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NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Who Owns What?

Understanding electric equipment responsibilities



Chuck Goeckel

As July rolls in with longer days and rising temperatures, it also brings the increased potential for severe weather. Summer storms can arrive quickly and hit hard, sometimes causing significant damage to essential electric equipment throughout our community.

Flint Hills REC is always prepared to respond swiftly to outages and restore power safely, but it is also important

for homeowners to understand which parts of the electric system are their responsibility and which are maintained by us at the co-op. Understanding these key differences can help speed up repairs and ensure everyone stays safe when the weather turns rough.

Flint Hills REC is responsible for maintaining and repairing the equipment and lines that run to your meter, including utility poles, distribution power lines, electric meters and pad-mounted transformers.

Flint Hills REC members are responsible for the equipment located between the electric meter and

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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.

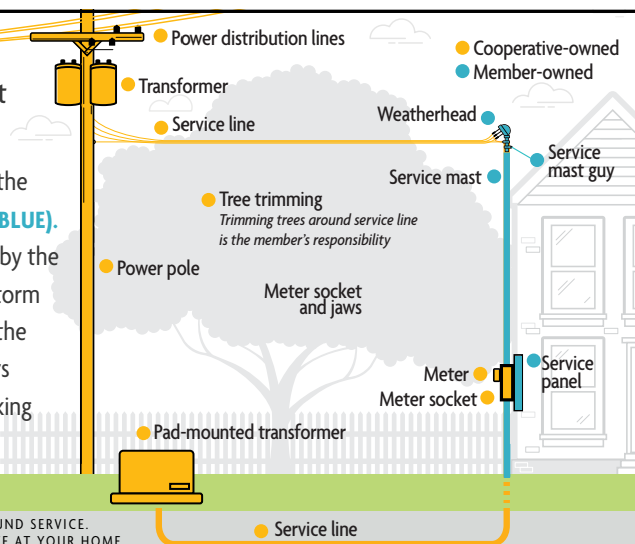
**THIS INSTITUTION IS AN
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER
AND EMPLOYER.**

Who Owns What?

Electric Cooperative-Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the **CO-OP (IN YELLOW)** and the **MEMBER (IN BLUE)**.

If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



NOTE: THIS GRAPHIC DEPICTS OVERHEAD AND UNDERGROUND SERVICE. PLEASE BE AWARE OF WHICH TYPE OF SERVICE YOU RECEIVE AT YOUR HOME.



How Transmission Demand Shapes Electricity Prices

In last month's issue of *Kansas Country Living Magazine*, we talked about understanding demand. We explained the difference between demand and consumption. We also talked about the types of demand Flint Hills REC is billed for from our wholesale power supplier.

We would like to spend a little time explaining Transmission Demand and how that has an impact on your electric bill. Transmission demand refers to the amount of electricity that needs to be transmitted across a utility power grid from the generation plant to our distribution system at any given time to meet our customer needs.

Transmission demand plays a crucial role in shaping electricity prices. Here are some of the components that influence transmission demand and its costs:

- ▶ **GRID CONGESTION:** When transmission demand exceeds available capacity in certain areas, it can lead to congestion, requiring rerouting or additional infrastructure to maintain reliability. The utility must reroute power or invest in upgrades, leading to higher costs that is passed on to consumers.
- ▶ **PEAK VS. OFF-PEAK PRICING:** Utilities must ensure their transmission network can handle the highest levels of electricity demand, often occurring during extreme weather conditions or specific hours of the day. During periods of high transmission demand — such as summer

afternoons when air conditioning usage spikes — electricity prices tend to rise due to increased strain on the grid. Conversely, prices can drop during off-peak hours when demand is lower.

- ▶ **LOAD FORECASTING AND CAPACITY PLANNING:** Predicting transmission demand helps utilities optimize grid operations and prevent congestion or outages. Utilities invest in transmission infrastructure based on anticipated demand, balancing reliability with cost-effectiveness.
- ▶ **WHOLESALE MARKET IMPACT:** In deregulated electricity markets, transmission demand affects wholesale electricity prices. If transmission constraints limit access to cheaper power sources, utilities may need to buy from higher-priced generation facilities, increasing overall costs.
- ▶ **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS:** Higher transmission demand necessitates upgrades in grid infrastructure, including new lines and substations. While these investments improve reliability, they also contribute to long-term electricity pricing adjustments.

As you can see there are a lot of factors that influence transmission demand. Flint Hills REC will always strive to meet the necessary demand to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity for your family.

RECENT REVIEW OF EPA RULES SIGNALS RELIABILITY WINS

Electric cooperatives are applauding a recent series of actions announced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These actions would alleviate reliability and cost challenges for electric co-ops across the U.S.

The EPA said it will review and reconsider the Biden administration's power plant greenhouse gas rule. The agency also plans to reconsider other rules hindering America's energy dominance, including the mercury and air rule, ozone transport rule, and power plant wastewater rule. The agency will also address a number of fundamental problems with the coal ash program and take other actions to unleash American energy while protecting the environment.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association that represents electric cooperatives in D.C., flagged concerns with these rules in a letter to EPA Administrator Lee

Zeldin in January. NRECA CEO Jim Matheson met with Zeldin at EPA's headquarters to discuss these issues. The letter served as a policy road map recommending ways the EPA could address harmful regulations for electric co-ops while ensuring reliable and affordable power and promoting a healthy environment.

The recent EPA announcements are another critical step that puts our nation on a path toward a more reliable and resilient electric grid — and not a moment too soon. The demand for electricity is skyrocketing, yet unrealistic public policy decisions are forcing always-available generation resources to retire faster than they can be reliably replaced.

Electric cooperatives appreciate the EPA's recent actions that could bolster American energy dominance with sound policies that protect our environment — without leaving American families in the dark.

Who Owns What? Continued from page 12A ▶

your home or business, including any underground service lines that lead into the structure and the service panel. Members are also responsible for the weatherhead and service mast located outside the home.

If any equipment that you (the homeowner) are responsible for is damaged, please call a licensed electrician to conduct the repairs. A professional has the experience and know-how to assess and manage these types of repairs.

When severe weather damages electrical equipment, it's important to note that any necessary repairs to the homeowner's equipment must be conducted before Flint Hills REC crews can safely restore power to your home or business. By understanding the equipment you are responsible for, the repair and restoration process will be smoother and faster.

Our community takes great pride in the beautiful trees and landscaping that contribute to the natural beauty where

we live, however, regular tree clearing and trimming is essential to ensure reliable electric service and minimize damage from severe weather. Flint Hills REC regularly cuts and trims trees throughout our service territory to improve service reliability. If you spot a tree limb that is obstructing a Flint Hills REC distribution power line outside your home, please call Flint Hills REC so we can cut those limbs and maintain those lines.

Any overgrown limbs or vegetation around the member's service line is the homeowner's responsibility, and in these cases, please call a professional tree trimming service to assist.

By working together to understand the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared to start the repair and restoration process if severe weather impacts our community.

If you have any questions we're here to help. Please contact Flint Hills REC at 620-767-5144.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat such as clothes dryers and dishwashers during the evening when the outdoor temperature is lower. Running heat-emitting appliances in the evening will reduce indoor heat gain during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest and ultimately keep your air conditioner from working harder than necessary.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



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).



STAY COOL AND SAFE

Blend Up a Summer Smoothie

On a hot summer day, there's nothing more satisfying than sipping a cold, tropical smoothie. But before you plug in your blender and start whipping up that fruity refreshment, it's important to keep electrical safety in mind — especially in the kitchen where water and appliances mix. Here are some easy but essential electrical safety tips to help you enjoy your summer smoothie safely:

SAFE BLENDING TIPS FOR YOUR KITCHEN

- ▶ **DRY HANDS BEFORE PLUGGING IN:** Wet hands and electricity don't mix. Always make sure your hands are completely dry before plugging in or operating your blender.
- ▶ **SKIP THE POWER STRIP:** Plug high-wattage appliances like blenders directly into wall outlets to avoid overheating or tripping your power strip.
- ▶ **CHECK FOR GFCI OUTLETS:** Outlets near sinks or water sources should be equipped with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection to help prevent electrical shock.
- ▶ **INSPECT YOUR CORDS:** If your blender has a frayed, cracked or damaged cord or plug, it's time for a replacement. Using damaged appliances is a major safety risk.
- ▶ **AVOID OVERFILLING:** Don't fill your blender to the top. Overflowing ingredients can cause spills that may reach electrical parts and pose hazards.
- ▶ **UNPLUG BEFORE CLEANING:** Always unplug the blender before trying to remove stuck ingredients or before cleaning. It's a simple step that prevents unexpected starts or shocks.
- ▶ **KEEP THE BASE DRY:** Never submerge the blender base in water. Use a damp cloth to wipe it clean instead.

Whether you're blending up a quick breakfast or a poolside treat, following a few simple electrical safety tips can help prevent accidents and keep your summer safe and sweet.



Tropical Summer Smoothie

Once your blending setup is safe, it's time to treat yourself! Try this tropical smoothie recipe — it's quick, easy and perfect for hot summer days.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| ▶ 1 cup frozen mango | ▶ ½ cup Greek yogurt |
| ▶ 1 banana | ▶ ½ cup pineapple chunks |
| ▶ ½ cup coconut water | ▶ ice as needed |

Add mango, banana, coconut water, yogurt and pineapple to the blender. Blend until smooth.

Add ice and blend again to your desired consistency. Pour into glasses and enjoy!

Makes 2 servings.