



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

FROM THE MANAGER

A Balanced Fuel Mix Promotes Power Reliability

As I've noted in my past columns, the energy industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation as consumer demand for more renewable energy sources grows, and innovation and technology continue to advance exponentially. You're likely witnessing this energy evolution firsthand.

In driving across the region, you may have noticed fields of solar panels owned by electric cooperatives and other utilities, along with an increase in solar panels on your neighbors' roofs. Maybe you've heard about the impending changes in the transportation sector with most major vehicle companies announcing plans to offer more electric vehicles at more affordable prices.

Consumer interest in renewable and non-carbon energy is strong and growing. In addition, national studies indicate that consumers have an

expectation that companies operate in an ethical and responsible manner — including when it comes to the environment.

At Flint Hills REC, we have always put the good of our community first. While our primary function is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to our consumer-members, we are more than an electricity provider. Because we are a co-op, we strive to enrich the lives of our members and to serve the long-term interests of our community. We feel we are doing both by investing in responsible energy sources.

Green energy is certainly not new. Solar, wind and hydro power have been around for decades. However, the recent innovations and advances in renewable technology have led to

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Chuck Goeckel



HAPPY
★
4TH OF JULY
★★★
INDEPENDENCE DAY
Our office will be closed on
Monday, July 5, for the holiday.

Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams

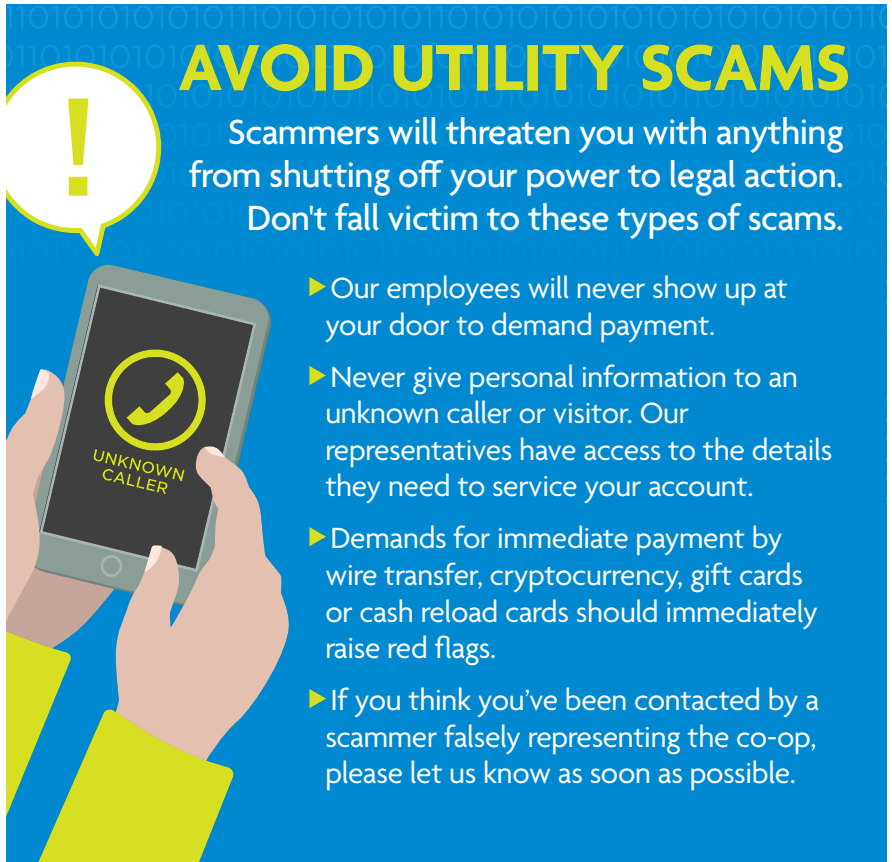
Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Just a few months ago, Flint Hills REC members were targeted through a phone scam in which the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, Flint Hills REC will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, which occurs when a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, Flint Hills REC will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle. Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. Flint Hills REC will only send you important updates via text if you've signed up for our SmartHub alerts. These are just a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- ▶ **TAKE YOUR TIME.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and



AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Scammers will threaten you with anything from shutting off your power to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- ▶ Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- ▶ Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- ▶ Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- ▶ If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.

hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.

- ▶ **BE SUSPICIOUS.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.

- ▶ **CONFIRM BEFORE YOU ACT.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Flint Hills REC or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 620-767-5144 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to Flint Hills REC so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.

A Balanced Fuel Mix Promotes Power Reliability

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sharp decreases in cost, making it more feasible and accessible. In recent years, Flint Hills REC has been able to adjust our fuel mix by using more renewables. In 2020, two-thirds of our fuel mix is comprised of non-carbon energy sources, the majority of which is solar, wind, hydro and nuclear.

However, to borrow a nautical analogy, it takes a long time to turn the direction of a large ship — and changing the energy mix we use to power homes and businesses doesn't happen overnight. While renewable energy use is increasing, we will still depend on traditional forms of energy to keep power flowing reliably to your home. After all, solar and wind energy are referred to as "intermittent" power since the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its

own challenges. That's why there is real value in maintaining a balanced mixture of fuel types to ensure reliability and resiliency, and meet the growing demand for electricity.

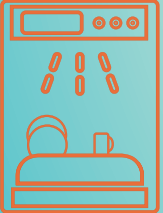


As the energy industry continues to evolve, Flint Hills REC is striving to take advantage of technology advances and market opportunities as they become available. This means we can leverage the flexibility of the grid to offer a wider range of renewable power selections as we continue to bring safe, reliable and affordable power to our community.

Albert Einstein once observed that, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." For Flint Hills REC to meet the growing demand for renewable energy and ensure the reliability of our power supply, we must constantly make operational adjustments as we strive for balance and a bright future for our consumer-members.




WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY USAGE

Did you know that the highest hour of electric usage in the summer months is the basis for billing for the next eight months? Controlling your energy usage **between 3-7 p.m.** helps reduce electricity demand and keeps costs down.

 <p>Avoid running the dishwasher during peak energy use hours.</p>	 <p>Avoid doing laundry during peak energy use hours.</p>	 <p>Raise your thermostat a few degrees to help conserve energy.</p>
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FREE AND EASY Ways to Save Energy

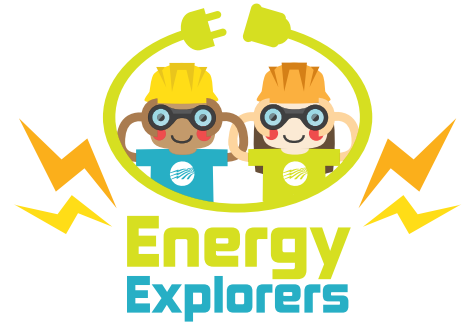
Here are **10** easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer.

- 1** Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day. 
- 2** Set your thermostat a few degrees higher. 
- 3** Take cooler showers (this is better in the summer anyway!) 
- 4** Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of an oven. 
- 5** Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors. 
- 6** Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage.) 
- 7** Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them.) 
- 8** Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weatherstripping if needed.) 
- 9** Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house. 
- 10** Shut the front door (don't air-condition the outdoors.) 

COOPERATIVE WORD SEARCH

As a member of an electric cooperative, you're part of something special!

Read the facts below to learn how co-ops are unique, then find and circle the words in **BOLD** type.



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

WORD BANK

1. Electric **COOPERATIVES** are local organizations and businesses, so they understand the communities they serve.
2. Co-ops don't have customers; instead, they have consumer-**MEMBERS**.
3. All co-ops are guided by the same set of cooperative **PRINCIPLES**.
4. "Concern for **COMMUNITY**" is the seventh cooperative principle.
5. Co-ops are led by the consumer-members they **SERVE**.
6. You're a consumer-member of an **ELECTRIC** cooperative, but there are also housing, grocery and other types of co-ops.