

FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021

April is National Safe Digging Month



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees. Consider lowering your heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.



Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

P.O. Box 330
Greenfield, IA 50849
FarmersREC.com | (800) 397-4821

LINEMAN APPRECIATION:

Geared for service.
Geared for safety.
Lineman Appreciation Day
April 12, 2021



Members Report Scam Attempts

The cooperative has been made aware that some of our members are getting scam call recordings threatening to disconnect service within 30 minutes for nonpayment.

Please be aware this is a scam. The cooperative will never disconnect your service for nonpayment without notice and you should never provide personal information to someone you can't verify is an employee of our co-op.

Members in good standing can be caught off-guard by the aggressive tone of these con artists. They may claim to be from Farmers Electric and the caller ID or email address may even appear legitimate. Here are a few tips to remember if you are contacted by a scammer:

1. Never provide or confirm personal information (social security number, date of

birth, banking account information).

2. Take your time and take a breath. Pause to question what this person wants.

3. Always ask questions - ask *them* to give *you* your account and payment information. A legitimate co-op representative will have this information readily accessible.

4. Contact us. Please call our office at (800) 397-4821 if you ever have any questions about your bill or to report an attempted scam.



It's Easy to Show You Care with RECare

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact daily life, many of our members are wondering how they're going to pay their winter heating bills. Now more than ever, Farmers encourages members to help their neighbors and community by participating in RECare. A one-time or monthly contribution through the RECare program can help offset high bills for those who need it most. RECare funds can also be used to weatherize the recipient's home and help make electricity usage more efficient. Your donation is directed to local community action agencies for distribution to low-income families near you.

Member Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members through the RECare program.

- Enclosed is a check with a one-time donation.
- I would like to make a monthly donation of \$ _____. I understand this amount will be added to my electric bill each month.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Account # _____

Cut out this form and mail to: RECare, c/o Farmers Electric Cooperative, 2389 Hwy. 92, Greenfield, IA 50849; or visit www.farmersrec.com to fill out an online form.

Co-op Participates in 2021 REC Day on the Hill

This year's REC Day on the Hill was quite different from years past, taking place as a virtual event for safety reasons during the pandemic.

The online event, held March 17, encouraged electric cooperative staff and directors to advocate for issues affecting electric cooperatives and share the electric cooperative story with their state legislators. It's an important way to remind leadership of the importance of electric cooperatives to rural Iowa.

Employees and directors of Farmers Electric joined representatives from electric cooperatives across Iowa March 17 to meet virtually with their state representatives and senators to discuss co-op priorities.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's (IAEC) annual advocacy event, known as REC Day on the Hill, is typically held at the Iowa State Capitol

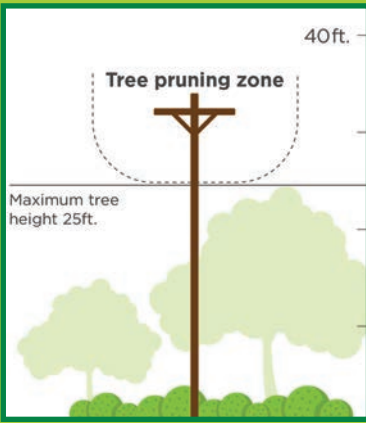


during the legislative session. The event provides co-op leaders with a prime opportunity to discuss issues important to Farmers Electric members.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, co-op advocates used virtual platforms to discuss important issues with legislators. This year's topics included vegetation

management, expanding broadband connectivity and balancing sales tax treatment of utilities.

To learn more about statewide advocacy efforts by Iowa's electric cooperatives, visit iaruralpower.org/advocacy.



Arbor Day April 30: Right Tree, Right Place

Arbor Day is April 30 and the Arbor Day Foundation and Farmers Electric offers some planning tips if you're thinking about planting a tree to cool your home in summer and tame the winter winds:

Height: Will the tree grow into or close to power lines when it is fully grown?

Canopy spread: How wide will the tree grow?

Is the tree deciduous or evergreen? (Will it lose leaves in the winter?)

Form or shape: A columnar tree will grow in less space. Round and V-Shaped species provide the most shade.

Growth rate: How long will it take for your tree to reach its full height?

Soil, sun, and moisture requirements.

Remember, the tree pruning zone around the top of a power pole is anything above 25 feet and within 20 feet around the top of the pole. Consult with a professional arborist to determine the best tree for the location you're considering.

Linemen: The Heart of Your Co-op

When you think of Farmers Electric Cooperative, you likely picture one of our linemen doing what they do best: keeping the lights on for you. They are the most visible employees of the co-op and work tirelessly to ensure our community receives uninterrupted power 24/7.

That kind of responsibility doesn't come without risk. In fact, lineworkers are consistently listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. due to their work around high-voltage power lines in all types of weather conditions, 40 feet in the air while carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

On the second Monday of every April, we like to take a moment to recognize them and their commitment to our communities during Lineman Appreciation Day. It's not a glamorous or easy job, and they can be pretty humble about the work they do, but their training, sense of service, and commitment to safety above all else is reason for us to thank them.

And while they may be the most visible employees at the co-op, linemen have a highly skilled team of professionals working behind the scenes. Line Foreman **Pat Held** and **Dave Hennigar** and Director of Operations **Dave Shike** provide ongoing expertise and guidance

on the operations side of the co-op. Director of Member Services and Communications **Holi Weston** is standing by to take your calls and questions on rebates, energy efficiency questions and more. And



CHARLIE DUNN
CEO

Carol Hutchinson, Lori Kinyon, Lynn Miller, Gina Meisenheimer and **Marisa Pickrell** take care of our members, track our finances and billing, and keep the office humming. Meter Technician **Scott Davis** and Material Coordinator **Jeff Held** are integral parts of our team. Without all of them, our linemen wouldn't be able to "bring the light" to our community.

Our dedicated linemen are proud to represent Farmers Electric, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineman Appreciation Day April 12.

On April 12, and any time you see one of our linemen, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service:

Chad Berrey

Joe Blankenship

Trey Eddy

Darrian Fischer

Nathan Hubenka

Nick Kintigh

Gavin Kline

Josh Oder

Paul Paxton

Paul Weber

Ross Wright



Pasta



If you're hungry for something other than regular spaghetti and meatballs, but just as easy, try one or both of this month's recipes. There are no rules when it comes to pairing pasta with sauces, vegetables, meats or even fruits. Mix it up and find what your family likes best. The possible combinations are virtually endless and you may be surprised by the yummy results!

Each month, the 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. Plan now to participate by mailing your entry with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mailing it to: HWeston@farmersrec.com.
May: Beef

Want a chance to get \$5 off your next electric bill? Enter a recipe in our recipe contest each month!



Pasta Bake

INGREDIENTS

- 1 16 oz. box penne pasta (cooked)
- 1 24 oz. jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 15 oz. jar alfredo sauce
- 2 c. mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 lb. hamburger (cooked, optional)

In mixing bowl, combine the spaghetti and alfredo sauces with one cup of the mozzarella cheese and pasta. Add hamburger if desired. Pour into a 9x13 inch pan and top with mozzarella cheese. Bake at 350 until cheese is melted.



recipediaries.com

Amy Jo Thompson, Bridgewater

Baked Feta Pasta

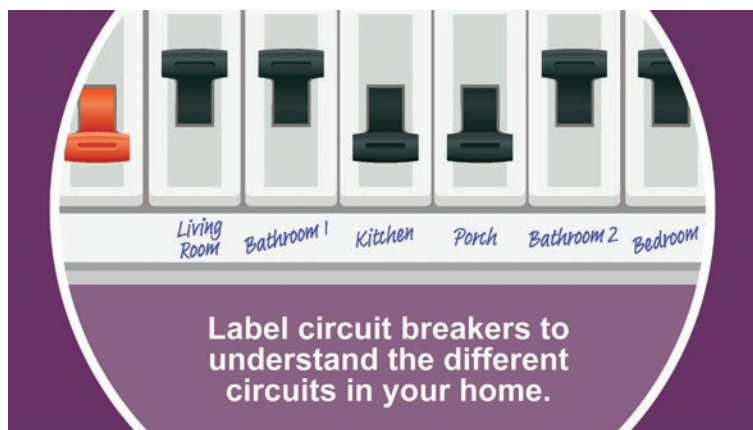
INGREDIENTS

- 2 pt. cherry or grape tomatoes
- 1 shallot, quartered
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed (opt.)
- 1/2 c. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt
- Crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 (8-oz.) block feta
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 10 oz. pasta
- Zest of 1 lemon (optional)



Preheat oven to 400°. In a large ovenproof skillet or medium baking dish, combine tomatoes, shallot, garlic, and most of the olive oil. Season with salt and red pepper flakes and toss to combine. Place feta into center of tomato mixture and drizzle with remaining olive oil. Scatter thyme over tomatoes. Bake for 40-45 minutes, until tomatoes are bursting and feta is golden. Meanwhile, in a large pot of salted boiling water, cook pasta according to package instructions. Reserve 1/2 cup pasta water before draining. Add pasta, reserved pasta water and lemon zest (if used) to skillet with tomatoes and feta to skillet and stir until completely combined. Garnish with basil before serving.

Hillary Laughery, Orient



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

CEO:
 Charles Dunn
 2389 Highway 92 | P.O. Box 330
 Greenfield, Iowa 50849-0330
 Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 24 hour outside depository
 Ph: (800) 397-4821
 Fax: (641) 343-7187
www.farmersrec.com

Board of Directors
 Dan Westphal, President
 Kevin Tanner, Secretary
 Janelle Peiffer
 Darrell Jensen
 Kevin Stender
 Steve Chandler, Vice President
 RoxAnn Rhoads, Treasurer
 Mark Earhart
 Kris Petter

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.