



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box B
1564 S. 1000 Rd., Council Grove, KS 66846
620-767-5144
www.flinthillsrec.com



FLINT HILLS
RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Preparing to Serve You Better

Providing reliable power to you is and will always be a top priority for Flint Hills REC. These days, power reliability seems to be making news, now more than ever.

As the energy industry continues to transition and more segments of the economy are becoming electrified, such as vehicles, machinery and even lawn equipment, additional pressures are being placed on our nation's electric grid.

With summer storm season upon us, I thought it would be a good time to tell you about a few measures we're taking to ensure you continue receiving the reliable power you depend on and deserve.

Let me be the first to say I love trees and the charm they add to our communities, and I know you do

too. While trees provide shade and add beauty to our area, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages.

That's why we strive to keep the co-op's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas. A ROW area is the land a co-op uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. This ROW enables Flint Hills REC to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines. The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our area.



Chuck Goeckel

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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

HAPPY

4TH OF JULY

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, for the holiday.

Preparing to Serve You Better *Continued from page 12A* ▶

Modernizing Vegetation Management

Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to improve power reliability. However, traditional vegetation management is costly and time consuming. It entails on-the-ground, labor-intensive efforts involving dozens of workers assessing vegetation and overseeing the quality and completion of contractor work.

Flint Hills REC has adopted a vegetation management program that allows us to work through our entire system before the vegetation becomes

unmanageable. We have also adopted a zero-clearance policy when possible. This means that we will clear all the trees to the ground in the ROW which will help us save on our vegetation management expense in the future.

Planned Outages Improve Reliability

Although it may seem counterintuitive, we also maintain power reliability through planned, controlled outages. By carefully cutting power to one part of our local area for a few hours, Flint Hills REC can perform system repairs and upgrades, which ultimately improve electric service. Rest assured,

when possible we will notify you in advance of a planned outage, so make sure we have your correct contact information on file to receive the latest emails.

Vegetation management is an essential tool in ensuring power reliability and minimizing the risk of outages. As advancements become more accessible and costs drop, we anticipate using additional technologies to ensure a consistent energy supply while managing the environment.

Lastly, I encourage you to follow Flint Hills Electric Cooperative on Facebook so you can learn about the latest co-op updates.

**JOIN THE
PEAK
ALERT
SAVINGS
PROGRAM**

**SIGN UP TO
SAVE**

Save on your bill when electricity demand is high. Sign up for **PEAK ALERT SAVINGS** and receive an energy credit when you lower your energy usage during peak hours.* The lower your usage, the **BIGGER THE CREDIT** you could be eligible for. The sign-up deadline is **JUNE 30.**

SIGN UP TODAY!

**MEMBERSERVICES
@FLINTHILLSREC.COM**

620-767-5144

**Some program restrictions apply. Credit only valid for reductions in the months of July and August, from Monday-Friday from 3-6 p.m. (excluding July 4). This program will be active on peak load days when alerts are sent to participating members. Visit www.flinthillsrec.com for a full list of program details.*

Easy Steps to Greater Efficiency and Reduce Your Demand

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy (DOE), a typical American family spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy and reduce your demand without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And, you won't have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

Where to Start

According to *Money Magazine*, improving the "envelope" of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing

weatherstripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weatherstripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the DOE, by replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the Energy Star rating, you can save \$75 each year.

Wrapping Up Savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25% to 45% and save you about 7% to 16% in water heating costs, according

to the DOE. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the DOE recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit



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on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket; the higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure your home's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15% higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

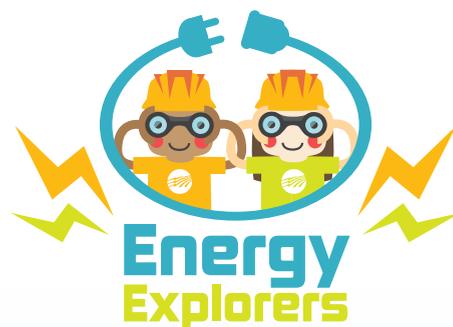
Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home and reduce your electric demand. To learn more about how you can become energy efficient and reduce your demand visit our website at www.flinthillsrec.com.



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SWIMMING POOL SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Water and electricity never mix. Always practice safety when you're near or in the swimming pool this summer. Read the following safety tips, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle below.



Never bring electrical **devices** near a swimming pool. **Electrical** devices that come in contact with **water** can cause electric shock.

When possible, use **battery**-operated devices when **outdoors** near a swimming pool.

Outdoor electrical **outlets** should be **dry** or covered.

If you hear thunder, immediately exit the swimming **pool**. Thunderstorms and lightning may be near.

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