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620-767-5144 | *www.flinthillsrec.com*

FLINT HILLS RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

NEWS

FLINT HILLS REC

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- Viasat Internet Services
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- Power Surge Protection
- Rebate Programs

For more information, call us at 620-767-5144 or visit our website at www.flinthillsrec.com.

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

FROM THE MANAGER

Reliable Power for Today — and Tomorrow

Ringing in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the general manager of Flint Hills REC, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of our cooperative.

Our team at Flint Hills REC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and use new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering — and empowering — our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across our territory. You may not realize it, but Flint Hills REC doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resource mix is more than 64% non-carbon emitting.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.


Chuck Goeckel

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, Flint Hills REC is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumer-members. During a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact outage location and analyzes damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Flint Hills REC save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

To improve our service, we continue to monitor trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Kansas and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, Flint Hills REC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable and safe electricity you expect and deserve — for today and tomorrow.

YOUTH PROGRAM TRIPS

Summer 2024

Students invited to apply for leadership opportunities

Flint Hills REC has a strong tradition of promoting youth leadership and that tradition will continue with two all-expenses-paid leadership programs this summer. Flint Hills REC will select one winner for each trip below:

- **ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR**
  JUNE 14-20, 2024
  Students will join 1,700 youth from across the nation in Washington, D.C. They will see the monuments and other attractions, as well as visit Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government works. Those selected for this experience may also apply for the Kansas seat on a national youth leadership council.

- **COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP**
  JULY 12-18, 2024
  High school students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming participate in this leadership camp located near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Campers will create a candy cooperative, hear from dynamic speakers, and raft down the Colorado River.

If you know of a student that is a junior or sophomore in high school with strong leadership potential who is ready for new experiences, would like to network with other student leaders, and is willing to learn more about themselves and their communities, encourage them to apply for these incredible leadership opportunities.

To apply, call our office at 620-767-5144, email us for an application at memberservices@flinthillsrec.com or visit www.flinthillsrec.com/youth-tour.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION BY FEB. 2, 2024

NOMINATIONS FOR TRUSTEE

The Nomination Committee is scheduled to meet on Jan. 4, 2024. Nominations for the Board of Trustees of Flint Hills Rural Electric Cooperative can also be made by petition, filed at the Council Grove office on or before the close of business on Jan. 19, 2024.

For more information on the cooperative's voting process, please visit Article V of the Member Bylaws located on our website www.flinthillsrec.com.

Beginner's Guide to the Electric Grid

Electricity plays an essential role in everyday life

It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we're starting our day, and in the evenings when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that spans the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

THE JOURNEY OF ELECTRICITY BEGINS AT POWER PLANTS

Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

Flint Hills REC receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo). We work closely with KEPCo to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system.

High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

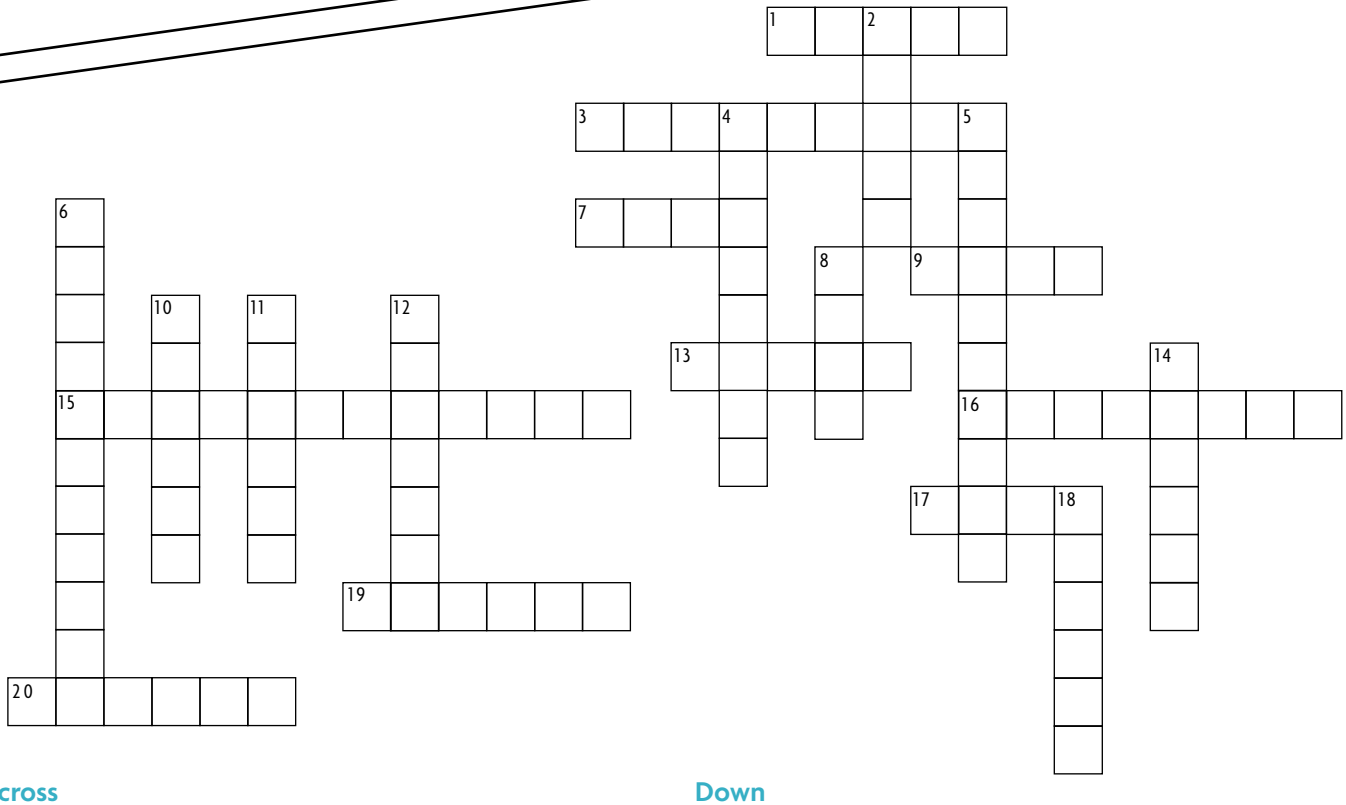
Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you — to power everyday life.

We're proud to be your local, trusted energy provider. From the time it's created to the time it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine — and one of our nation's greatest achievements.

Be Energy Wise!

Read the efficiency tips and find the missing words to solve the crossword puzzle!



Across

- 1. Purchase a dishwasher that saves _____ and energy.
- 3. Select efficient home office _____ and electronics.
- 7. Install ceiling _____ to reduce air conditioning costs.
- 9. Purchase a clothes _____ with a moisture sensor.
- 13. _____ between window/door frames and walls.
- 15. Install a _____ thermostat.
- 16. Use _____ for light or heat whenever practical.
- 17. Launder clothes in cold or _____ water.
- 19. Fix _____ faucets.
- 20. Turn off electronics and _____ chargers when not in use.

Down

- 2. Plant _____ to shelter your home from the elements.
- 3. Upgrade to a high-_____ furnace/air conditioner or heat pump.
- 4. _____ your attic, exterior walls, basement and crawl spaces.
- 5. Adjust your _____ when leaving home for an extended time.
- 6. Completely convert to a compact and other _____ lightbulbs.
- 8. _____ load dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers.
- 10. Set the water heaters to no _____ than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 11. Use window blinds or _____ to keep out cold or heat.
- 12. Purchase an insulating _____ for the hot water heaters.
- 14. Turn off _____ when you leave the room.
- 18. Install _____sensors, dimmers and timers for indoor and outdoor lighting.

ACROSS: 1. water, 3. equipment, 7. fans, 9. dryer, 13. caulk, 15. programmable, 16. sunlight, 17. warm, 19. leaky, 20. unplug
DOWN: 2. water, 3. efficiency, 4. insulate, 5. thermostat, 6. fluorescent, 8. fully, 10. higher, 11. shades, 12. blankets, 14. lights, 18. motion

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.COM