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Lebo, KS 66856

Southern District
9346 Jewell Road
Fredonia, KS 66736

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2501 W. 18th Ave., Ste. B
Emporia, KS 66801

4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CURRENTS

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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FROM THE MANAGER

Beat the Peak From 3-6 p.m. to Save



Dennis Svanes

Summer is upon us. As the temperatures warm, my thoughts go in a different direction for most of the members of 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative.

How do we reduce our peak demand to reduce expenses for the cooperative and our members?

You may be asking yourself how does saving money for your electric utility reduce costs for you? The answer is because we are your electric cooperative. We are a cost-based utility operating to serve our members. Money we save will either flow directly onto your power bill or be allocated to you in capital credits (equity in the cooperative).

The simplest and cheapest way is for you, our members, to reduce your consumption from 3-6 p.m. Monday through Friday from June through September.

Simple changes like setting your thermostat a little higher, not using your stove/oven, not running the clothes dryer, and avoiding other high consumption electric appliances during those three hours of every weekday

can help. It's also important to avoid charging your electric vehicle during this time.

We run diesel generators and have solar fields, both designed for maximizing generation during these three hours — which is different from solar on a house — all to reduce our purchased demand during the peak hours of the summer. We know our peak will be in those three hours, we just don't know which hour on which day will be the peak for the month and the peak for the year. If you have questions about this, please contact our office and speak to one of our employees.

On a different topic, this past winter we fielded numerous inquiries from members who had installed solar and did not have the outcome they had expected on their bills. Before signing anything with a solar company, please contact us here at the cooperative. We will help you understand how solar operates, sizing and limitations that may exist where you live, and how proper and improper sizing will have an impact on your electric bill.

We are a not-for-profit electric cooperative committed to serving our member-owners. We strive to assist our members, work in their best interests and will be here for them long term.

Budget Billing

Members enrolled in budget billing will receive their biannual adjustment on bills issued in June. The bills issued in May noted the new budget billing amount for the following month.

Budget billing is one option the cooperative offers other than traditional billing. Some may have heard this type of billing called “even payment plan” or “level billing.” This option gives members a more consistent payment each month by considering an account’s usage history and fees. Accounts are reassessed in May and November and the payment amount is updated to reflect any changes to the average usage/fees. This helps members avoid a large credit or balance due at the end of the year.

Call 620-364-2116 to speak to one of our billing specialists if you are interested in signing up for budget billing.



Welcome New Employees



Connor Hoyt



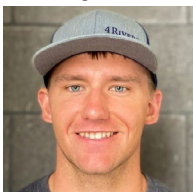
Blake Audiss



Jarred Lutz



Trint Rogers



Kellen Tindle

CONNOR HOYT

joined the 4 Rivers team in April as an apprentice lineman. Connor grew up in the Emporia area and later attended Manhattan Area Technical College completing the Electric Power and Distribution program. Connor is based out of the north office.

Four interns from area electrical programs will gain valuable on-the-job experience working with our line crews this summer.

JARRED LUTZ and **TRINT ROGERS** are working with our line crews in the north territory, while **BLAKE AUDISS** and **KELLEN TINDLE** are helping serve our members on the south side of the co-op.

We are pleased to be working with these students this summer as they further their electric lineworker careers.

Blaufuss and Helton Awarded Lineworker Scholarships

4 Rivers continues to invest in our community youth and future lineworkers by funding two scholarships for students majoring in an electrical lineworker program. The 2023 lineworker scholarships have been awarded to **BRADEN BLAUFUSS** and **GRANT HELTON**.

Blaufuss graduated from Anderson County Junior Senior High School in May and plans to attend the electrical lineworker program at Northwest Lineman College in Denton, Texas.

Blaufuss says he knew he wanted to be a lineman after spending some time job shadowing a 4 Rivers line crew.

“It takes hard work and determination to be successful and being a lineman meets those standards,” he said. “I like the feeling of brotherhood with the crews and how everyone works together to get the job done. I think there’s a rewarding feeling in this line of work.”

Helton graduated from Fredonia Junior Senior High School in May and is attending the electric lineman



Braden Blaufuss



Grant Helton

training program offered at Coffeyville Community College, Coffeyville, Kansas, in association with Pratt Community College.

Helton wants to become a lineman because he likes the idea of helping build and repair power lines. “The electrical trade runs in my family — my dad, uncles and cousins have worked in that field, and I’m looking forward to being a part of the trade,” Helton said.

Scholarship applicants were scored on their application, essay and transcript, with the top two scorers being awarded \$5,000 scholarships to help with tuition, fees, books, tools and supplies. 4 Rivers is excited to offer this opportunity for future lineworkers and help cultivate this trade in our area. We look forward to watching these students succeed in their efforts.

Stay Safe While Spending Time Outdoors

As temperatures increase and sunny days abound, it is easy to be footloose and fancy free. As you spend more time outdoors, keep these safety tips in mind to have a great summer.

Pools and Hot Tubs

Before opening your pool or hot tub for the season, ensure there is ground fault circuit interrupter protection on underwater lighting circuits, as well as for lighting around pools, hot tubs and spas. Have your pool's electrical system inspected. Faulty wiring can cause swimmers to experience electric shock drowning.

Boating and Swimming

When boating or swimming, know that faulty wiring can cause the water to become energized. Never go swimming near boats plugged into shore power or docks with an electrical source. Energized water can cause electric shock drowning.

While Recreating

According to the National Lightning Safety Council, approximately 440 people are struck and killed by lightning each year.* Nearly two-thirds of the deaths occurred while enjoying outdoor leisure activities — 33% of the fatalities occurred during water-related activities such as boating, spending time on the beach and swimming, while 14% happened during sporting activities such as fishing, soccer and running.

During a Storm

When angry clouds roll in, take them seriously. Have a weather app installed on your phone to inform you of weather alerts. Lightning can occur up to 10 miles away from the heart of the storm, so if you hear thunder, take cover. A watch means that conditions are likely for severe weather to develop; a warning means take action.

When Playing

When flying drones, remote-controlled



planes, toys or kites, fly them in a wide-open area free from overhead power lines. If a toy or object gets stuck in an overhead power line, do not try to remove it. Instead, call your electric co-op and a crew will address the issue safely.

Ensure that overhead power lines do not run through or over a tree before your child starts to climb. Select trees that are in a wide-open space without overhead power lines nearby.

If kids are playing with a ball and it goes inside a substation fence, teach them to never touch or climb the fence to attempt to retrieve it or any other item. Instead, call your electric co-op to safely take care of it. The same precaution applies to a pet or animal inside the fenced area of a substation.

Avoid Releasing Balloons

Although not an outdoor recreational activity per se, be careful with balloons. Metallic balloons if released or accidentally let go can get caught in a power line or other utility equipment and cause a major power outage. In fact, avoid releasing any type of balloon as they can interfere with power lines, substations and aircraft. Plus, birds, turtles and other animals commonly mistake balloons for food, which can harm or kill them.

For additional electrical safety tips, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

*ANALYSIS OF LIGHTNING-RELATED DEATHS IN THE U.S., 2006–2021

AT THE MARINA



the water is NOT FINE.

Although the water may look inviting, marinas are not meant to be swimming areas. Docks and boats can carry sources of electricity. If this electricity seeps into the water due to faulty wiring, the water becomes energized.

If you are exposed to water charged with electrical current, you can be shocked and even drown — this is known as electric shock drowning. There are also other dangers of swimming near a marina.

Dangers of Swimming at a Marina

- ▶ Electric shock drowning.
- ▶ Carbon monoxide poisoning from boat exhaust.
- ▶ Contaminated water from a storm or spill.
- ▶ Impact from a boat or its propellers.



Ensure marinas have ground fault circuit interrupters installed and that they are tested often. Keep your boat's electrical system well-maintained and have it inspected regularly.

Energy-Saving Projects for the Weekend Warrior

If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money, we have a few project ideas for you — all of which can be completed in a day or less for you weekend warriors!

Here are three energy-saving projects that you can easily tackle whether you are a weekend warrior pro or a DIY dabbler.

Get Smart About Home Cooling and Heating

Cooling and heating your home typically account for a large portion of energy bills. Smart thermostats can help keep your cooling and heating costs in check, with Energy Star®-certified models saving about 8% on annual energy costs.

Now that smart thermostats are more affordable (as little as \$70), this simple upgrade makes for a fun, efficient weekend project. Smart thermostats offer a variety of bells and whistles, but the average model will allow you to set custom temperature schedules, adjust the settings from anywhere using your phone, and over time, learn your cooling and heating preferences.

Your new smart thermostat will come with step-by-step instructions, but this project typically involves shutting off your HVAC at the breaker panel, disconnecting/removing the old thermostat, installing the new smart thermostat and connecting it to your home Wi-Fi.

PLAY IT SAFE: Remember to carefully read the installation instructions before you get started.

Go Green and Boost Your Greenery With a Rain Barrel

If you've got a green thumb, you already know that rainwater is the best water for your outdoor plants. Rainwater is free of

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one rain barrel can save a homeowner 1,300 gallons of water annually. Most residential rain barrels range in size from 50 to 90 gallons.



Installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy. Not only will you save on dryer costs — you can also save on cooling since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home.

minerals, salts and treatment chemicals found in tap water or groundwater. It also contains helpful macronutrients to foster healthy plant growth.

Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to harvest large amounts of rainwater and reduce home water use — it's a win-win. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one rain barrel can save a homeowner 1,300 gallons of water annually.

Most residential rain barrels range in size from 50 to 90 gallons, so the size you purchase will depend on your watering needs.

The simplest way to install a rain barrel is positioning a plastic or wooden barrel directly under your gutter downspout. Basic piping may be required, but this is an easy way to harvest rainwater, and the barrel won't take up much space. Consider a cover for the top of your rain barrel to keep insects and small debris out of your harvested water.

Create Fresh Savings With a DIY Clothesline

If you have enough outdoor space available, installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy. Not only will you save on dryer costs — in the summer, you can also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home (which makes your air conditioner work harder). Additionally, air drying is much gentler on fabrics and will keep your clothes and linens looking fresh longer.

You can create your own clothesline with two T-posts, wire and hook-and-eye turnbuckles. Depending on your soil, you may need a small amount of fast-setting concrete to set the posts. Another option is installing the line between two trees. A typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line, so keep this in mind as you're determining the best location.

If an outdoor clothesline isn't an option, no sweat! You can easily create an indoor drying rack that folds to save space. Home improvement websites like www.thespruce.com and www.hgtv.com offer step-by-step tutorials for a variety of indoor clothes racks.

These are just a few simple ideas to help you save energy and money. So, get out there, roll up those sleeves and tackle a few projects.

