



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
P.O. Box B  
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620-767-5144  
www.flinthillsrec.com



## FLINT HILLS RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# NEWS

### Flint Hills RECA

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**Chuck Goeckel**  
General Manager

### Member Services

- ▶ 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](http://www.flinthillsrec.com)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

### FROM THE MANAGER

## Making Positive Impact on Community, Earth ‘Cooperatively’



**Chuck Goeckel**

On April 22, we mark the 50th anniversary of the original Earth Day event that mobilized 20 million Americans and became a catalyst for individuals and businesses to rethink, reinvent

and recycle for the benefit of people and our planet.

Cooperatives across the country have led the electric utility industry in actively expanding their fuel portfolios to include an array of renewable sources while educating their consumer-members on best practices in reducing energy use.

Co-ops have been using clean, renewable hydropower for more than 75 years. In addition to the roughly 10 gigawatts of hydropower purchased from federally-

run dams, co-ops have developed an additional 692 megawatts of hydropower with 724 co-ops in 43 states using hydro as a source of power.

Solar’s flexible and scalable abilities have prompted co-ops to triple their solar capacity in the last three years. In Kansas alone, both generation and transmission cooperatives that supply power to the 27 distribution cooperatives including Flint Hills REC, have or will soon have solar included in their power supply mix. Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo) began commercial operation of its Prairie Sky Solar Farm in 2017, and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, at press time, was nearing completion of the Johnson Corner Solar Project. In addition, several electric co-ops serving Kansans have invested in their own solar power.

A drive in either direction of the Sunflower State showcases the expansion of wind energy. In fact, since the

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## Flint Hills Suspends Disconnects

Flint Hills REC will suspend all disconnects for non-pay until May 1, 2020.

With the uncertainty created by the coronavirus pandemic, we know that our consumer-members are facing many concerns. Effective immediately we will forgo the disconnecting of electric and internet service to our consumer-members for non-payment until May 1, 2020. Bills, late notices and disconnect notices will continue to be sent as usual. We encourage any member who is facing financial difficulty and can not pay their bill to call us at 620-767-5144.

# ANNUAL MEETING CANCELED

In an abundance of caution, the Flint Hills RECA board and management are **CANCELING OUR ANNUAL MEETING** previously scheduled for April 7 due to concerns regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus). Visit our website, Facebook or call our office for more information.





## 10 REASONS WE APPRECIATE LINEWORKERS

Although we appreciate each and every co-op employee, it takes a special kind of person to be an electric lineworker. Here are the top 10 reasons we appreciate our lineworkers.

- 10 They are specially trained to work on power lines and related equipment.
- 9 They are dedicated to safely and efficiently restoring power following weather or outages.
- 8 They work overtime, many holidays and get up in the middle of the night to help restore power.
- 7 They enjoy serving our communities.
- 6 They aren't afraid of heights.
- 5 They help other electric co-ops with major outages at a moment's notice.
- 4 They lend their talents in many ways, including educating the public about electrical safety.
- 3 They have each other's backs.
- 2 They are trained to work safely on both dead and live power lines.
- 1 We couldn't provide excellent service without them or any of our other dedicated employees.

## On April 13 Remember to #ThankALineworker

Lineworkers serve on the frontlines of our nation's energy needs, and on April 13, 2020, Flint Hills REC, along with other electric cooperatives across the country, will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on.

Line crews work around the clock, sometimes in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. Whether they're restoring power after a major storm or maintaining critical infrastructure to our electric system, lineworkers are at the heart of our co-op.

When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations and birthdays. A service-oriented mentality is one of the

many admirable characteristics of an electric lineworker.

Flint Hills REC is proud to honor the 12 lineworkers who maintain over 2500 miles of power lines in our service territory.

To show our appreciation we would like for you to take the time to send a letter or card thanking our linemen for what they do. You can send your letter or card to Flint Hills REC, attn; Travis Griffin, P.O. Box B, Council Grove, KS 66846. We will make sure and share them with our linemen.

Flint Hills REC invites all co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do. On April 13, you can use #ThankALineworker on social media to show your support for the brave men and women who power our lives.

## THANK YOU LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY IS APRIL 13



Flint Hills RECA formally recognizes April 13 to honor the men and women who keep the lights on. Show your appreciation by sending a thank you letter or card to:

**FLINT HILLS RECA**

Attn: National Lineworker Appreciation Day  
P.O. Box B, Council Grove, KS 66846

## Take Control of a Controlled Burn

Properly controlled burns can have many benefits for agricultural land. However, if these burns are not managed safely, they can result in property damage, power outages, injury and even death. Flint Hills REC urges you to make safety a priority and take special considerations when burning near electric utility lines.

First, make yourself aware of laws and regulations. Burns should only be conducted by those who are experienced with fire and burn paths. Avoid burning near public roads or airports as this can create a potentially dangerous visibility hazard. Alert all those who may be potentially affected by the burn — including neighbors, the local fire department, and law enforcement. Ensure that you have the proper clothing, equipment, and tools. For personal safety, all those near the flames should wear clothing made of natural fibers or approved for firefighting.

Take special note of electric utility poles and lines. Burning a pole could result in a widespread power outage and be costly for those responsible for the fire. The cost to replace just one utility pole can range from \$1,500 to \$2,500. Remove grass and weeds around the utility pole prior to burning and water

down the area near the poles as to not encourage fires to encroach. While controlling the fire, keep water away from electric lines.

If a pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert your electric utility to handle the possible electrical dangers. Even if you think you have been able to extinguish the fire yourself, alert your electric utility to the fact that it caught fire. The preservative on the inside could still be burning the pole from the inside out. In addition, if the pole catches on fire, it could create shock or electrocution hazards to those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from the downed lines.

Carbon particles in smoke can conduct electricity. It is also possible for smoke produced during the burning to conduct electricity and cause an electrical discharge from the line. To reduce this risk, the fire should not cross under electric lines.

Keep environmental factors such as temperature, humidity and wind direction and speed in mind. The wind speed in the area should be low and in a steady direction as to not let the fire get out of control. As environmental



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factors are subject to change, check forecasts as well as actual conditions before you begin the burn.

Local resources, through conservation offices, are available to develop a plan and assist in training for a controlled burn. Depending on local regulations, you may need to obtain a burn permit. Preparation and timely planning will ensure a safe, controlled burn for you and all involved.

## Making Positive Impact ... *Continued from page 16A* ▶

beginning of 2008, wind generating capacity in Kansas has more than tripled, making Kansas one of the top five states in the nation. Nationally, wind development has surged in the last 10 years and is now second only to hydro in the co-op's renewable portfolio.

Flint Hills REC also educates you, our consumer-members, on ways to reduce your energy use, helping you help the environment. There are many ways we can help the environment, and some are easier than you'd think. Here are a few simple actions you can take now to reduce your energy use. Audit your light-bulbs. Swapping out any remaining incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency, and it's one of the easiest ways to reduce your energy bill.

Maintain your HVAC system. Replace your home air filters to allow your HVAC system to run more efficiently. Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Chang-

ing the filters makes your unit run more efficiently — keeping your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Examine your smart or programmable thermostat. Make sure it is programmed for the current season and family schedule. This is one of the best tools at your fingertips, however, you can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

Seal windows and doors. Seal leaks with weather stripping and caulk to keep cool air indoors during warm months and prevent cold air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and increase efficiency.

As we celebrate Earth Day this April, let's continue to work together and make a positive impact on our local community, the Sunflower State — and our beautiful planet.