

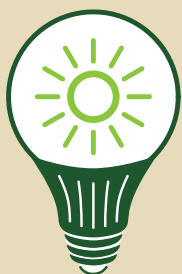
# FARMERS *Open Lines* ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2023

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 6 degrees.



How you landscape to conserve energy depends on where you live. Iowa's climate falls within a cool region that extends basically across the top half of the U.S. Here, you'll want to use dense windbreaks to protect your home from winter winds; allow the winter sun to reach south-facing windows, but also shade south and west windows from the direct summer sun. Deciduous trees that drop leaves in the fall are a great way to shade in the summer and allow warmth in the winter.

Source: energy.gov



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

## LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY:

# Thank You, Linemen!

**N**ational Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10. On this powerful day, Farmers Electric honors and thanks not just our dedicated linemen, but lineworkers around the world, for the hard work they do.

These dedicated, highly skilled workers put their lives on the line daily to keep our lights on. They work in the most dangerous conditions as they face challenging elements and situations. National Lineworker Appreciation Day is a day to #thankalinerworker for their work which goes largely unnoticed until you are without power.

At Farmers Electric, we pride ourselves on the extremely talented, brave, and passionate linemen we have on our team who keep the lights on for our more than 3,800 members.

Should you see a lineman on National Lineworker Appreciation Day, or any day for that matter, please give them a wave. Farmers Electric extends a huge thank you to all the brave line heroes across the nation working hard around the world to ensure that no one must worry about not having power. #thankalinerworker



#THANKALINEWORKER



Mike Auten

Chad Berrey

Joe Blankenship

Sam Dolan

Trey Eddy

Darrian Fischer

Jeff Held

Nick Kintigh

Josh Oder

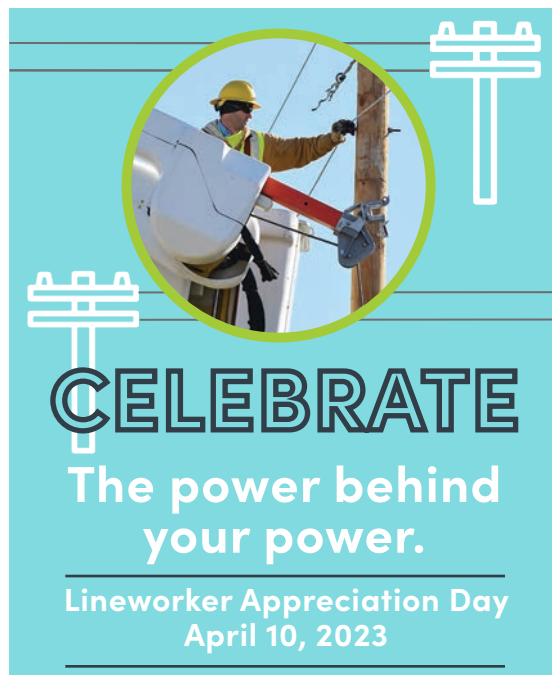
Paul Paxton

Dave Shike

Paul Weber

Mason Wisse

Ross Wright



**F**armers Electric joined more than 300 employees and elected directors from Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives March 15 for REC Day on the Hill.

The annual event allows RECs to advocate for issues moving through the 2023 Legislative Session that would impact REC members. The opportunity to meet face-to-face with our state's elected leaders is a valuable way to share our local perspective on issues that impact our rural communities and rural economic development. Advocates also educated legislators on the benefits of the cooperative business model, including local ownership, cost-based rates and democratic governance.



Attending from Farmers Electric were Holi Weston, CEO; Nick Kintigh, line foreman; board members Cary Gilman, Janelle Peiffer, Kris Petter, RoxAnn Rhoads, Kevin Stender and Kevin Tanner; and Board President Dan Westphal.

## Spring is Here! What Will You Plant?

**M**any members of Farmers Electric use the spring season to plant trees or upgrade landscaping. Since both Earth Day and Arbor Day occur in April, what better way to help absorb CO2 emissions than by planting a tree?

As an electric cooperative, we want to make sure our members understand that where you plant a tree is just as important as what type of tree it is, particularly if there are power lines in the area.

To make sure you're not encroaching on the co-op's right of way (the area around the pole the co-op is responsible to maintain), consult with your nursery or arborist on the height of the tree at full maturity. And if you have any questions about the co-op's right of way, or our planting guidelines, please give our office a call and we'd be happy to answer your questions.

### Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

#### LOW TREE ZONE

Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

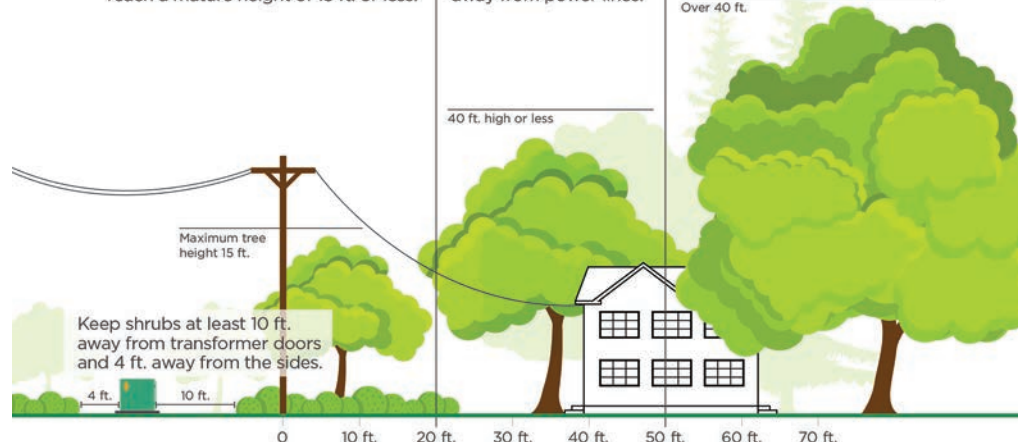
#### MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

#### LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.

Over 40 ft.



### START YOUR SPRING OUTDOOR PROJECTS RIGHT



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

**APRIL IS NATIONAL  
SAFE DIGGING MONTH**



## Osmose to Begin Pole Inspections

The cooperative has contracted with Osmose Utilities Services to conduct pole inspections across our service territory. Please keep an eye out and give them plenty of room as they work along roadways.

Each year your cooperative performs this critical function in order to identify poles in need of replacement sooner rather than later. Specifically, Osmose will use equipment to determine the degree of wood decay and damage to each pole. If a pole has been affected by wood-destroying fungi or insects, Osmose will tree the wood to provide an effective defense against any further pest damage to get the longest life possible out of the pole.

Poles will also be restored if there is some damage but not enough for a full replacement. Restoring poles is about a third of the cost of replacement and adds decades of service life.

We appreciate our members' patience as we continue this work again this year. Our goal with this program is to provide you with the best and most reliable service possible.

# Work Zone Safety: Work With Us

**W**ork zones are among the most dangerous places for utility workers, police officers, road construction crews and any job that finds itself working along or in roadways.

We emphasize safety above all else here at the cooperative, but we also understand that some things are beyond our control. That's where you come in.

Did you know that in Iowa, an average of seven people were killed each year between 2012 and 2021 in work zone related accidents? Nationwide, that number is almost 700 deaths. Excessive speeding is the primary cause of injuries and death, along with distracted driving, failure to yield the right-of-way, and following too close.

The safety of our line crew is our top priority, but we also need drivers to follow the rules of the road when it comes to driving through work zones, mainly:

**1. Move over and slow down.** A few years ago, Iowa updated its statute to include electric utility trucks. This means when you see one of our co-op trucks parked along the side of the road with its lights flashing, you **MUST** make room and slow down or be subject to a fine of up to \$1,000.

**2. Pay attention** to signs that indicate you must merge or that there are workers along or in the roadway. Better yet, use an app like Iowa 5-1-1 to check your travel route before you leave and see where there may be road closures or detours due to construction.

**3. Be cognizant of other drivers and give them plenty of room.** We all know that getting caught in

a slow-moving traffic line through a work zone can be frustrating, particularly if we are running late. Try to be patient and remember that arriving safely is better than not arriving at all.

This year, National Work Zone Awareness Week will be April 17-21. For more than 20 years, this national campaign has demonstrated the importance of work zone safety and spread the message that everyone plays a role in getting roadway workers - and our utility crews - home safely.

When out working, our crews will be wearing highly reflective clothing for better visibility and our trucks will have lights flashing, day or night. As required by law, we will have cones set out around our trucks and signs placed well in advance of the work area indicating there is a work zone coming up.

Work zone incidents impact everyone. Your driving habits can directly help - or harm - the well-being of other motorists, cyclists, utility workers and pedestrians in addition to yourself. By working with us, we can keep everyone safe.



**HOLI WESTON**  
CEO



## Pasta Pleasers

### Pasta Bake

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 jar spaghetti sauce
- 2 c. mozzarella shredded cheese
- 1 box small shell noodles

Brown ground beef and mix in a jar of spaghetti sauce. Place the mixture in the bottom of a 9x13 pan. Boil shell noodles according to the directions on box, drain and place on top of meat mixture. Top with cheese and bake at 350 for 20 minutes.

*Maxine Wheeler*



*thecomfortofcooking.com*

### Cheesy Taco Pasta

- 8 oz. rotini noodles
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 c. water
- 1 oz. pkg. taco seasoning
- 1 1/2 c. salsa
- 2 c. shredded fiesta cheese (divided)

Prepare rotini pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside. In a large pot, brown ground beef until fully cooked. Drain. Add taco seasoning and water to the ground beef, stirring until water is gone. Add cooked pasta and salsa and mix well. Add 1 1/2 c. cheese and mix until melted. Remove pot from heat and add remaining cheese to the top and allow to melt.



*motherthyme.com*

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Did you know there are several ways you can save energy during spring months?

Read the efficiency tips below and unscramble the bolded letters to reveal how you and your family can save energy during spring time.



Don't forget to check your work in the answer key below!

- Sealing air leaks around doors and **diwwson** saves energy and keeps your home comfortable.
- LED **hlgist** typically use 75% less energy than traditional incandescent light bulbs.
- Unplug devices and electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone **scragher**.
- Planting shade **esrte** around your home can block unwanted heat from the sun.
- Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off when you leave the room to save **yengre**.

Answer key: 1) windows 2) lights 3) chargers 4) trees 5) energy

### Enter to win \$5 off your electric bill!

Mail your recipe with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mail to: HWeston@farmersrec.com. Send recipes by the 15th of each month to be included in the newsletter.

**MAY: Beef recipes JUNE: Taste of Summer**



**Farmers Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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CEO:  
Holi Weston

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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.