

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box B  
1564 S. 1000 Rd., Council Grove, KS 66846  
620-767-5144  
[www.flinthillsrec.com](http://www.flinthillsrec.com)



**FLINT HILLS RURAL  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

# NEWS

## Flint Hills RECA

### Board of Trustees

**Shawn Potts**  
President

**James Witt**  
Vice President

**Korby Effland**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Dale Andres**  
Trustee

**Cary Granzow**  
Trustee

**Trey Hinkson**  
Trustee

**Terry Olsen**  
Trustee

**Roger Zimmerman**  
Trustee

### Staff

**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

### We're Here to Serve You

"We're here to serve you." We've all heard this phrase countless times. These words may sound generic, but to us — your local electric cooperative — they mean everything.

Flint Hills REC was created to serve our community. Back in the day, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good. In our case, it was the only way the community could bring electricity to the area where there was none. In doing so, Flint Hills REC helped the community thrive. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread woven throughout our history.

Today, we are continuing to power the community. While our focus has remained steady on providing reliable energy to our members, today's energy landscape and consumer expectations

are far different than they were decades ago. That's why we're adapting, to keep pace with changing technology, evolving needs and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy adviser means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and information on a broad range of energy topics. For example, if you're looking for ways to save energy, check out our website at [www.flinthillsrec.com](http://www.flinthillsrec.com) for energy-saving tips and ideas to increase the energy efficiency of your home. Understanding how your home uses energy can help determine the best ways to modify energy use and thereby keep more money in your wallet.



**Chuck Goeckel**

*Continued on page 12B ▶*



## We're Here to Serve You Continued from page 12A ▶

If you're considering a rooftop solar installation, we are here to give you an unbiased view of the pros and cons. Investing in a solar system is a major decision, and it's important to fully understand the costs, restrictions, and potential energy savings. Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. We understand that homeowners must complete their due diligence, and we're here to help you through that process.

In a similar vein, we recognize that some members are considering electric vehicle options. Flint Hills REC can provide a candid assessment of residential and business

charging requirements for all types of EVs. No matter what our members drive, we want to help you achieve energy savings.

So, the next time you hear Flint Hills REC use the phrase “we're here to serve you,” we hope you know that we mean it. Service is deeply ingrained into who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we've found additional ways to serve you and provide more options for you to power your life.

We're here whenever you need us. Connect with us online, in person, or through our social media channels. However you choose to connect, please let us know how we can serve you better.

## Get Smart About Home Lighting

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only choice for illuminating our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative and intelligent technologies, which includes smart lighting. Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers an array of cutting-edge functionality and convenience. Let's look at the main benefits of smart lighting options.

### SMART LIGHTING IS ENERGY

**EFFICIENT.** Most smart lightbulbs use LED technology, which is much more efficient than traditional incandescent lighting. Additionally, smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home, ultimately resulting in less energy used for lighting.

**SMART LIGHTING PROVIDES CONVENIENCE AND CONTROL.** Most smart lightbulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings from anywhere in your home or when you're away. Whether you want to set a schedule for lighting or adjust brightness levels, these smart options offer effortless control from the comfort of, well, anywhere!

**SMART OPTIONS EMPOWER YOU TO PERSONALIZE HOME LIGHTING.** Bright, warm, purple, green — whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white lightbulbs. If you want to create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for a variety of vibrant colors. The possibilities are endless.

While smart lighting offers convenience and control, keep in mind your wall light switch will need to stay “on” for you to control the smart lightbulb from your phone or via voice command. To use a smart lightbulb, the wall switch it's connected to must be “on” so the bulb receives power, which enables it to connect to a Wi-Fi network.

If you need additional options to operate the lights, consider a smart light switch. Today's smart switches tend to

play nicely with smart lightbulbs. If you want to control your smart lightbulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches that include a built-in feature that allows both. Many smart light switches include motion detectors as well.

If you're looking to take the plunge and integrate multiple smart lightbulbs to your home lighting system, your best bet may be a kit, like the Philips Hue Starter Kit. Most kits include several bulbs and any additional tools you'll need to get started.

If you're new to smart home tech and looking to start small, try a smart lightbulb in a high-traffic area of your home. It's also worth noting that smart plugs are a great starter option and allow convenient control of lamps or other lighting fixtures that are plugged in to a wall outlet. Smart plugs are inexpensive and simply plug in to your existing outlet. Electrical items that are connected to the smart plug can be controlled from a smart phone app, just like smart lightbulbs.

Whether you're looking for more convenience, colorful options or better ways to manage energy use, smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!



Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa.

# Use Energy Wisely

We hear a lot about peak energy demand, but what is it and how does it impact electricity use? As the name implies, peak energy demand occurs when energy consumption is at its highest. In much of the U.S., energy use spikes in winter and summer due to the need to cool and heat indoor spaces.

Although it depends on where you live, summertime energy demand increases when outdoor temperatures soar. In Kansas, peak demand is generally on weekdays between 3-6 p.m., when most individuals are returning home, cooking dinner, and preparing for evening activities.

That is why Flint Hills REC offers its **PEAK ALERT SAVINGS PROGRAM**. Members can receive an energy credit by making a qualifying reduction of their demand during summer peak load hours. The more you lower your usage during the peak load hour, the bigger the credit you could be eligible for.

**DURING THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 3-6 P.M. (EXCLUDING JULY 4)**, this program will be active on peak load days. Flint Hills REC will notify you via email, text or on the website of these days so you know when to reduce your usage. These reductions could be as simple as moving everyday household chores outside of peak hours. Call our office to sign up for the program and to learn more.

Changing the time of day you use energy can help lower your energy demand and avoid interruptions or service glitches that can occur during peak demand times. To do this, consider run-

**Making small changes to conserve energy can help even out energy use, save money on your utility bill, reduce your demand and avoid service interruptions caused by high demand.**

ning major appliances during off-peak times and not at the same time. Smart devices or appliances that have delay starts can also help achieve this goal.

Do your part to use energy wisely when temperatures are high. In the summer months, help decrease demand by doing the following:

- ▶ Turn your thermostat temperature up by 2 degrees or more and program your thermostat to a higher temperature when no one is home.
- ▶ If you do not have one, consider purchasing a smart thermostat.
- ▶ Make sure your HVAC system is in good working order. Remember to keep your unit and the area around it clean and clear.
- ▶ Use bathroom and kitchen fans temporarily to remove heat and humidity. Remember: Fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off before you leave the room.
- ▶ Use your countertop toaster, air fryer and/or convection oven instead of your oven. Even better, keep the heat outside by cooking food on the grill.
- ▶ Use major appliances in the early morning or late evening. Delay turning on your dishwasher or clothes washer until you're heading to bed.
- ▶ Program smart devices to run appliances at off-peak times.
- ▶ Close window coverings during the hottest part of the day.
- ▶ Use minimal lighting and try using LED lighting instead of traditional incandescent bulbs.
- ▶ Turn off and disconnect electronics that are not in use.
- ▶ Turn off stand-alone dehumidifiers.

Making small changes to conserve energy can help even out energy use, save money on your utility bill, reduce your demand and avoid service interruptions caused by high demand.

For more information about how you can conserve energy and reduce your demand call our office at 620-767-5144 or visit our website at [www.flinthillsrec.com](http://www.flinthillsrec.com).

## FREE & EASY ways to save energy

(Spoiler Alert: Your clothes and dishes won't know the difference)

Major home appliances account for approximately 16% of an average home's energy consumption.

16%



- ▶ Run full loads of laundry instead of several smaller ones.
- ▶ Use cold water to wash your clothes.

- ▶ Keep your refrigerator at 35-38 F and your freezer at 0 F.
- ▶ Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators.



- ▶ Skip the heated dry setting on your dishwasher.
- ▶ Fully load your dishwasher before washing.

- ▶ When buying new appliances, consider Energy Star® versions.
- ▶ Unplug appliances you're not using.



Time to replace that old appliance? Replacing older versions with energy-efficient models can save the average household more than

**\$500 per year.**

SOURCES: NATIONAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, U.S. ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

# HOW SOLAR PANELS WORK WORD SEARCH



Did you know energy from the sun can be used to create electricity? Read the following information about how solar panels work, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.

- ▶ Solar panels contain **photovoltaic** cells that convert sunlight into electricity.
- ▶ **Sunlight** hits the **solar** panels and generates a direct current.
- ▶ The direct **current** flows to an inverter, which converts it to an alternating current. (This is the kind of electricity we use in our homes.)
- ▶ The alternating current flows from the **inverter** to the home's breaker box, where it's used to **power** appliances and electrical devices in your home.
- ▶ If the solar **panels** generate more **electricity** than the home needs, the unused electricity is sent back to the power lines.

C N B S T T G Z O V S U Y V K  
 I H Y I C T N H Z O V K W Z A  
 A B N G E O Z E L P L K K B R  
 T H T Q Y N P A R F N R C A E  
 L X O D W G R Q W R B Z S U T  
 O P K T X D S T O Y U T U Q R  
 V O U U O S L E N A P C Y S E  
 O F S W R V X E H Z P D W U V  
 T F B E X I O B Q G F P Y N N  
 O V W I W O N L E F P X V L I  
 H O Y C Z J K Z T A J F F I F  
 P R X S F Z K E U A D P Q G V  
 B K E L E C T R I C I T Y H G  
 V S B F U E I U E J N C C T Z  
 J M T V H W S M V O K E L R N