

FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2021

Upcoming Office Closing

The Farmers Electric office will be closed Dec. 24, 27 and 31 so our staff can spend time with their families over the holidays. We wish all our members a safe, happy and healthy holiday season!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Heading out of town for the holiday season? Remember to unplug electronics that draw a phantom energy load. Some gadgets like TVs, phone chargers, gaming consoles and toothbrush chargers use energy when plugged into an outlet – even when they're not in use.



Need Help with Heating Bills?

The LIHEAP application period is now open for all households in Farmers Electric service territory. Visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/liheap> for details.



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



Show Your Care with RECare

As you plan your end-of-year giving this holiday season, please consider contributing to your cooperative's RECare program.

RECare helps your fellow member-consumers offset the cost of their electric bills and weatherization expenses to maximize the efficiency of heating their home. Donations are distributed by local community action agencies to low-income members.

Many families in our communities are struggling to meet their basic needs. They are facing a long, dark winter of worrying about how they will pay to heat their home or put food on the table. Your giving goes a long way!

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 \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Mail to:

RECare, c/o Farmers Electric Cooperative,
2389 Hwy. 92, P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA
50849

Get to Grandma's House Safely

Holiday travel is back on the menu! After a year of isolated or socially distanced festivities (thanks to COVID-19), we anticipate more people taking to the road and skies this holiday season. But wintry weather and extensive travel time can lead to safety hazards. Here are nine holiday travel safety tips to know before you hit the road.

1. Prepare your home for optimum safety while you're away. If you anticipate being gone for an extended period of time, stop your mail, have neighbors check on your house and pick up any deliveries, and arrange to have snow cleared.

2. Have your car inspected or serviced before you leave, and keep an emergency kit in it. Be proactive to avoid hazards like a blown tire, and make sure your tires are winter-ready and properly inflated.

3. Know how to drive safely on icy roads. Give yourself extra time, decrease your speed as needed, avoid driving until roads are cleared and/or salt/sanded, and leave yourself plenty of room behind other vehicles.

4. Plan the drive ahead of time and know alternate routes. Download the Iowa DOT 511 app to check road conditions, accidents, plow locations and more.

5. Make frequent rest stops to help stay alert and stretch your legs.

6. Carry a cell phone and charger. If your car insurer has an app, download

HOLIDAY SAFETY WORD SEARCH

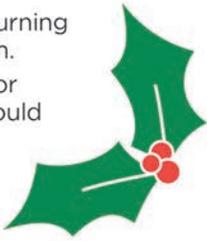
Remember to keep electrical safety in mind this holiday season!

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.



D	T	T	X	M	L	N	L	W	V	B	H	G	P	M
P	E	Y	E	N	H	S	A	G	E	T	Q	W	C	O
D	C	R	A	K	P	T	C	K	J	X	N	C	J	Q
E	X	R	E	I	O	J	I	T	B	S	L	E	Y	I
M	P	W	W	T	W	F	R	V	V	Z	U	U	V	J
X	R	K	Z	Z	A	T	T	L	X	W	L	M	X	Y
D	T	Z	G	P	N	W	C	C	N	L	Z	A	H	Z
I	N	S	P	E	C	T	E	D	P	F	R	R	Z	T
D	P	G	V	B	E	E	L	L	Q	P	H	V	W	F
A	J	K	F	L	B	A	E	S	K	H	I	Z	W	M
N	M	V	D	T	W	V	X	R	I	R	B	H	U	C
C	O	N	B	B	R	W	O	H	O	W	Q	N	Q	P
X	A	W	X	S	N	O	I	T	A	R	O	C	E	D
C	K	L	B	T	K	R	A	J	B	C	M	D	Y	P
X	C	M	A	Y	S	K	B	O	Y	Q	M	Q	K	Q

- Do not overload electrical outlets with too many **decorations** or appliances.
- Make sure your Christmas tree is **watered** daily.
- Turn off all **electrical** decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Never leave a **candle** burning if you're not in the room.
- Extension cords used for holiday decorations should always be **inspected** for damage or exposed wires.



it before your trip for easy access to roadside assistance. It's also a good idea to download or take a picture of your insurance card.

7. Stay hydrated. Dehydration causes drowsiness and decreased alertness. Keep a few water bottles nearby to sip.

8. Wash your hands frequently with soap, especially if you're on public transportation. Aside from general good

hygiene, we are now in flu season. Carry hand sanitizer or antibacterial wipes for when a sink isn't available.

9. Give someone close to you a copy of your trip itinerary and contact information. Make photocopies of your important documents and keep in your luggage.

Safe travels!

Energy-Wise Holiday Decorating Tips

Whether you've already decked your halls or you're just getting started, there's still time to incorporate energy savings into your holiday décor planning. Here are three budget-friendly, easy ways to keep your electric bill manageable this month.

1. If you haven't strung your twinkle lights, be sure to use LED light strands. They last longer and consume far less energy than traditional string lights. They're also safer because they're made with epoxy lenses, not glass, making them less likely to break.
2. Use a programmable timer. Using a timer will save you time, money, energy and the hassle of remembering to turn off the lights. If you're using a timer for outside lighting, make sure it's weatherproof.
3. Go green with a natural approach. Many retailers or Christmas tree sellers give away greenery clippings from recently trimmed trees. With a little twine, extra ornaments and sparkly ribbon, you can create beautiful garlands and wreaths. To add extra twinkle, try solar powered spotlights to illuminate your new greenery. And because they run on natural energy from the sun, there's no additional cost to your energy bill.

Regardless of how you decorate your home for the holidays, there are plenty of ways to save energy throughout the season. Visit farmersrec.com for more energy saving tips.

Season's Greetings from Your Electric Co-op

Like most of you, I love everything about this time of year. Growing up, my memories of family gatherings and traditions that I have passed onto my own children warm my heart.

And, being as we are in the last few weeks of the year, it's also a time of reflection. I'm grateful for my co-op family who are driven by a sense of mission and purpose that honor the tradition upon which we were founded. Our can-do community spirit and a strong connection to our neighbors is important to us because we live here, too.

While many community giving programs and activities ramp up this time of year, we have several programs and services in place to help our members year-round. I'd like to remind you about some of these offerings in hopes you'll find them beneficial.

We hope you'll take advantage of SmartHub, an app that empowers you to monitor, manage and pay your energy bill conveniently through your phone. If you're expecting company over the holidays, SmartHub can help you keep track of your energy use by the hour if needed. You can also use it to view graphs showing how the weather affects your usage, and much more. The app is fully integrated with Farmers Electric and delivers information, mobile payments and more in a safe, secure environment.

The Operation Round-Up program helps our most vulnerable members pay their energy bills. By simply choosing to "round up" your bill to the next whole dollar amount, you can help others right here in our community.



CHARLIE DUNN
CEO

Your donation over the course of 12 months will never exceed \$11.88, but for those in need, your small change can change lives.

But the most important investment we make is in our local youth. Farmers Electric has logged hundreds of volunteer hours supporting schools, youth clubs and programs along with providing annual scholarships for local students. Each year, through our Youth Tour program, we send high school juniors and seniors to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action and learn more about rural electric cooperatives like ours.

At the heart of all of these programs is you—the members we proudly serve. Looking back, I'm grateful for so many wonderful community partners and for the positive impact we can continue to make.

This holiday season, I wish you and your loved ones peace, joy and prosperity. On behalf of our team, I know the future will be bright, because of you.



WHISK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS SEASON.

- Clean oven burners regularly.
- Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.





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. **January:** Healthy recipes

Cake Mix Chocolate Chip Santa Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 1 box of white cake mix any brand
- 2 large egg whites
- 2 T. flour
- 1/2 c. oil
- 3/4 c. chocolate chips + extra to press on top of the cookies prior to baking
- 1/4 c. red, white and green holiday sprinkles



therebelchick.com

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Combine the cake mix, egg whites, flour and oil, mixing well. Add in the 3/4 cup of chocolate chips. Roll cookie dough into 1-2" size balls and place 2-3" apart on your baking sheets. Gently press down on the cookie dough balls and place a few extra chocolate chips and sprinkles on top. Place in the oven and bake 8-10 minutes. Do not over bake. Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.

Dark Chocolate Candy Cane Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder, sifted
- 1/4 cup black cocoa powder sifted
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 1 c. unsalted butter room temperature
- 1/2 c. granulated sugar
- 1 c. light brown sugar, packed
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 tsp. peppermint extract optional
- 1 bag Bright White Candy Melts or white chocolate, melted
- Vegetable shortening as needed to thin candy melts
- Crushed candy canes



livforcake.com

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powders, baking soda, and salt. Set aside. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat butter and sugars on med-high until light and fluffy (approx. 2-3 mins.). Reduce speed and add egg and peppermint extract. Beat until well combined. Add flour mixture and mix until just combined. Chill dough for at least 1 hour or overnight. Preheat oven to 350°F and line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats. Using a medium cookie scoop, portion dough onto baking sheet (9 cookies per sheet). Bake for approximately 10 mins, or until the middle is set. Cookies will deflate and crinkle a bit upon cooling. Cool on pans for 5 mins then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Dip in melted candy melts or white chocolate, place on a parchment lined baking sheet and sprinkle with crushed candy canes. Allow to set.



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.