



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
 P.O. Box B
 1564 S. 1000 Rd., Council Grove, KS 66846
 620-767-5144
 www.flinthillsrec.com



**FLINT HILLS RURAL
 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

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- ▶ Viasat Internet Services
 - ▶ Online Payment Options
 - ▶ Outside Security Lighting
 - ▶ 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

Keeping Pets Comfortable Can Save on Energy Bills

I don't know about you, but I consider my four-legged companion part of the family. My family and I can't imagine life without our cat Peanut. I know others feel this way also, whether it's your cat or dog. That's why during the winter months, we make sure our whole family, including our four-legged members, is cozy — without taking a big “bite” out of our budget.

This month, I'd like to share a few simple ways you can make your home more comfortable this winter, which can ultimately help you save on energy bills and reduce your demand.

At the onset of the cold weather season, we replace the HVAC filter for better air quality and to help the unit operate more efficiently. You

can also keep your home cozier by caulking and weatherstripping windows and doors. If your home is particularly chilly, you can tape or affix heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against the cold. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

We know winter can be “ruff,” so we set our thermostat at 68 degrees, a “purr-fect” temperature for people and pets. This is especially important for smaller, short hair and senior dogs — not just for warmth, but for their



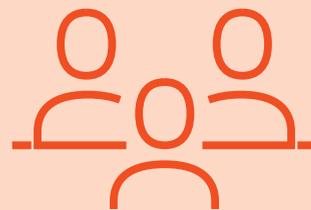
Chuck Goeckel

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Nominations for Trustee

The Nomination Committee is scheduled to meet on Jan. 5, 2023. 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 the twentieth day of January.

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



Keeping Pets Comfortable Can Save on Energy Bills

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general health. Puppies, kittens and older pets with arthritis or other ailments may have a harder time controlling their body heat and need the additional warmth when it's chilly out.

Pets that sleep close to the floor can be subject to cold drafts that enter your home through windows and exterior doors. If your pet's bed is near a window or door that feels drafty, tightly roll up a towel and place it near the bottom of the door or window to eliminate the draft. Cutting down on cold drafts helps everyone feel more comfortable during colder months.

If possible, elevate your pet's bed so it's not placed directly on a cold floor. An old chair or sofa cushion works well. If you don't use a dog bed, take some old blankets and create a doughnut shape on the cushion so the dog can snuggle and "nest" within the blanket. You can do the same for cats but on a smaller scale. Blankets enable pets to nestle into them, even when they aren't tired, and provide a comfortable place for dogs and cats to curl up.

During the day, open your blinds and curtains to allow sunlight to warm your home. Close window coverings at night for an added layer of insulation.

At Flint Hills REC, we want to help you save energy and money. Check out our website at www.flinthillsrec.com/together-we-save for additional energy-saving tips.

We can't control the weather, but we can provide advice to help you save energy and keep your family and furry friends more comfortable during the winter season.

Heating Equipment Leading Cause of Fires

Heating equipment, such as space heaters, kerosene heaters, fireplaces and wood-burning stoves, is a leading cause of fires in U.S. homes, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The term "homes" includes one- and two-family homes (including manufactured homes), apartments, townhouses and other multi-family dwellings.

During a recent four-year period, local fire departments responded to an estimated average of 48,530 fires involving heating equipment each year. The fires resulted in 500 civilian (non-first responder) deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries and \$1.1 billion in direct property damage, according to NFPA's Home Heating Fires report published in 2021.

In Addition:

- ▶ Heating equipment caused one in seven home fires and 19% of home fire deaths.
- ▶ Most home heating fire deaths (81%) included stationary or portable space heaters.
- ▶ More than half of the home heating fire deaths were caused by placing heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as furniture, clothing, mattresses or bedding.
- ▶ Nearly half (48%) of all home heating fires occurred in the time frame of December, January and February.
- ▶ Failure to clean equipment, such as chimney flues, accounted for a quarter of all heating equipment fires. Approximately two in five home heating equipment fires involved items

that ran on what is considered solid fuel, such as wood-burning or pellet stoves or wood-burning fireplaces. However, electric-powered heating devices were responsible for the largest share of losses, accounting for more than half of the fatalities, three in five injuries and two-fifths of the property damage.

Follow These Safety Tips to Use Space Heaters Safely:

- ▶ Read all instructions and use space heaters only as recommended.
 - ▶ Do not leave space heaters unattended.
 - ▶ Plug them directly into an outlet; most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by space heaters cycling on and off.
 - ▶ Unplug any other items from the outlet you are using and try to use a dedicated circuit to avoid overload.
 - ▶ Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
 - ▶ Turn the heaters off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
 - ▶ Do not use heaters that are in disrepair or have frayed cords or damaged plugs.
 - ▶ Place them on flat, level surfaces and never on furniture, counters or carpet, which can overheat.
 - ▶ Unplug and put space heaters away (out of the reach of children) when not in use.
- Use space heaters with care. For additional safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Did you know insulating your electric water heater could reduce standby heat loss by 25% to 45%? This could save you 7% to 16% on annual water heating costs.

Insulating your electric water heater is an easy, inexpensive project that can improve energy efficiency and save you money each month. The Department of Energy rates this project level as medium difficulty, meaning most homeowners can tackle this project on their own.

Visit energy.gov for project tips and additional considerations. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



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 in-person leadership programs this summer. Flint Hills REC will select two individuals and they will have their choice to attend one of two all-expenses-paid trips to either the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour or the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

The two winners will also receive a \$500 scholarship. We will also select an alternate in the event one of the winners can not attend their trip and the alternate will receive a \$300 scholarship.

The contest is open to all current high school sophomores and juniors in Flint Hills' service area whose parents or guardians are members of Flint Hills RECA. Contest entrants will be interviewed and required to take an open book test covering material that will be made available to each contestant.

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour — June 15-22, 2023

Students will join 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 also can apply for the Kansas seat on a national youth leadership council.

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp — July 14-20, 2023

Held near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, high school students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming participate in this leadership camp. Together, they will create a candy cooperative, hear from dynamic speakers, and raft down the Colorado River.

How to Apply

If you know of a student 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, you can call our office at 620-767-5144, email us for an application at memberservices@flinthillsrec.com or visit our website at <https://flinthillsrec.com/youth-tour>. **APPLY BY MARCH 1, 2023.**

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour



Youth Tour delegates pose outside the White House.



During Youth Tour, students visit many of the memorials around Washington, D.C.

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp



At camp, youth form a candy cooperative, learning the ins and outs of the co-op business model.



Campers go whitewater rafting during camp to test their communication and teamwork skills.

APPLICATION Due March 1, 2023

Complete and return this application to Flint Hills RECA, Attn: Travis Griffin, P.O. Box B, Council Grove, KS 66846, or tgriffin@flinthillsrec.com.

Name of Applicant

Date of Birth

Address

City, State Zip

School

Year in School

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Phone Number

I AGREE THAT ALL INFORMATION SUPPLIED IN THIS APPLICATION IS ACCURATE AND TRUE.

Signature of Applicant

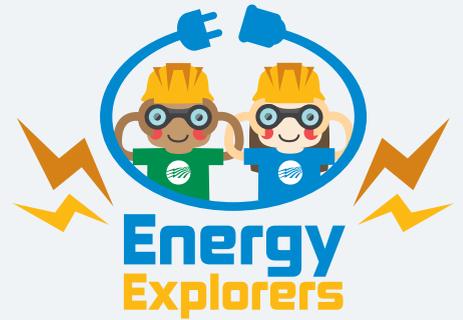
I HEREBY GRANT PERMISSION FOR

TO APPLY FOR THE 2023 COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP OR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR SPONSORED BY FLINT HILLS RECA.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

PLEDGE TO SAVE ENERGY

It's a new year, and that means it's time to think about how you'll make a positive impact in 2023! You can help the planet by saving energy at home and at school. Take the pledge to save energy this year by completing the form below. Post it on your refrigerator or at school to remind others about easy ways to save energy and costs while helping our environment.



I Pledge to Save Energy



Name: _____

I pledge to do my part to save energy and help our planet.
Every day, I'll do the following to save energy at home
and/or at school.

My Daily Energy-Saving Plan:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Need some ideas to help you get started?

Here are a few easy ways you can save energy every day.

- ▶ Turn off all lights when you leave a room.
- ▶ Unplug phone and other device chargers when they're not being used.
- ▶ Turn off running water while brushing your teeth.
- ▶ Remind family members to wash clothes in cold water.
- ▶ Turn off ceiling fans when you leave a room.