NEWS

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.

FROM THE MANAGER

Powered by Purpose

Chuck Goeckel

In October, electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Co-op Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. It's also the perfect time to thank you — the members who make it all possible. For us, it's not just a celebration. It's a chance to reaffirm the values that guide everything we do.

As the general manager of Flint Hills REC, I see purpose in action every single day. Unlike investor-owned utilities, our co-op doesn't exist to make profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you — our members, our neighbors and our communities. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At its core, being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally controlled. That's not just a tagline; it's the very heart of our business model. Members have a voice in how our co-op operates. You elect board members who live right here in our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of miles away; they're made here at home, by people who care about the same things you do.

This local accountability means we can stay focused on what matters most: delivering reliable, affordable electricity and providing real value to the people we serve.

We do that by investing in essential

Electric cooperatives provide power with purpose.

NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

POWERED BY PURPOSE

infrastructure upgrades and technologies that strengthen our local grid and improve electric service. We work hard to manage costs and keep rates as low as possible — because we know how much rising prices affect families and small businesses in our area. And when storms hit or outages occur, Flint Hills REC crews are here and ready to respond quickly, because we live here too.

But our commitment doesn't end at the power lines.

Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity. Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring youth programs, or partnering with volunteer organizations, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality of life in the places we serve. Community support isn't an afterthought — it's part of our mission.

We're also planning for the future. As electricity demand grows due to new technologies and economic development, electric co-ops are working to ensure we continue to meet those needs with a balanced, reliable energy mix. We know our members care about affordability and dependability, and we're committed to delivering both.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose.

This National Co-op Month, I encourage you to take pride in your cooperative membership. You're not just a customer — you're an owner, a stakeholder, and a vital part of a larger effort to keep our community strong, connected and energized.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to be your local electric cooperative.

Flint Hills REC Board Approves Revenue Neutral Rate Change

Over the past several months we have been discussing wholesale transmission demand and its effect on Flint Hills REC wholesale energy charges. Flint Hills REC Board of Trustees held an open meeting on Sept. 15, where they approved a revenue neutral rate change to more appropriately bill our members.

The revenue neutral rate change consists of adding a transmission demand adjustment as a separate line item on the members' monthly electric bill. To offset the cost of the new Transmission Demand Adjustment charge, an equal cost reduction will occur in the members' kilowatt-hour energy charge, resulting in a zero, or near zero, overall rate increase to the Flint Hills REC membership.

To measure the hourly demand used for the new transmission demand adjustment charge Flint Hills REC will use the hourly demand only during the following times:

▶ **SUMMER (JUNE-SEPTEMBER)** — hour beginning noon through hour ending 11 p.m.

▶ **WINTER (OCTOBER-MAY)** — hour beginning 5 a.m. through hour ending 11 p.m.

The new transmission demand adjustment will allow for more transparency and fairness in how you are billed. For more information, please read the past articles in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine on our website at www.flinthillsrec.com.

How to Put Out Electrical Fires
Stay safe. Act fast. Know what to do.

Power down immediately.
If wires or appliances seem unsafe or smell odd, unplug if safe to do so, and switch off the circuit at the breaker box. If there's a fire, cut power, but only if you can do so safely.

Do NOT use water.
Water conducts electricity — throwing it on an electrical fire could cause a shock or electrocution.

Use a Class C fire extinguisher.
These are specifically designed for electrical fires and are the safest way to put out the fire.

No extinguisher? Use baking soda.
Baking soda can smother small electrical fires by cutting off oxygen.

CALL 911
Call for help, even if you think the fire is out. Evacuate the area immediately if the fire is too large to extinguish safely.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

4 Best Bets to Stay Cyber Safe

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Protecting yourself online doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. A few simple habits can dramatically reduce your risk of falling victim to cybercrime. While you can never be "hackproof," you can become resilient in the online world.

At the heart of online safety are four essential behaviors we at the National Cybersecurity Alliance call the Core 4. These simple steps will help shield your personal information, protect your online accounts and keep your devices secure.

1 **USE LONG, UNIQUE AND COMPLEX PASSWORDS.** Your passwords are the first line of defense between a criminal and your sensitive information. Here's how to have amazing passwords:

▶ **EVERY PASSWORD MUST BE LONG, UNIQUE AND COMPLEX.** Nowadays, every password should be at least 16 characters long, which significantly overwhelms password-cracking programs. Use a random mix of letters, numbers and symbols.

▶ **DON'T REUSE PASSWORDS.** Every account needs a unique password. Unfortunately, making small changes, like adding numbers or switching out an S with a $, doesn't count as a unique password.

▶ **USE A PASSWORD MANAGER TO STORE AND GENERATE STRONG PASSWORDS.** If you're wondering how to manage so many unique, long passwords, the answer is a password manager! There are many free, secure options. Password managers are the safest way to store your passwords. If you prefer to keep a password notebook, treat it like cash.

2 **ENABLE MULTIFACTOR AUTHENTICATION (MFA).** Multifactor authentication (sometimes called 2FA) adds an extra security layer by requiring something more than just your password to log in. Think of it as using two locks on your digital door instead of only one. This could be:

▶ A one-time code sent to your phone
▶ A biometric scan like a fingerprint scan or FaceID
▶ A physical security key

Enable MFA on your accounts — especially email, banking and social media. It's a simple way to supercharge the security on your accounts. Also, never share MFA codes with anyone — this includes not sharing them over the phone, through texts or via email. Only scammers will ask for MFA codes.

3 **KEEP SOFTWARE UPDATED.** Software updates don't just bring new features. They often fix security flaws that criminals exploit. It usually takes a few minutes, but updates are worth it. Here are some tips:

▶ Turn on automatic updates when possible for your devices and apps. You can usually find these options in your Settings menu.
▶ Install updates promptly for your operating systems, browsers, antivirus tools and apps.
▶ Don't click Remind Me Later — the security is worth it.
▶ Remember your phones, smartwatches and tablets are computers, so keep these devices updated as well!

4 **LOOK OUT FOR PHISHING AND SCAMS.** Phishing remains the most common online threat. Criminals send fake emails, texts or social media messages to trick you into revealing sensitive information or clicking malicious links. These messages aim to get you to click before you think by playing on your emotions. Scammers will even call you! Here's how to look out for phishing and scams:

▶ Be highly skeptical of unexpected messages, especially those urging immediate action or asking for personal details.
▶ Phishing emails can light up positive emotions ("You've won our sweepstakes!") or negative ones ("You've been hacked!").
▶ Don't click suspicious links or download unexpected attachments.
▶ Report phishing attempts to your email provider, social media platform or IT department.
▶ If you're unsure if a message is legit, ask a friend, coworker or family member. A second set of eyes can be invaluable in spotting scams.

Article provided by the NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY ALLIANCE, a non-profit organization on a mission to create a more secure, interconnected world. From families to Fortune 500s and every kind of organization in between, we work together with one goal in mind: to make cybersecurity easier and more accessible, so that we can experience the benefits technology brings to our lives without worry.

4 Ways to Secure Your Data

USE STRONG PASSWORDS
Create unique, complex passwords and use a password manager.

UPDATE REGULARLY
Keep your software and devices updated with the latest security patches.

BACK UP YOUR DATA
Regularly back up your data using external drives or cloud storage.

ENABLE MFA/2FA
Add an extra layer of security with multi-factor or two-factor authentication.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

CO-OP MONTH WORD SEARCH

Did you know October is National Co-op Month?

Read the following facts to learn how co-ops are unique, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.

Energy Explorers

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B T A M L J S T K S N B M T M
S R G T A C F V E S I S U J P
Z Q Z M M V G L K E F U F A J
Q R F R M N P C W I Z N G K K
L A E Q B I N P C T N V K T W
H K V H C X I C B I H Y S I S
X S O N T C W B L N E F D U F
P Z I M R E R I W U L H F K I
C R C Y E X G T H M O B M G B
P A D O U M D O Z M C J W Y T
A A T U V Z B X T O A Q J B X
I F D H F O S E N C L W O J V
L U P C O O P E R A T I V E F
F F C N K B S I I S Q D S U Y
A X S Y X Y B P G G B M D P D
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FUN FACTS ABOUT CO-OPS:

▶ Co-ops and their members work **TOGETHER** toward a common goal.

▶ Co-ops are local organizations, so they understand the **COMMUNITIES** they serve.

▶ All co-ops operate according to the same set of seven cooperative **PRINCIPLES.**

▶ Concern for community is the seventh **COOPERATIVE** principle.

▶ Co-ops don't serve customers; instead, they serve **MEMBERS.**

▶ Co-ops are led by the **LOCAL** members they serve.