



# FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Open Lines


MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2019

### Office Closed

The Farmers Electric office will be closed Thursday, July 4, for Independence Day. We wish all our members a safe and happy holiday!

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

 Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights! They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free. Remember, solar lights work best when the solar cells receive the manufacturer's recommended hours of sunlight, which are higher during the longer summer days.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

### Annual Meeting Sept. 17

The Farmers Annual Meeting will be Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Adair County 4-H Building in Greenfield. Registration and a free meal will be offered from 5-6:30 p.m. with the business session following. Mark your calendar now!

 **Farmers Electric Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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FarmersREC.com | (800) 397-4821



### STORM SEASON SAFETY:

## When Tornadoes Strike at Night

**A** tornado that ripped through Farmers Electric service territory in the early morning hours of May 22 was a rare but devastating occurrence.

In Iowa, less than five percent of all tornadoes in the past 38 years have occurred between midnight and 6 a.m. Although rare, night time tornadoes are more than twice as likely to be deadly according to a 2018 study from Northern Illinois University that looked at roughly 48,000 tornadoes that occurred in the U.S. between 1950 and 2005.

That's due to several factors. Tornadoes are difficult to see at night, so few if any spotters are out monitoring the storm. Another factor is most people are asleep. Finally, people are usually at home at this time of night, which means they are inside a structure that's likely not as sturdy as their place of work, especially if they live in a mobile home.



Here are some tips to remember during tornado season:

- Stay aware of potentially changing weather conditions and forecasts before going to bed.
- If there is any threat of severe weather, make sure you have a weather app on your phone that will sound an alarm when a

*continued on pg. 3*

### Replacing Aging Lines Keeps Service Reliable



**F**armers continually assesses our aging distribution lines to identify those that need to be replaced. Each year, the cooperative budget allocates funds toward this important work that helps keep our service reliable.

Pictured are Apprentice Lineman Trey Eddy and Lineman Nick Kintigh who were out recently working to replace aging line with new. This year, more than 20 miles of line will be replaced across our service territory.

## Creative Ways to Beat the Heat

*Stay cool this summer without paying a fortune in cooling costs. It can be difficult, but there are many ways to beat the heat that don't demand turning on the air.*

1. Block the sun by keeping curtains and blinds closed. This alone can reduce the amount of heat coming into your home by as much as 45 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

2. Give your A/C some TLC. Clean or replace the filter in room and central air conditioners about once a month.

3. Spritz yourself. Keep a spray bottle in the refrigerator and give yourself a cooling spritz when you feel overheated. The water will cool you as it evaporates.

4. Let your computer take a nap. Set it to go into "sleep" mode if you are away from it for more than 10 minutes and it will give off less heat.

5. Spice it up. Eating hot stuff - like chili peppers - helps you perspire. When your sweat evaporates, you will feel cooler.

6. Think cool. Read a book or watch a movie (with curtains closed) like *The Call of the Wild* or *Dr. Zhivago*. It will take your mind off the thermometer!

# Use Energy Wisely During Warm Months

**P** eak hours are the busiest times for your local electric cooperative, since many people are using electricity at the same time. In addition, it costs your co-op more to generate electricity when demand soars during peak periods – and the cost of your electricity also may rise. Obviously, using less electricity during peak periods can save your co-op – and you – money.

Here's how you can help during peak hours, which generally occur on the hottest summer days between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.:

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. Wait to run your dishwasher until you go to bed, for instance.
- If you have air conditioning, turn the thermostat up when you are gone and at night. Cool only the rooms you're using.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave oven, for example,



uses considerably less energy than your stove or cooktop.

- If you're buying a new appliance, make sure you get one that is highly efficient. Look for ENERGY STAR® labels when you're evaluating different models.
- Be aware of your energy consumption, and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round.

Use the energy you need, but use it wisely! You'll help your co-op avoid building expensive new power plants – and that, in turn, will help keep your electric rates stable.

## Required Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through

the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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# Cost for Energy Efficiency Programs is Built In

Energy efficiency programs continue to offer valuable rebates for making homes and businesses more efficient. Last year, there was a change in the state law providing additional transparency with energy efficiency programs. What's different? Transparency!

We will continue to offer energy efficient programs but want to be clear. The annual average energy efficiency cost to residential members is \$13.92. This is not something extra you will see on your bill, it is and always has been built into the rate. To learn about the energy efficiency programs available, please visit [farmersrec.com/content/rebates](http://farmersrec.com/content/rebates).



## Cool your home efficiently.

An electric heat pump is the most energy-efficient home cooling and heating option available today – and can reduce your energy consumption and utility bills during even the warmest months of the year. Visit our website to learn more about going electric – and find rebates on new equipment.



800-397-4821  
[farmersrec.com](http://farmersrec.com)



SAVINGS  
WITH  
STAYING  
POWER

# We Are Committed to Zero Contacts



*Charlie Dunn  
General Manager*

There is a disturbing trend in the electric utility industry. A recent study by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange revealed that while overall, electric cooperative safety programs have greatly reduced days lost to workplace injuries, the record of serious injuries while on the job has not improved. The majority of these serious accidents involve human contact with an energized power line or equipment. The study further revealed that a majority of electrical contacts occurred during small restoration efforts with downed power lines.

NRECA, in conjunction with Federated Insurance, developed the “Commitment to Zero Contacts” campaign to provide cooperative CEOs, seniors leaders and field personnel with the resources they need to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities due to electrical contact, and to enhance cooperative safety programs. It reinforces the principle that being safe is not a matter of speed, but that we can be efficient, safe, and get the lights back on all at the same time.

Your Farmers Electric Board of Directors recently passed a resolution stating that the cooperative “places a high value on the health and welfare of its employees and members” and that the Board “believes in taking proactive steps to help prevent injury due to electrical

contacts.” I also joined other CEOs across the country to sign a commitment for the cooperative to participate in the Zero Contacts initiative because I am fully committed

to the safety of our employees. Each lineman also signed a voluntary commitment to safety form agreeing to follow the life-saving rules of wearing personal protective equipment, ensuring lines are properly tested and grounded, using the proper insulating materials, and following the approved clearance procedures for energized lines. At the kickoff ceremony for the Zero Contacts initiative, Farmers Line Superintendent Pat Armstrong, said, “I truly appreciate how safe you guys work and the culture of safety here at the REC.”

We understand how much our members depend on safe and reliable electric service and we are committed to working hard every day to ensure you receive the best service possible. We are also committed to providing our employees with the proper equipment and training to ensure that when outages do occur, we can restore the power safely, and all of our linemen can return home safe.

I genuinely appreciate the focus on safety here at Farmers and guarantee we will continually work to make safety improvements.

## Tornadoes...from pg. 1

storm warning is issued, or keep a weather radio on that will sound loudly enough to help wake you up when there is an alert.

- Practice with your family so if awakened in the middle of the night, everyone knows exactly where to go and what to do to reach safety. Know where you should take shelter within a matter of seconds and practice the drill at least once a year.

If severe weather threatens, review the plan to refresh everyone’s memory. Compile supplies such as bottled water, flashlights, blankets, etc. in your storm shelter area.

No matter what time of day a tornado may strike, be sure you have a plan in place to help keep you and your family safe.



# Garden VARIETY

100%  organic

**W**hether you grow your own or visit the local Farmer's Market, veggies fresh from the garden can be mixed and matched for a light summer meal, or served on the side at the barbecue.

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](mailto:Holi@farmersrec.com).

JULY RECIPES: FROM THE GRILL

## *Veggie Crescent Bites*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 can reduced-fat Pillsbury Crescent Rolls
- 4 oz. reduced-fat cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 c. sour cream (light)
- 1 T. fresh dill, chopped
- 1 T. fresh chives, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 c. chopped assorted veggies (broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, green onion, cucumber)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine sour cream, cream cheese, dill, and chives. Let chill. Remove crescent rolls from can and roll out just so all the pieces are sticking together. You want one large sheet so pinch together any seams that are not staying together. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 6-7 minutes. Remove and let cool.

Spread chilled cream cheese mixture onto cooled crescent roll sheet. Top with fresh veggies and additional chives if desired. Use a pizza cutter or large knife to cut down to appetizer size pieces and serve. Can be refrigerated for up to an hour before serving. Yields 32 pieces.

## *Garden Fresh Stuffed Peppers*

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 bell peppers
- 1 c. cooked white rice
- 1/2 lb. lean ground beef
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 T. olive oil
- 1 onion
- 1 large carrot
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 medium zucchini
- 4 paste tomatoes
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce
- Red pepper flakes
- 1 c. grated mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 c. grated parmesan cheese

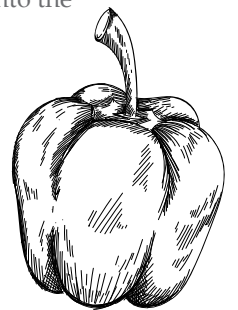


Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut the tops off the peppers and remove the seeds and white membrane. Dice the tops of the peppers and discard the stem. Reserve for future use. Place the peppers cut-side up in a baking dish that can hold them upright. Heat a medium sized skillet over medium-high heat.

Add the ground beef and season with salt and pepper to taste. Brown the meat until no longer pink and drain. Set the meat aside. Drain any remaining grease from the skillet. Place the skillet on medium heat and add 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add the onions, chopped peppers and carrot and cook for 3 - 4 minutes. Next, add the garlic and zucchini continue to sauté for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, Worcestershire sauce and red pepper flakes (optional).

Season with additional salt and pepper as desired. Stir and add beef and rice. Cook for 3-5 minutes until everything is heated through.

Stir in 3/4 cup of the mozzarella cheese until melted, remove from heat. Fill the peppers with the mixture and top each with a sprinkle of the remaining mozzarella cheese and the Parmesan cheese. Pour a little water into the bottom of the baking dish, just enough to cover the bottom of the dish. Cover with tented foil (so that the foil doesn't touch cheese) and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until the peppers are soft and the cheese is melted and beginning to brown. (approximately 15 minutes).



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. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.