



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

Flint Hills RECA

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FROM THE MANAGER

Rate Study Process

Have you ever wondered how the rates you pay for electric service are established? The revenue derived from the rates paid by the members for electric service funds the operation of the electric cooperative.

It is the responsibility of your elected board of trustees and management to examine rates periodically to be sure rates are just and reasonable and will allow the cooperative to fulfill its obligations to the members and lenders. Over the next few months, we will explain the different parts of the rate study process.

Rate studies are complicated. In a sense they are an attempt to predict the future, or at least the answers to a few questions. What revenue will be required to fund the operation of the cooperative for the foreseeable future, and what is the fairest way to collect that revenue through rates? What external factors will affect the cooperative's financial picture? What will the weather be like in the coming years?

While we may never accurately predict the weather in the future, an attempt can be made to predict the other variables that affect rates. In 2021, Flint Hills REC retained the services of Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) to assist us with our rate study.



Chuck Goeckel

This study has several stages. First, we will use existing data to determine what revenue is required to operate the cooperative in the future. Next, the cost-of-service study is conducted to assign the costs to provide electric service to member classes using traditional ratemaking principles. Then rates will be designed to meet the cost recovery obligations, to recover the revenue fairly from each member class, and to meet any other strategy or goals identified by the board in the rate study process.

When the rate study is completed, it will be reviewed by the board in detail.

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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



LABOR Day
Office Closing

In observance of Labor Day, our office will be closed on **MONDAY, SEPT. 5.**

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles

ACE Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O'Lakes and Flint Hills REC are all cooperatives

We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good. Let's take some time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time but also provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the first three cooperative principles.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Flint Hills REC was created out of necessity — to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So in 1938, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

While this history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain —

the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Flint Hills REC's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

Our close connection to this community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on members' priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term invest-

ments, such as high-speed broadband, community solar programs, equipment and technology upgrades, electric vehicle programs, etc.

Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Flint Hills REC. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Because we are guided by seven cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars — it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Flint Hills REC is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. And by the way, that sums up the seventh co-op principle, Concern for Community, which we'll elaborate on in next month's issue.

Rate Study Process Continued from page 12A ▶

Kansas law then requires that we provide the membership with notice of the time and place of any meeting of the board of trustees where rate changes will be discussed and voted on, which will appear in this section of the *Kansas Country Living* magazine and an attempt will be made to provide you with as much detail as possible on any proposed changes to the rates. You will have the opportunity to attend the open board meeting to hear the discussion and vote of the board and even express your opinion on the changes proposed. Kansas law also allows members to petition the Kansas

Corporation Commission for review of any rate changes after the changes are adopted.

You show confidence in your board of trustees when you cast a vote for their election to the position. The board takes its responsibility to set fair rates very seriously. After all, they are members of the cooperative and pay the same rates.

Flint Hills REC last performed a cost-of-service and rate study in 2015. It is our desire to keep the cooperative financially healthy while providing safe, reliable and affordable power to our members. We will keep you informed in the following months as we work through this process.

Scott Represents Flint Hills at Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp



LaiCee Scott

LAICEE SCOTT attended the 45th annual Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) July 15-21, 2022. The leadership camp was held near Steamboat

meetings. Camp participants also attended educational seminars on leadership, online reputation management, conflict management, and co-op careers, in addition to presentations on high voltage electricity, raptors and avian protection with HawkQuest, and a tour of the Yampa Valley Electric community solar array.

Springs, Colorado, and hosted 62 student leaders from Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming. These high schoolers were sponsored by a total of 31 participating electric cooperatives across the four states.

Scott was selected by Flint Hills REC based on the leadership skills, academic achievements, extracurricular activities and character demonstrated in her application, which included a written application, short test on electric cooperatives and an interview conducted by Flint Hills REC employees.

During the camp, Scott learned how an electric cooperative is organized and operated by developing a model-cooperative with her fellow students, empowering the campers to elect a board of directors, appoint a general manager, establish committees, and attend daily membership

Along with its professional development programs, CYLC included a visit to Mount Werner and downtown Steamboat Springs, whitewater rafting on the Colorado River, and other fun activities such as a volleyball tournament, swimming, talent show and a dance.

“Flint Hills is proud to continue our sponsorship of our co-op’s student leaders at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp,” said Travis Griffin, member services manager. “It is an honor to help provide students opportunities to grow in their leadership potential and develop the knowledge

to further engage in our cooperative community.”

Flint Hills sponsors the trip of one student each year. For more information on how to attend/send students to camp, contact the Flint Hills REC office at 620-767-5144.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back. Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



Farming season means sharing the road with large farm equipment, which can be wide and slow. Public roads are often the only way to get from point A to point B.

When you find yourself following or meeting large farm equipment on the road, take a deep breath and do the following to keep everyone safe.

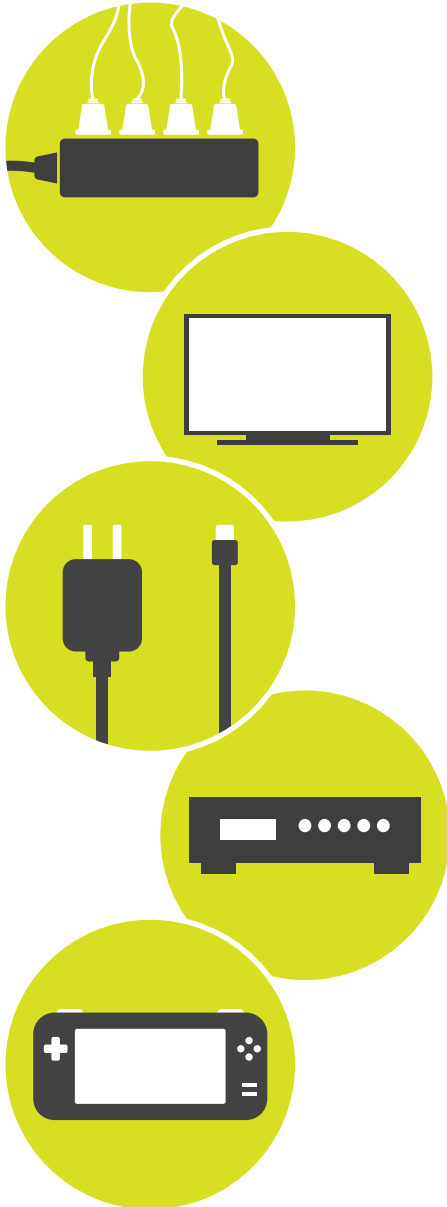
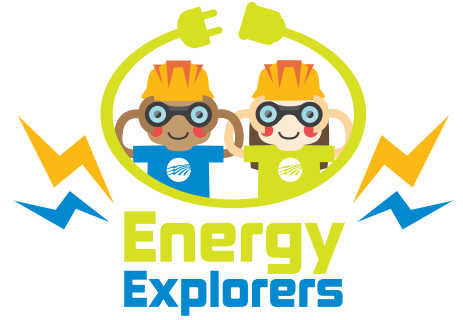
- 1** Be alert and cautious, and give farm equipment and other slow-moving vehicles space.
- 2** Do not pass in a “No Passing Zone,” or where it is not safe to do so, such as intersections, bridges and railroad crossings, among others.
- 3** Make sure the tractor is not trying to make a left turn before you pass on the left.
- 4** Do not tailgate. Following too closely means you could be in the operator’s blind spot.
- 5** Be careful when you do get the chance to pass. Oftentimes, farmers will move their equipment over when it is safe for them to do so.

SOURCE: TEXAS TABLE TOP (TEXAS FARM BUREAU)

ELECTRONICS WORD SCRAMBLE

You can be more energy efficient by turning off unused electronics. Many electronics consume energy even when they're not being used. Unplug them to save energy.

Unscramble the letters below to reveal electronics you can turn off when not in use. Use the pictures for clues and check your work in the answer key.



1. NEPOH EHGRAC

2. MGAE NOESCLO

3. LCAEB XBO

4. EWROP PRTIS

5. ONSILEETIV

WORD BANK

Power strip Television Game console
 Cable box Phone charger

ANSWER KEY: 1) PHONE CHARGER 2) GAME CONSOLE 3) CABLE BOX 4) POWER STRIP 5) TELEVISION