



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
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FLINT HILLS RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

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For more information, call us at 620-767-5144 or visit our website at www.flinthillsrec.com

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FROM THE MANAGER

Here for You, Even at a Distance

As we all deal with the new realities brought on by the coronavirus, I want to assure you that your local electric co-op is here to help you. We have always had an emergency plan that has served us well in a variety of circumstances, from ice storms to tornadoes to flash floods. Early in this crisis, our staff updated that plan with a special emphasis on ensuring we can continue to provide the reliable electric service you have come to expect from your electric co-op.

So far, that is exactly what has happened. We know that after a sufficient supply of food and water, electricity is the No. 1 thing you need to maintain some sense of normalcy as we hunker down in our homes. With that in mind, keeping the power flowing is priority No. 1 for everyone involved in maintaining the electric co-op system.

That starts with our generation co-op, Kansas Electric Power Co-op, which has taken extreme measures to ensure its workforce is healthy and its power plants are functioning as needed. It extends to the local electric co-ops that wheel that electricity across Kansas, which includes Flint Hills REC where business processes may temporarily be modified, but our service remains the same.

We thought you might want to know some of the steps we have taken in order to keep your power flowing. We've closed our lobbies to prevent the spread of germs. Instead, we are encouraging members to use our drop box, automatic bill pay (ACH), online and phone payment options and the "good ol'" U.S. Postal Service to pay bills.

Some of our employees are working from home. We've separated those employees to

ensure that each major business function of the co-op is taken care of if an employee or group of employees are directly affected by the virus. If you call, the phones will be answered as always.

We have separated our line crews from other employees and even from each other to limit possible spread of the virus. Some lineworkers head to the job site without coming to the office. New routines are in place for contractors working on our system in order to keep them away from employees. Deliveries are being quarantined.

We are in constant contact with the other electric co-ops in Kansas and with Kansas Electric Co-ops, Inc., which in turn is working closely with our national association, the state legislature, and Gov. Laura Kelly's office.

So far, it is working well and everyone has adapted to the new norm. That's because we've done this before with extreme storms. Nothing brings out the best in our employees more than a crisis situation. It's kind of like gold that has been tested in fire — stronger and more beautiful!

Our focus here is on doing our part to keep your life as normal as possible through this situation and beyond. The co-op way of doing business has brought us this far, and the co-op way will help us through this crisis.

All the best to everyone. Stay healthy, stay home and we will get through this together the co-op way!



Chuck Goeckel

4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS:

1 Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



ELECTRICAL WIRING:

2 Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. Homes older than 20 years may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, contact a qualified electrician.



OVERLOADED CORDS AND OUTLETS:

3 Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, computer and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.



OLD APPLIANCES:

4 Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.



2020 Board of Election Results

Thank you all for sending in your ballots for the 2020 board of trustees election. We normally announce the election results at the annual meeting, but because of the rare circum-



Korby Effland



Roger Zimmerman



Trey Hinkson

stances we find ourselves in we had to cancel the 2020 annual meeting.

The election results for the 2020 board of trustees is as follows; **ROGER ZIMMERMAN**, District 1, and **KORBY**

EFFLAND, District 2, were re-elected to the board of trustees. Elected in District 4 was **TREY HINKSON**, who replaces the vacant spot created by the retirement of Tim Miser.

Miser Retires from Board after 21 years



Board President Roger Zimmerman (right) presents Tim Miser with a plaque of appreciation for his service.

TIM MISER announced his retirement from the Flint Hills REC board of trustees. Board President Roger Zimmerman presented Miser with a plaque in appreciation of his 21 years of service to the co-op.

The March board meeting was Miser's final meeting as a Flint Hills REC trustee.

Flint Hills REC employees and board members would like to thank Miser for his dedication and commitment to the cooperative and its members.

Electrical Safety: What Your Teen Should Know

Parents of teens can relate: You want to share important information with your teen but he or she braces for the next lecture. Your teen may give you the quintessential eye roll, but sharing the following safety information could help save his or her life. So when the time is right, relay this information to your teenager to prevent electrical shock.

At Home

DO NOT use a cell phone near the bathtub or sink or with wet hands while it is plugged in and charging. **DO NOT** use an extension cord in the bathroom to extend your phone's reach closer to the tub. Teens have died after a charging phone dropped into bath water.

DO NOT sleep with your charging cell phone under your pillow or in bed with you. The phone can overheat, causing bedding to catch on fire or burns to the skin. Also, a short in the charging cord can cause electrical shock when you are using your phone. This is especially a risk when using generic or incompatible charging equipment. Always replace charging equipment with brand name/matching items. They cost more, but they are less likely to malfunction.

DO NOT charge your cell phone, tablet or other devices on soft surfaces such as a blanket, pillow or bedding.

On the Road

THIS ADVICE CAN SAVE YOUR TEEN'S LIFE: If you are in an accident involving a downed power line or damaged pad-mount transformer or other electrical equipment, **DO NOT** get out of your car. Call 911, warn others to stay away and to wait for assistance.

Only exit if there is smoke or your car is on fire. If that is the case, make

a solid jump out of the vehicle without touching the car and hop with feet together as far as you can. **DO NOT WALK.** If there is damaged power equipment, the ground and anything else the lines touch could have electrical current running through it.

If you approach an accident with a downed power line, **DO NOT** attempt to help the victims and do not go near the scene. Instead, call 911 and warn others not to approach the area.

Outside

DO NOT use plugged in devices (e.g., a charging cell phone) near water like a pool or hot tub or in damp conditions.

Sometimes electrical currents can leak into water and can cause electric shock drowning. If you feel odd sensations in a wading pool, hot tub or swimming pool, get out. If you are swimming in a lake and feel odd sensations in your body, such as tingling or zaps, swim away from the dock or other source of electricity (e.g., lights).

In the Dorm Room

- ▶ **DO NOT** hang decorative light strands with metal tacks or nails.
- ▶ **DO NOT** overload outlets or extension cords.
- ▶ **DO NOT** run extension cords under a rug or use them if they are frayed or cracked.
- ▶ Use extension cords with care, they are for temporary use only.
- ▶ Use reputable laboratory-tested cords.
- ▶ Only use appliances allowed by your dorm/campus.

Although you can't cover all these tips with your teen in one sitting, they are important to convey and could prevent injuries and save lives.

IT CAN WAIT

AVOID ALL DISTRACTIONS WHILE DRIVING

Our crews often work roadside. Please pay attention when approaching a work zone and respect and obey orange work zone signs. Slow down, move over, and follow any other instructions when approaching and moving through a work zone.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

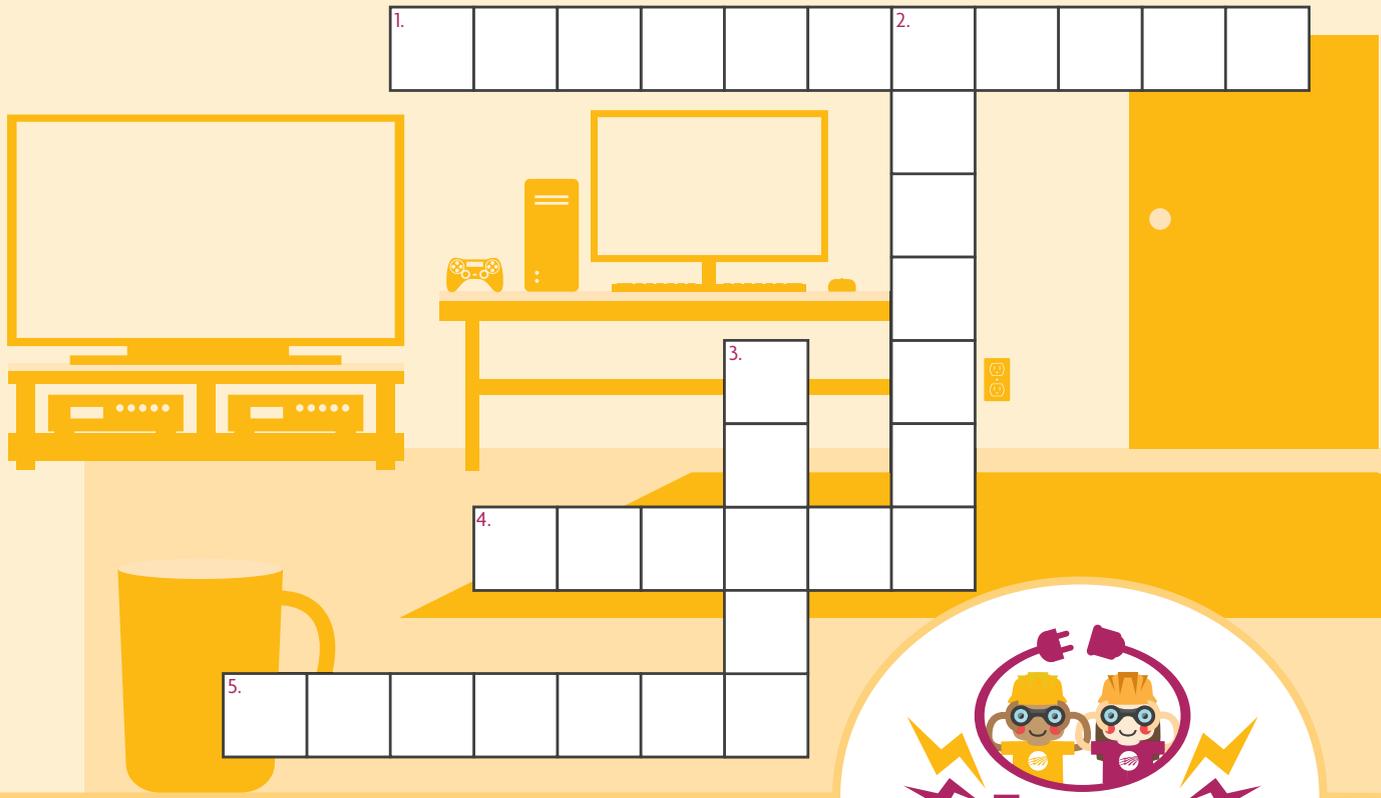
- ▶ **9%** of fatal crashes in 2017 were reported as distraction-affected crashes.
- ▶ In 2017, there were **3,166 people** killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.
- ▶ **6%** of all drivers involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crashes.
- ▶ Ages **15-19** have the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of the fatal crashes.
- ▶ In 2017, **599 pedestrians, bicyclists and others** were killed in distraction-affected crashes.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors. Source: energy.gov



ELECTRICAL SAFETY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



May is Electrical Safety Month!

Read the safety tips below to complete the crossword puzzle.

1. **ACROSS:** Keep all liquids away from _____, like TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
2. **DOWN:** Never overload electrical _____. This creates a greater risk of fire.
3. **DOWN:** Never use electrical _____ that feel warm to the touch or are damaged in any way.
4. **ACROSS:** Smoke _____ should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
5. **ACROSS:** Don't run electrical cords under rugs. This creates potential fire _____.