money through the scam, report it immediately to your local police department or sheriff's office. Then file a complaint with the Iowa Attorney General by visiting www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov.

I want to wish everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving holiday. A little extra diligence this time of year, whether you're buying gifts or paying your utility bill, will help ensure your family is safe from scammers.



*Charles Dunn
General Manager*

Car accidents...from pg. 2

Here are a few things to remember:

1. While downed lines can sometimes reveal they are live by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live, but they are just as lethal.
2. After an accident, stay in the car, and tell others to do the same. If you come upon an accident involving power lines, do not approach the accident scene. If you see someone approaching, warn them to stay away. Call 911 to notify emergency personnel and utility services. Do not leave your vehicle until a utility professional has told you it is safe to do so.
3. The safest place to be is almost always inside the car. The only circumstance when you should exit the vehicle is if it is on fire—and those instances are rare. If you must exit the vehicle, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Continue to "bunny hop" with your feet together to safety. Doing this will ensure that you are at only one point of contact and will not have different strengths of electric current running from one foot to another, which can be deadly.

Knowledge is crucial in keeping everyone involved in the accident safe. Start by educating your family of drivers on what to do if they're in an accident with a power pole.



Make your house the football game-day headquarters with these sure-to-satisfy recipes. After all, the food is almost important as the game itself! So make game day special whether you're a football fanatic or just in it for the halftime show.

Each month, Farmers Electric Cooperative places a call for recipes in various categories. Winners receive a \$5 credit on their account, with their recipes appearing in the next month's issue. Mail entries with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mail them to: Holi@farmersrec.com. DECEMBER RECIPES: Holiday Baking Best

Buffalo Chicken Stuffed Bread

INGREDIENTS

1 c. chicken, cooked and shredded	1/4 c. blue cheese, optional
1/4 - 1/2 c. Frank's red hot sauce	1/4 c. ranch dressing
1 loaf of French bread	2 c. shredded cheddar cheese
	8 oz. cream cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

In a mixing bowl combine cream cheese, blue cheese (if using), ranch dressing, and hot sauce until smooth. Stir in chicken and 1 1/2 cups of shredded cheese. Cut the top edge of the bread loaf off and hollow out it a little to fit the filling. Leave an inch or so of crust and bread around all sides. Spoon the buffalo chicken mixture into the loaf. Sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 cup shredded cheese.

Place on a baking tray and bake at 350 F degrees for about 18-22 minutes or until warmed through.

Mexican Corn Dip

INGREDIENTS

3 cans Mexicorn, drained
 1 can green chilies, undrained
 1/2 jar chopped jalapenos with
 1/4 c. juice
 4 c. shredded cheddar cheese
 1/2 cup red onion, chopped
 1 c. mayonnaise
 1/2 c. sour cream
 2 T. sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix all ingredients together and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve with chips (tortilla or corn chips such as Frito's®). Can store for several days.

Shelley Herrick, Greenfield

Grain Bins...from pg. 3

systems installed after December 24, 1997. (As adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board)

Farmers Electric Cooperative is required by the Iowa Utilities Board to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants, and city and county zoning officials. If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please contact the cooperative.

Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2012 Edition of the NESC as corrected. To view the actual drawings refer to 2012 Edition National Electrical Safety Code and the Errata to 2012 Edition National Electrical Safety Code Correction Sheet issued April 29, 2013.

Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or for damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



Open Lines is a monthly publication of Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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The mission of Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc., is to deliver safe, reliable, affordable electricity and other services to improve the quality of life within our communities.