



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

Board of Trustees

Roger Zimmerman
 President

Shawn Potts
 Vice President

Korby Efland
 Secretary/Treasurer

Dale Andres
 Trustee

Cary Granzow
 Trustee

Tim Miser
 Trustee

Terry Olsen
 Trustee

James Witt
 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

**This institution is an equal
 opportunity provider
 and employer**

FROM THE MANAGER

Capital Credits and Annual Meeting

**Return of Member's
 Patronage Capital**

On Jan. 20, 2020, the board of trustees voted to retire approximately \$427,000 of member capital credits in the form of cash payments to members and credits on the April 1, 2020, electric bills. With this retirement, Flint Hills REC has retired over \$10 million of capital credits through estate and general retirements. The 2020 general retirement is equivalent to an “average” reduction in retail cost of electricity of approximately one-half cent per kWh.

Annual Meeting

It's also that time of year again — annual meeting time! On behalf of Flint Hills REC, I'd like to personally invite you to join us on Tuesday, April 7, at 5:30 p.m. at the Herington Community Building. We look forward to gathering with you, members of the co-op community, to catch up, listen to what you have to say and enjoy good food and fellowship.

Our annual meeting makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you and your family. While Flint Hills REC provides convenient options for

bill paying and communications, there is no substitute for in-person engagement.

When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we improve the quality of life for all in our corner of the world. Perhaps you feel you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to attend the annual meeting. However, every energy bill you pay to the co-op helps ensure better service and reliability for the whole community. Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements that impact the reliability and affordability of your energy, and we want to hear from you so we can make informed decisions as we plan for the future.

If you've never attended our annual meeting, or if it's been awhile, please stop by. Our co-op family looks forward to visiting with you! We'll have food, fun and door prizes, so mark your calendar for the annual meeting on April 7 at the Herington Community Building.



Chuck Goeckel

Mark Your Calendars!

Annual Meeting April 7

The Flint Hills RECA annual meeting will be held April 7 at the Herington Community Building. Dinner will be served starting at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. We hope you will attend the annual meeting and take part in the business of the cooperative.

April 2020						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Mail-In Ballots Due March 27

Cast Your Vote for Board of Trustee Election

The Flint Hills RECA mail-in ballots were mailed on March 3 for the 2020 election of the board of trustees. The new mail-in ballot voting process allows every consumer-member the opportunity to cast their vote by mail. Following is an explanation of how the voting process will work.

Voting

The election of trustees shall be by mail-in ballot. Only those nominees selected by the nominating committee or nominated by petition shall appear on the mail-in ballot. The ballots were mailed to all active members on March 3, 2020. All ballots must be returned to the Flint Hills RECA office and in our possession by the March 27, 2020, deadline.

Election Committee

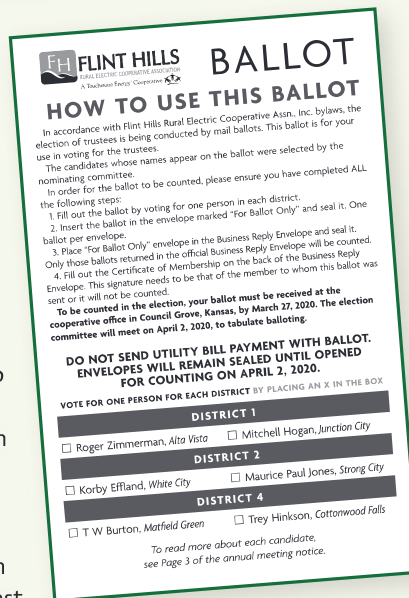
The board selected an election committee, consisting of at least three qualified members of the cooperative. They will be responsible for opening and counting all mail-in ballots. The election committee will follow a confidential counting process during the ballot opening meeting, which will be held on April 2, 2020. The cooperative's legal council will also be present at the counting meeting.

Annual Meeting

The voting results will be announced, along with other cooperative business, at the April 7, 2020, annual meeting. Results will also be posted on our website after the annual meeting and in the

May 2020 *Kansas Country Living* magazine. The Flint Hills RECA 82nd Annual Meeting will be held at the Herington Community Building, with registration and meal starting at 5:30 p.m. There will be no voting of trustees at the annual meeting. Your vote for trustees is important because Flint Hills RECA is run by a democratically elected board of trustees. The board is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. The trustees you vote for are a part of your local communities and are committed to remaining dedicated to providing to the co-op's consumer-members safe, reliable and affordable electric service. For more

information on the voting process, please call 620-767-5144 or visit our website, www.flinthillsrec.com, and click on the Member Services tab to view the cooperative's member bylaws. Please remember to cast your vote, and return it on time to ensure your cooperative is in good hands for the future.



Unruly Trees Interfere with Power

Ever wonder who gets to decide when a tree needs cut down or trimmed? Electric utility companies manage tree trimming and vegetation growth because of the importance of interference between vegetation and our infrastructure. Utilities make the call to cut down or trim trees according to state and local requirements and laws, applicable safety codes, and any limitations or obligations specified in rights-of-way agreements.

The trees and vegetation may be in your yard, but it's the responsibility of the electric utility to ensure reliable power for everyone. An electric utility is granted an easement or a right-of-way on private property to build and maintain electric power lines.

The utility is always required to maintain the appropriate clearance between trees and transmission lines. For example, in the summer, power lines sag as they expand, due to air temperature and heavy use. Clearances around the lines must account for this, as well as wind, which causes the lines to sway. So on a cool, still day, it may appear there is ample, or even excessive, clearance, but that clearance is needed for hot or windy days.

Clear power lines make it easier and safer for lineworkers to access lines and fix problems that occur. When clearing around lines, we make sure proper pruning techniques are used to preserve tree health as much as possible. Pruning is the first line of defense against unruly trees. Sometimes a tree



Clear power lines make it easier and safer for lineworkers to access lines and fix problems that occur.

must be removed. This is a last resort for certain scenarios, for example when a fast-growing tree is located directly under a power line or for trees that are leaning, in decline, cracked or split.

Electric utilities usually prune or remove vegetation to a distance greater than the minimum clearances to account for future growth, movement of trees or power lines due to wind, conductor sag due to heat and line loading, and other factors.

Contact us if you have questions about our vegetation clearance initiatives.

WHY IS TREE TRIMMING NECESSARY?



Tree and foliage **OVERGROWTH** can **INTERFERE** with **POWER DISTRIBUTION**.



Power lines can give off a **SPARK OR ARC** that may land on nearby branches and **IGNITE**.



The lights in your house may **FLICKER** when tree branches brush power lines during **HIGH WINDS**.



Stormy weather can cause nearby limbs to **BREAK OFF** and land on power lines.



Accessibility to maintain equipment and **RESTORE POWER** is important to keep **LINEWORKERS SAFE**.

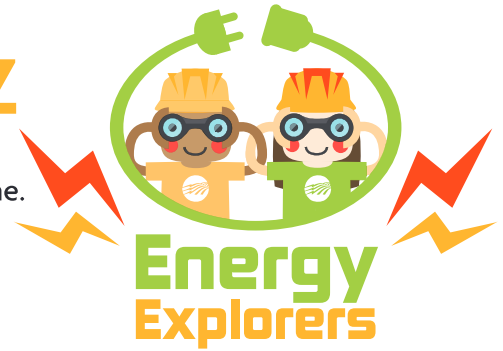
TRIMMED TREES = GREATER RELIABILITY

SPRING EFFICIENCY QUIZ

Spring is just around the corner!

Take this quiz to learn how you can help save energy around your home.

Hint: Check your work in the answer key below.



1. Sealing air leaks around _____ saves energy and keeps your home comfortable.

A) doors B) windows C) both A and B

2. Unplug devices and electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use, like _____.

A) refrigerators B) cell phone chargers C) dishwashers

3. Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave the room to save energy.

A) True B) False

4. LED bulbs typically use _____ less energy than incandescent light bulbs.

A) 25% B) 50% C) 75%

5. Planting _____ around your home can block unwanted heat from the sun.

A) flowers B) shade trees C) vegetables



Answer Key: 1. C 2. B 3. A 4. C 5. B