



GM'S REPORT

LINEMEN, HEROES, AND DADS

When you hear the word hero, the first image that usually comes to mind is a masked character clad in a cape and wearing a utility belt filled with futuristic gadgets. They are always ready — at a moment's notice — to save the world from evil villains and ne'er-do-wells.

In reality, however, heroes come in many forms. Soldiers defend our freedom. Doctors, nurses, and first responders save lives. Teachers prepare our children for the future. Even the stranger who helps a motorist replace a flat tire is a hero to that person stranded on the side of the road. These and many others are people noted for their acts of courage or nobility of purpose. Simply put, they put the needs of others before their own.

At Firelands Electric Cooperative and in the electric industry at large, you've often heard linemen referred to as heroes. Nowhere is this perception more evident than through the eyes of a lineman's children. Stealthily sneaking out of the house by cover of darkness, their dads wear their own special uniform of lineman's gear. In a child's mind, dad's hard hat, utility belt laden with

tools, and protective rubber sleeves are not so different from the costume of Batman or Iron Man. Trying not to wake their sleeping families, linemen make their way outside into rain, ice, wind, and snow to restore power to those in need.

Linemen's children are also well aware that their dads have an alter ego. While attending a baseball game or choir concert, they may be called away for a power outage somewhere in Firelands Electric's service territory. Dad switches from spectator or even coach to lineman, once again putting on his "uniform" to save the day.

For many of the Firelands linemen's children, their dads have been co-op employees since before they were born. These kids have grown up with a thorough understanding of a lineman's duties, and they know the challenges and dangers that go along with the job. Restoring power to Firelands' members during a thunderstorm can be risky business — and this group of youngsters is pretty proud of their dads for doing so.

To recognize the dedication of Firelands Electric's linemen, the cooperative has designated April 11–18 as Lineman Appreciation Week. We asked our linemen's children to help celebrate by joining us for a special hero photoshoot in honor of their dads. Make sure to check out the fantastic results on the next two pages. And if you come across a Firelands lineman, give him a hero-sized thank you!

Clockwise from back left: Kory, Emilee, and Madison Rowland, children of Journeyman Lineman Chris Rowland and Sophia Clemons, daughter of Journeyman Lineman Evan Clemons.

On the cover: Morgan Shepherd, daughter of Journeyman Lineman Robert Shepherd.



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER





OUR DADS ARE HEROES

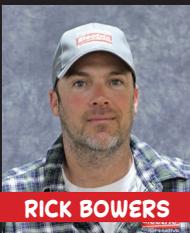
LINEMAN APPRECIATION
WEEK APRIL 11-18



HANNAH AND DANIEL COLLINS



PEYTON AND BEAU PICKERING



RICK BOWERS



EVAN CLEMONS



ZACH COLLINS



DON ENGLET



FRED HARTMAN



CHRIS KENT

integrity community commitment
 accountability innovation



MADISON, EMILEE, AND KORY ROWLAND

SOFIA CLEMONS



MORGAN SHEPHERD



PHIL PICKERING



CHRIS ROWLAND



ROBERT SHEPHERD



DAVID SUMPTER



ROB SWIGER



MATT WHITESIDE



YOUTH PROGRAMS

CO-OP AWARDS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Firelands Electric is pleased to announce the winners of its 2022 scholarship contest.

Morgan Welch of Crestview High School was selected as the first-place winner of an \$1,800 scholarship. The daughter of Mike and Misty Welch of Mansfield, she plans to study at Grace College in the fall. Welch is also now eligible to participate in a statewide contest on April 12 at Ohio's Electric Cooperatives in Columbus. At this event, representatives from Ohio's 24 electric co-ops have a chance to compete for additional scholarships worth up to \$3,900.

The second-place winner of \$1,600 is Ellen Fox of Willard High School. Fox is the daughter of Todd Fox and Bethany Fleiner of Willard. She plans to study nursing and is currently undecided which college she will attend next fall.

Alison Barr of Loudonville High School is the winner of the third-place, \$1,400 scholarship. Daughter of Matthew and Kelly Cominsky of Loudonville, she plans to study pharmacy at Ohio Northern University.

Fourth-place winner of a \$1,200 scholarship is Madison Beard of Seneca East High School. Beard is the daughter of Josh and Tammy Beard of Attica. She plans to study baking and pastry arts at The Culinary Institute of America.

The fifth-place winner of \$1,000 is Allyson Gatchall of Tri-County International Baccalaureate Academy. Gatchall is the daughter of Scott and Jennifer Gatchall of Mansfield. She has a special nomination to attend the Air Force Academy in the fall.

Aubrianna Lugli of New London High School is the winner of the sixth-place, \$750 scholarship. The daughter of Denis and Sherry Lugli of New London, she plans to attend Xavier University with a major in biomedical science.

The winners of Honorable Mention scholarships, worth \$500 each, are Ashlee Gantz of Ashland High School and Katelynn Smeltzer of Hillsdale High School. Gantz is the daughter of Raymond and Melanie Gantz of Ashland. She will major in middle childhood education and botany at Miami University next fall. Smeltzer, the daughter of Jason and Jennifer Smeltzer of Perrysville, plans to major in animal science at The Ohio State University-ATI next fall.

Lauren Ayers of South Central High School and Caden Fox of Ashland High School are the winners of Judges' Choice awards of \$500 each. Ayers is the daughter of Jerry and Angie Ayers of Willard. She plans to study nursing next fall at Mount Vernon Nazarene University. Fox, son of Jeremy and Adina Fox of Ashland, plans to major in engineering at The Ohio State University.

Firelands Electric offers its scholarship contest annually to graduating high school seniors who reside in a home served by the cooperative. This year, the co-op received applications from students attending Ashland, Crestview, Hillsdale, Loudonville, Mapleton, New London, Seneca East, South Central, St. Paul, Tri-County International Baccalaureate Academy, and Willard high schools.

For more information about Firelands Electric's scholarships and youth programs, visit our website at www.firelandsec.com.

Class of
2022



Morgan Welch
FIRST PLACE
CRESTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL



Ellen Fox
SECOND PLACE
WILLARD HIGH SCHOOL



Alison Barr
THIRD PLACE
LOUDONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Madison Beard
FOURTH PLACE
SENECA EAST HIGH SCHOOL



Allyson Gatchall
FIFTH PLACE
TRI-COUNTY INTERNATIONAL
BACCALAUREATE ACADEMY



Aubrianna Lugli
SIXTH PLACE
NEW LONDON HIGH SCHOOL



Ashlee Gantz
HONORABLE MENTION
ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL



Katelynn Smeltzer
HONORABLE MENTION
HILLSDALE HIGH SCHOOL



Caden Fox
JUDGES' CHOICE
ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL



Lauren Ayers
JUDGES' CHOICE
SOUTH CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL





YOUTH PROGRAMS



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Winners of February drawing receive Amazon gift cards

Education helps shape the leaders of tomorrow. That's why Firelands Electric includes it as one of our seven core principles. The A Team is a cooperative program designed to encourage students in their pursuit of academic excellence. Students in grades 6–8 are invited to participate and be recognized for their hard work and dedication to education.



Alyssa Clevidence
Hillsdale Middle School
Daughter of Daniel and Tina Clevidence



Taylor Smith
South Central Middle School
Daughter of Brian and Amanda Smith

Send us your grade card and win!
The next drawing will be held on April 10.

How you can win

Students in grades 6–8 who have a minimum of three A's on their most recent report card and whose parents or guardians are members of Firelands Electric Cooperative are eligible to apply. A copy of the report card should be submitted by mail to Attn: The A Team, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851. Report cards may also be emailed to members@firelandsec.com.

Be sure to include the student's name, age, school, grade, address, phone number, parents' name(s), and email address on your entry.

Complete program details are also available at www.firelandsec.com/team.



Carlee Hess
New London Middle School
Daughter of Mike and Dawn Hess

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

LET IT *flow*

Many of us don't give our home's heating and cooling system a second thought unless it's not working properly. While it's not necessary to watch your system 24/7, it is a good idea to occasionally take a walk around the outdoor components. Doing so can help prevent higher electric bills and costly repairs. While you may find something that requires the assistance of a qualified professional, sometimes what you discover can be as simple as the air around you.

What does air have to do with it?

If your home has a whole house air-conditioner or heat pump system, you have an outdoor unit that houses your system's compressor and coil. In summer, these components work in conjunction to transfer heat from inside your home to the outside to keep you cool. Heat pumps work the opposite way during the winter months. Essentially, the warm and cold air outside are "separated" to bring heat into your home.

This constant back and forth movement requires adequate airflow on the sides as well as the top of your outdoor unit. Without it, one or all of the following can happen:

- Your home won't stay as warm or cool as you would like.
- The air conditioner or heat pump will have to work harder and longer to move enough air, resulting in higher energy bills.
- The blocked flow of air could cause damage to your unit due to overheating or trapped debris.

Fortunately, airflow issues with your outdoor air-conditioner or heat pump unit are often simple to correct. The easiest action to take is to keep the space around your unit free of obstructions. As a general rule of thumb, nothing should be located within three feet of the sides of your outdoor HVAC unit or six feet above it. If you're not sure what is recommended for your particular system, check the manufacturer's specifications.



In order for your HVAC system to operate at its most efficient, fencing, shrubbery, and other landscaping should be kept at least three feet away from your outdoor unit.

Common obstructions

Lawn or garden structures — Items such as decking, fencing, trellises, or decorative yard structures should never be constructed near or over outdoor HVAC units. Although they don't always fit the aesthetic of your yard or garden, attempting to hide them can cause more harm than good.

Landscaping — Keep trees, shrubbery, and other vegetation away from your HVAC unit. Even tall grasses can prevent air from reaching the coil. Other landscaping items like potted plants, rocks, yard signs, and benches are also not a good idea.

Other home systems — Venting from other devices in your home can also affect the operation of your HVAC system. Exhaust vents from clothes dryers and kitchen ranges can not only block airflow, but the heat they emit can interfere with the cooling feature of your system. And gas or other fossil fuel valves near your HVAC unit are downright dangerous.

Natural debris — Check for certain obstructions on a regular basis. Snow, ice, leaves, and even the fluff from cottonwood trees can clog up your system. Be sure to clean these off both the sides and top of your outdoor unit as needed.

Just being aware of how poor airflow can negatively impact your air conditioner or heat pump is a big step toward improved efficiency. Now that you know what to look for, make sure to get that outdoor unit checked out before summer weather arrives!

For more information on how to maintain your air conditioner or heat pump for optimum energy efficiency, check out the articles under the Heat & Cool tab at www.energy.gov/energysaver.



SAFETY

SURGE PROTECTION 101

A power surge is an unusual and unexpected increase in voltage and can occur due to a variety of reasons. Regardless of the cause, surges can damage electronic devices and equipment in your home. But with the right precautions, you can avoid these costly repairs and replacements.

One of the most common causes of a power surge is lightning. When lightning strikes an electrical system, the excess current must be channeled somewhere — unfortunately in some cases, it's sent through your home's wiring system. Your best bet during severe thunderstorms is to unplug all unused devices and electronics.

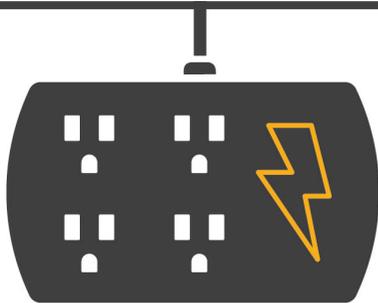
Another frequent cause of power surges is electrical overload. This happens when devices or appliances are plugged into an outlet that can't handle the necessary amount of voltage, or if multiple devices are plugged into a single outlet through an extension cord. If you're

experiencing power surges due to electrical overload, it's time to call a qualified electrician to evaluate your home's electrical needs and to consider installing additional outlets.

Faulty wiring in a home can also cause surges. If you notice burns on outlets plates, buzzing sounds from power outlets, or frequently tripped circuit breakers, your home may be due for electrical wiring repairs or updates.

Surges can also occur after a power outage. Sometimes when electricity is being restored and reconnected, a quick surge in current can occur. It's best to unplug sensitive electronics during an outage — then wait to plug them back in after power has been fully restored.

Aside from unplugging devices, there are a couple of additional ways you can protect the electronics in your home from power surges.



SURGE PROTECTION

Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.

Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- Easy to use (just plug them in)
- Protect electronics plugged into the device
- Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event



REMEMBER:

Not all power strips offer surge protection.
Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.

Point-of-use surge protection devices, like power strips, can protect electronics during most surges. But remember, not all power strips include surge protection, so read the packaging label carefully before you buy and don't overload the power strip with too many devices. You can also install specialized electrical outlets that offer additional surge protection. Talk to a trusted, licensed electrician to learn more.

Another option is a whole-house surge suppressor, which can help protect your entire home from power surges. In most cases, whole-house suppressors are connected to your home's service panel and include features like thermal fuses and notification capabilities that indicate when a specific device has been impacted by a surge. Whole-house suppressors should always be connected by a licensed electrician, so keep the cost of installation in mind when considering the addition of one to your service panel.

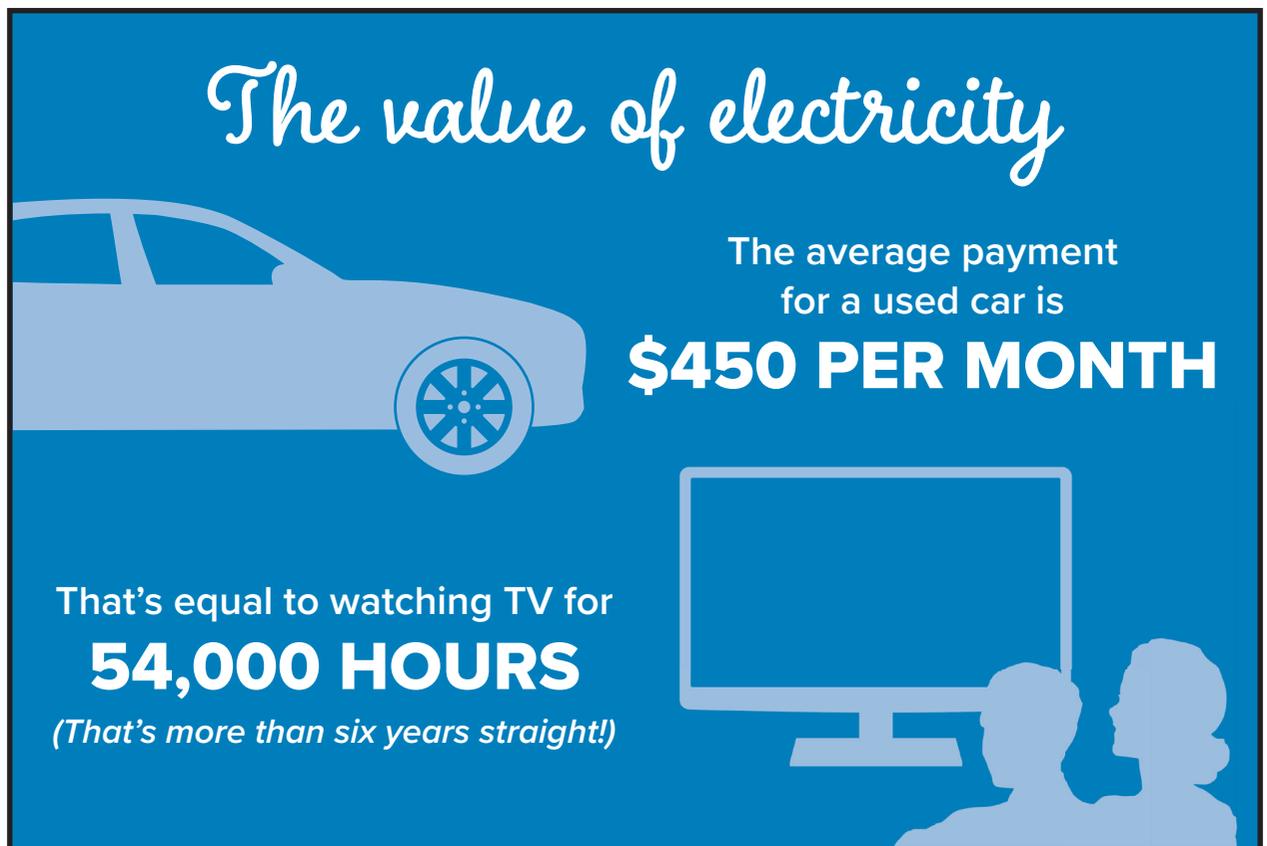
Occasional power surges are inevitable, but by unplugging devices when you think a surge may occur and using additional levels of protection like power strips with surge protection or whole-house surge suppressors, you can better safeguard your sensitive electronics and devices from damage.



Happy Easter

The Firelands Electric Cooperative office will be closed April 15 in observance of Good Friday.

Firelands Electric
COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



The value of electricity

The average payment for a used car is **\$450 PER MONTH**

That's equal to watching TV for **54,000 HOURS**
(That's more than six years straight!)



GOVERNMENT

ADVOCATING FOR AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



As a member of Firelands Electric Cooperative, you are among 42 million Americans who can claim ownership in a not-for-profit, member-owned utility that provides electricity at cost. The ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action program is an exciting opportunity for you to raise your voice and participate in the political process.

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) is the political action committee of the nation's electric cooperatives. For over 55 years, ACRE has been working to support candidates in Ohio and the U.S. who understand and support electric cooperatives and their member-owners. Through Co-op Owners, which is the consumer arm of ACRE, you have the ability to strengthen this support and join over 35,000 ACRE Co-op Owners members who form a strong network dedicated to the long-term success of the electric cooperative program.

If you are not already a member of ACRE Co-op Owners, we hope that you will consider joining this nonpartisan program. Together we will continue to fight for a viable

environment for electric cooperatives and the quality of life of the people and communities that co-ops serve.

Thank you for your continued support of the ACRE program. If you have any questions, would like additional information, or want to sign up for the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action program, please contact Firelands Electric Cooperative at 1-800-533-8658 or return the form provided below.

You can also visit www.voicesforcooperativepower.com to join our growing grassroots efforts to promote commonsense energy solutions and the importance of electric cooperatives.

Contributions to ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action are not tax deductible. All contributions to ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. Contribution guidelines are suggestions only. You may contribute more or less than the recommended amount. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal.



YES!

I want to help keep the voice of rural electric cooperatives heard in the political process by participating in ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action.

Monthly Bill Addition

- REGULAR: \$2.08 PER MONTH (\$25/YEAR)
- CENTURY CLUB: \$8.33 PER MONTH (\$100/YEAR)
- PRESIDENT'S CLUB: \$41.66 PER MONTH (\$500/YEAR)*
- OTHER \$ _____

One-Time Contribution

- REGULAR: \$25
- CENTURY CLUB: \$100
- PRESIDENT'S CLUB: \$500*
- OTHER \$ _____

I affirm that my contribution has been made with non-corporate funds (Please make checks out to Firelands Electric Cooperative):

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ COOPERATIVE: _____

EMAIL: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

*Federal Election Law requires the following information for contributions exceeding \$200:

EMPLOYER: _____ OCCUPATION: _____

Contributions to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Action Committee for Rural Electrification® (ACRE®) are not tax deductible. Contributions to ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. You have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Any contribution guidelines presented are merely suggestions. You are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts, or not at all. NRECA will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount contributed or a decision not to contribute.

IN THE COMMUNITY

SNAPshots



*International Book Giving Day
 Feb. 14*

As part of a special partnership between Touchstone Energy Cooperatives and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Firelands Electric received several children's books for donation in the community at the end of 2021. Co-op employees and trustees then donated additional books and presented them all to the New London Public Library in recognition of International Book Giving Day on Feb. 14.

Above, Firelands' Communications and Member Relations Specialist Tracy Gibb (left) and New London Public Library Director Anne Lowery (right) display some of the books that were collected.

The Imagination Library provides children ages 0-5 across the U.S. with a new, free book every month. For more information visit <https://imaginationlibrary.com>.



*Mutual aid at
 South Central Power*



*Mutual aid at
 South Central Power*

Above: In early February, Journeyman Linemen Rick Bowers, Chris Rowland, and Evan Clemons, along with Lead Linemen Fred Hartman and Rob Swiger, answered a call for help from South Central Power. The fellow electric co-op in southern Ohio was hit hard with heavy ice and snow, resulting in outages for over 24,000 of its members. To view additional storm aid photos, visit www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.



Feb. 25 winter storm

At left: Firelands Electric was faced with the aftermath of its own storm on Friday, Feb. 25. Mifflin and Monroe townships, Richland County, sustained the heaviest damage. Crews dealt with damaged equipment and downed wires in some very isolated and hard-to-reach areas.



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Jan. 25 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 42 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed reports for safety and training meetings held Nov. 19 and Jan. 6, as well as a Federated Insurance workforce safety observation conducted on Jan. 13.
- McNaull reviewed a report from the USDA regarding the cooperative's loan funding.
- The board reviewed important dates in the 2022 trustee election process.
- McNaull reviewed the monthly tree-trimming and outage reports.
- Heather Niedermeier-Heyman was selected to be the cooperative's next general counsel, following the retirement of long-time attorney Dave Harwood.
- Trustee Tom Lucha reported on a recent electric industry training session he attended.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the December financials and 2022 depreciation rate schedule. She also reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- McNaull reminded the board of the OEC 2022 Winter Conference, to be held Feb. 15 in Dublin, Ohio, and the NRECA Annual Meeting scheduled for March 6-9 in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed recent activities involving the member services and IT department, including the upcoming 2022 Children of Members Scholarship competition.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department, including mutual aid Firelands provided to Rappahannock Electric Cooperative in Virginia following a recent severe winter storm.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 26. If you would like to attend the next scheduled meeting, please contact the Firelands Electric office at 1-800-533-8658.

FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

OUTAGE HOTLINE

1-800-533-8658

OFFICE

103 Industrial Drive
P.O. Box 32
New London, OH 44851
1-800-533-8658

OFFICE HOURS

Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
www.firelandsec.com



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District 8

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Kevin Reidy
District 6

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District 7

GENERAL MANAGER

Dan McNaull

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
members@firelandsec.com

