

FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

MERRY
Christmas
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Farmers Electric office will be closed Dec. 23 and 26 and Jan. 2 for the holidays. We wish all our members a safe, warm and healthy holiday season.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture. *Energy.gov*



COOPERATIVE LEADERSHIP:

Co-op Names New CEO

The Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Holi Weston will serve as the cooperative's next chief executive officer/general manager.

Holi has been employed at the cooperative since 2009, first as billing clerk and customer service, then as director of member services and communications, and most recently as assistant manager. Prior to joining Farmers Electric, Holi worked as a supervisor/team lead and customer service representative at Wells Fargo.

Holi holds a Bachelor's degree in communications from Kaplan University. Since joining the co-op, Holi has actively pursued education and training opportunities through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), successfully completing the Certified Key Account Executive Program, the Management



Holi Weston

Internship Program, and the Cooperative Career Essentials Program.

Holi lives in Greenfield with her husband, Cliff, who works at Cardinal Glass, and daughter, Maddie, a sophomore at Nodaway Valley High School. In her spare time, Holi enjoys spending time with her family and attending her daughter's sports activities.

continued on pg. 3



FROM ALL OF US AT FARMERS ELECTRIC

Happy Holidays

RECare: Show Your Care During Season of Giving

As you plan your end-of-year giving this holiday season, please consider contributing to the Farmers Electric 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 during the cold months of the year. Donations are distributed by local community action agencies to low-income members.

With a one-time or monthly pledge, you can make a big difference for those in need. If you choose to do a monthly pledge, the amount can simply be added to your monthly electric bill. Your

financial assistance will be distributed locally within our service area to eligible:

- Households below the poverty level;
- Households with disabled individuals;
- Households of elderly individuals; and
- Households with children under six years of age.

Many families in our communities are struggling to meet their basic needs, particularly during this time of inflation and rising fuel costs. 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

Electrical Fire Risks Increase During Winter

The recent and tragic deaths of four children in a home fire in northern Iowa drives home the need to reiterate electrical safety precautions during these cold months. Our hearts go out to the family and the Mason City community during this time.

During a typical year, home electrical problems account for 67,800 fires, 485 deaths and \$868 million in property losses.

Many of these fires are caused by the misuse and poor maintenance of electrical appliances, incorrectly installed wiring, and overloaded circuits and extension cords.

Additionally, December is the most dangerous month for electrical fires due to spending more time indoors, and an increase in lighting, heating and electrical use.

Put a FREEZE on Winter Fires

Did you know? Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.

As you stay cozy and warm this winter, stay fire smart!

- Plug only **1 heat-producing appliance** (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.
- Keep anything that can burn **at least 3 feet** from any heat source.

Logos: U.S. Fire Administration, Fire is Everyone's Fight, NFPA

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Routinely check your electrical appliances and wiring.
- Replace worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately.
- Keep clothes, curtains and other potentially combustible items at least three feet from space heaters.
- Never overload extension cords or wall sockets.
- Having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire.
- Finally, remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.



Line Inspections Begin This Month

This month, members of the Farmers Electric line crew will be conducting annual line inspections across our service territory. Typically, they will do visual inspections from the truck driving slowly down our rural roads. If you come upon them, please be mindful of their work and cautiously pass them when it is safe to do so.

A visual inspection of our lines, poles and meters is the first step in identifying aging equipment that needs to be replaced. Once identified, poles will be physically tested which may require a co-op representative to enter your property. We will be sure to notify our members if and when this happens, and anyone from our co-op who needs entry to your property will be clearly identified.

Farmers Electric takes pride in the reliability of electric service we provide to our members. Our regular line, pole and meter inspection process ensures our equipment is operating at optimal levels for the best possible delivery of your electric service.

Please contact the cooperative if you have any questions about this process.

Small Change Can Change Lives

The holiday season is finally here and I, for one, am looking forward to revisiting our family traditions, gathering with friends and loved ones, and just generally enjoying the holiday spirit.

Part of that holiday spirit comes from the joy of giving. Giving back reminds me of the many good things we have right here in our community and why it's so important to spread the good as far as we can, especially to those most vulnerable in our local area. I'm also reminded of how wonderful our community is and what a big impact we can have when we work together.

As a member of Farmers Electric, you can help us spread the good throughout the year. By electing to round up your monthly bill to the next whole dollar helps local families – perhaps your friends and neighbors – in need. Operation Round Up is a voluntary program in which small change can change lives. By participating, you're helping to meet an immediate, critical need, but just as

importantly, you are telling this person or organization that the community cares.

To date and with your help, Farmers Electric has given thousands of dollars back to local families, individuals and organizations. And across the country, more than 350 electric co-ops have an Operation Round Up program that has raised millions for local communities. We are proud to be part of a nationwide electric cooperative network that act as a catalyst for good in our communities.

Please visit our web site to learn more about or enroll in Operation Round Up and download an application for consideration of funds. I wish all our members a joyous holiday season. May it be merry and bright!



HOLI WESTON
CEO

New CEO...from pg. 1

Holi has worked with all departments at the cooperative and has a great working relationship with the employees. She has a strong commitment to the cooperative, its members and the local community.

"I am really excited to continue working with our great employees and board members in this new role," she said. "Our members and safety are always top of mind so that will stay the same!" The Board of Directors is pleased to have the opportunity to promote from within the current workforce someone who is familiar with the cooperative's current employees, members, power supplier, and strategic direction.



SEVERE STORMS CAN BRING DOWN POWER LINES

Never drive over downed power lines.

✳

If you're in an accident involving a power line, do not exit your vehicle.

✳

Remember, power lines don't need to be sparking or arcing to be energized.



Save Your Dough During Holiday Baking

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, cooking accounts for 4% to 5% of a home's total energy use, not including refrigeration, water heating and dishwashing. Altogether, 15% of the average home's energy use occurs in the kitchen. That number climbs even higher during food-focused holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Try these tips for more efficient ways to cook:

- Skip preheating your oven for recipes that need to bake longer than an hour. And if your oven is electric, you can usually turn it off 5-10 minutes before finishing time and let the residual heat complete the baking.
- Premade dinner rolls can become nice and warm in under a minute by tossing them into the microwave.
- Don't peek! Did you know that every time the oven door opens, the temp drops about 25 degrees?
- Let your hot dishes cool before putting leftovers in the fridge.
- Use glass dishes. In fact, many recipes suggest lowering your oven temperature when baking with glass because of their heat holding ability.



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

Mail your recipe with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mailing it to: HWeston@farmersrec.com.
JANUARY: Healthy Resolution Recipes

Snow Day Snack Mix

- 12 c. popped popcorn
- 16 oz. white candy coating or melting wafers
- 3 c. miniature pretzels
- 10 oz. M&Ms®
- ½ c. sprinkles
- 10 oz. mini marshmallows



momontimeout.com

Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone mat. Spread popcorn out onto baking sheet. Melt candy coating according to package directions and pour over the top of the popcorn. Use tongs to toss to evenly coat popcorn. Add pretzels and M&Ms and toss with tongs to coat again. Add sprinkles and marshmallows and toss again. Let snack mix set for 30 minutes before breaking apart and serving. Store in airtight container.

Peppermint Holiday Bars

- 1 family-size bag of OREO cookies (about 48 cookies)
- 1/3 c. melted butter
- 5 c. mini marshmallows
- ¾ c. milk
- ¼ tsp. peppermint extract
- 1 16 oz. container Cool Whip®
- 5 Hershey's milk chocolate bars (1.55 oz)
- Christmas sprinkles



twosisterscrafting.com

For the crust, crush whole Oreos. Add melted butter to cookies, combine and press into 9x13" glass pan. In bowl, combined marshmallows, milk and peppermint extract and heat in microwave to melt. Refrigerate marshmallow mixture until cool, about 40 minutes. Stir the mixture 3-4 times during cooling or it will harden. Fold in Cool Whip to cooled marshmallow mixture. Rough chop Hershey bars and fold into marshmallow mixture. Pour filling over Oreo crust. Sprinkle Christmas sprinkles on top of marshmallow mixture. Refrigerate until set.



Farmers Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

CEO:
Holi Weston

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
 Cary Gilman
 Mark Earhart
 Kevin Stender

Steve Chandler, Vice President
 RoxAnn Rhoads, Treasurer
 Janelle Peiffer
 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.