

**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS



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Flint Hills RECA Welcomes New Members

Geary Estates Expansion Brings New Members to Co-op

Flint Hills RECA supplies electricity to the apartment complex in Grandview Plaza, known as Geary Estates.

This complex started renting out apartments in the fall of 2008. The original complex consisted of 252 apartments and the apartments are in high demand.

Geary Estates has recently added two more buildings to this complex. The first building is complete and Flint Hills RECA has been receiving applications for electrical service from tenants for this building. Based on applications, it won't be long before the second building has reached occupancy, too.

The apartments are located just off of I-70 at exit 301. This location is ideally suited to help with the housing of troops and their families



The Geary Estates apartments, located off I-70 and exit 301, have expanded adding new members to Flint Hills RECA.

stationed at Fort Riley.

These apartments and any future apartments at Geary Estates are a welcomed addition to the Flint Hills RECA's customer base. Geary Estates is the largest apartment complex facility that Flint Hills RECA has had the opportunity to serve. We welcome all of the Geary Estate tenants as co-op members to Flint Hills RECA.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Flint Hills RECA's office will be closed on December 24-25 and January 1 to celebrate the holidays.



CO-OP Connections Update		Have you taken advantage of your Connections Card yet?	
	Prescriptions Filled	Savings to Flint Hills' Members	
October	22	\$273.42	
2009 Total	279	\$4,313.15	

FEMA Update

Flint Hills RECA was notified in April 2009 that we were approved for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds to repair and/or replace the electrical lines damaged by the December 2007 ice storm.

We have made progress on this project and wanted to keep you informed about the status of our crews.

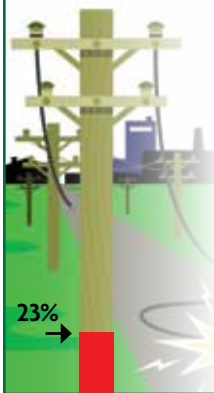
As of November 1, we have completed 114 miles of line construction. We still have 378 miles left to complete—all within a two year period.

If you see a Flint Hills RECA work crew in your area, they are likely replacing the old power lines and poles. When they switch to the new line, you may experience an outage of an hour or two. Before this happens, we will call the phone number listed under your account to let you know about the planned outage.

Along with our line crews, we also have a couple of contracted tree crews working in our service area. These tree crews will be working ahead of the line crews to clear the area for the new lines to be built.

We will keep you updated on these FEMA projects on our web site. Just go to www.flinthillsrec.com and check the home page for current updates.

We all appreciate your patience with us as we work to improve our service to you, our members.



Project Status

As of November 1, we have completed 114 miles of our 492 miles of FEMA rebuild work.

23%



Plotting Out Big Energy Savings



Flint Hills RECA encourages you to learn how you can save money by checking out the auditing checklist located at www.TouchstoneEnergySavers.com.

As cold weather sets in, your thoughts may turn to the garden and what you'll put in next spring. By the time the soil warms enough for the first seed, you'll likely have scribbled out half a dozen or more blueprints for what to plant and where. In the end, your garden will be better for it.

Like most things, getting things right calls for a certain amount of planning—an understanding of how all the rows work together.

We at Flint Hills RECA often suggest ways that you can reduce your electric bills by making home energy efficiency improvements. Weatherization—sealing air leaks and installing the proper amount of insulation—can make a big difference.

But just as scattering seeds randomly usually yields a lean harvest, energy efficiency upgrades done without knowledge of how your residence uses energy overall may not produce significant savings.

Spending a few hours on a home energy audit—a full assessment of how your house uses energy and

where problems lie—will ensure that money designated for efficiency is spent wisely. For instance, investing in additional insulation has little impact on heating bills if a drafty front door conspires against it.

On average, weatherization reduces heating bills by 32 percent and overall energy bills by more than \$350 per year. As you can see, the potential payback can be substantial.

You can also conduct a basic home energy audit with a simple but diligent walk-through. When auditing your home, keep a checklist of places you have inspected and problems you find. Most trouble spots can be found in a few key areas. Checklists are available through Touchstone Energy Cooperatives® Home Energy Saver at www.touchstoneenergysavers.com.

Create a plan before tackling home energy efficiency improvements. When it comes to weatherization, a little work up front goes a long way.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS

Energy Commandment No. 5

Thou Shalt Use the “Better Way”

BY DOUG RYE

A few mornings ago my wife said to me, “This would be a perfect morning to go to the farmers market. It is CLOUDY, about 70 degrees and NO WIND.” Even if we don’t buy anything, it would be a nice morning together. (Men, no comment about spending).

Well, I agreed and proceeded to get dressed for the market. There were about 20 vendors at the market and I like to talk to all of them. I want



“On most days, generating electricity with solar doesn’t even reduce a “toe-print.””

to know if they actually grew or made the products that they were selling.

The first person I met was a lady who had small bouquets of wildflowers. I told her that I would buy my wife flowers if she didn’t act up or spend any money. We proceeded around the square and purchased fresh blackberries, tomatoes, peaches, greens, grapes and two bluebird houses. We ended up at the flower lady’s table. She smiled and said, “You are back.” I said, “My name is Doug Rye. Have you ever heard of Doug Rye?”

“Yes, you are the man that writes in the cooperative magazine. What do you think of solar?” she asked.

I looked straight up toward the sky and turned 360 degrees, not saying a word. Several seconds passed as I continued to look at the sky. Finally, she said “It wouldn’t work very well

today, would it?”

I responded that it would not. She asked, “How about wind?”

Yep, you guessed it, I looked toward the sky and the trees, turned 360 degrees and she started laughing as she said, “It wouldn’t work very well today, would it?”

I encouraged her to read the November issue of *Kansas Country Living* to learn the “Better Way.”

Why do so many ask about solar and wind? It is because they care about the world, our nation and their own houses. That is just like me and most of you folks. Part of that concern is about the carbon “footprint” created as a result of energy generation. I don’t know of any person who objects to reducing the footprint. On most days, however, generating electricity at your house with solar doesn’t even reduce a “toe-print.”

In my opinion, sealing the duct work and adding attic insulation would reduce more “toe-prints” than solar. Now, caulk and install a geothermal heat pump and you might reduce the print by five toes and a half foot. You simply get better results for less money, even when the sun is not shining and the wind isn’t blowing.

Folks, I care as much about this country and the environment as anyone else. It is none of my business what you do, I just want you to know the “Better Way.”

DOUG RYE, is a licensed architect and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show. You can contact Doug at 888-Doug-Rye. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.

Practice Holiday Electrical Safety This Season

Flint Hills RECA reminds you to keep electrical safety in mind when decorating for the holiday season:

- ▶ **Before decorating**, read and follow the manufacturers’ instructions concerning installation and maintenance of all decorative electrical products.
- ▶ **Use lights** and other electrical decorations certified by a recognized independent testing laboratory such as CSA, UL, or ETL.
- ▶ **When decorating outdoors**, be sure to use lights and other electrical decorations certified for outdoor use.
- ▶ **Inspect each decoration** before plugging into an outlet. Cracked, frayed, loose or bare wires, as well as loose connections may cause electrical shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items.
- ▶ **Unplug electrical** decorations before replacing light bulbs or fuses.
- ▶ **Never nail** or staple light strings or extension cords.
- ▶ **Do not connect** more than three light string sets together.
- ▶ **Do not overload** extension cords – they can overheat and start a fire. Keep all outdoor extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water.
- ▶ **Never use electric** lights on a metallic tree.
- ▶ **Do not allow children** or pets to play with electrical decorations. Even small light decorations can produce a fatal shock if they are misused.
- ▶ **Turn off all** electrical decorations before leaving home or going to bed.
- ▶ **Plug outdoor** electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable GFCIs can be purchased wherever electrical supplies are sold.

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