



GM'S REPORT

GENERATING POSITIVE ENERGY

The bare-bones definition of an electric cooperative is a member-owned company that provides power to the homes and businesses in its service territory. The impact of cooperatives, like Firelands Electric, goes well beyond simply keeping the lights on, however. Our mission is to operate the cooperative for the greater good of the people and the communities that we serve. How do we accomplish this? By investing time and resources into the shared economic and social foundations of the co-op and the community.

The practical side

Admittedly, much of what Firelands Electric does on an everyday basis is utilitarian: building new service lines and maintaining existing equipment. However, even this practical work is rooted in our dedication to members' quality of life. For instance, if outages occur during a severe storm, the primary goal of our line crews revolves around getting power restored for our members as quickly and safely as possible.



Investing in the infrastructure of Firelands' distribution system is another way we look out for our membership. By replacing old or damaged poles, transformers, or other equipment before it fails, we can often avoid lengthy power outages. Your co-op uses a proactive approach to tree and vegetation management for this same reason. Devoting thousands of man-hours to trimming and removing trees within the co-op's rights-of-way now helps prevent complicated repairs and extended outages in the future. Anytime Firelands can prevent an outage — instead of having to repair one — is a good day!



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER

Program perks

Firelands Electric's energy efficiency programs also have a positive impact on our members. In 2021, members received nearly \$43,000 in rebates for purchasing qualifying energy efficient appliances, water heaters, and HVAC systems. This number doesn't even take into account the energy saved by members who took advantage of the cooperative's free energy consultations!

Last year, Firelands' energy advisors helped more than 50 members identify sources of high energy use in their homes, including faulty thermostats, locked-up HVAC compressors, well pumps running 24/7, and much more. Firelands' SmartHub app can also help members save energy by providing access to monthly, daily, and even hourly reports about their electric use.

Continued on page 20

At left, Apprentice Lineman Matt Whiteside helps a preschooler check out the bucket on a Firelands Electric truck during a touch-a-truck event.



Continued from page 19

A community affair

Firelands' community impact reaches beyond the co-op's members, though. Many of our programs touch the lives of nonmembers as well. Measures to reduce the risk and duration of outages, for instance, benefit not only the cooperative's members, but the community at large. Long or frequent power outages can have consequences for those who rely on services within our communities — whether they are a member or not. An outage can affect people's ability to purchase groceries, fill their car with gas, or even prevent car accidents at a busy intersection.

The entire community also benefits from many of Firelands' outreach programs. Firelands' involvement with local touch-a-truck events, safety demos, first responder training, and school and 4-H programs educate young and old alike about electrical safety, power generation, and energy efficiency. The cooperative's participation in charitable programs like Operation Round Up and the annual USO Step Up for Soldiers drive allows us to contribute to the well-being of our community. Even the local wildlife benefits when Firelands' crews volunteer with projects like installing nesting platforms for the eagles and ospreys at Pleasant Hill Park.

Firelands Electric Cooperative places a heavy emphasis on providing quality, reliable service to our members. But, as a local business, we also take great pride in our community involvement. Whether powering the local grocery and school, awarding an Operation Round Up grant to area first responders, or participating in a preschool safety program, we are committed to bringing positive "energy" to our community.



Above, Journeyman Lineman Rick Bowers gives a preschooler a closer look inside the cab of a Firelands Electric truck during a recent community event.



Firelands Electric's Jessica Schwanger (far left) and Stephanie Schmidt (left) recently took part in Crestview Middle School's Reality Store. The program teaches eighth grade students about managing their finances by assigning each student a specific "income" and then tasking them with budgeting their monthly expenses.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

BUDGET BILLING AVAILABLE

Firelands Electric's budget billing is a free service that makes managing your cash flow easier by providing set monthly payment amounts.

Utility bills are generally highest during cold winter months and hot summer months. Firelands' budget plan avoids these highs by leveling your monthly bill and setting a consistent monthly payment amount. Each member's budget amount is based on an estimated average of their past 12 months of electric use. In short, a year's worth of electric bills is spread out into even payments over 12 months.

Since the amount is based on previous use, members need to have at least one year of residency listed in their name at their current address to be eligible for the program.

The deadline to sign up for Firelands Electric's budget plan is Friday, Aug. 19.

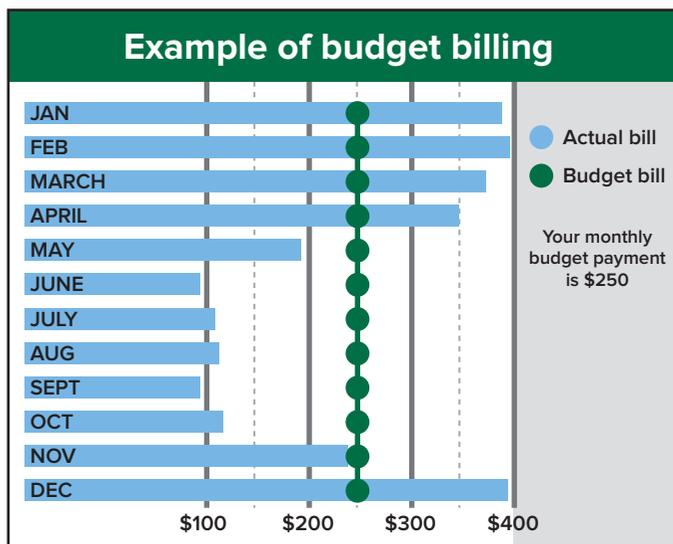
Firelands Electric's budget plan has a built-in annual "catch-up" month at the end of the 12-month period. Any balance remaining on your electric account is due by Aug. 14. If you have a credit, this will be reflected on your August bill, and you will not owe a payment. (Please note this is for the month of August only.) Members' accounts are reviewed quarterly and, based on changes in actual electric consumption, the monthly payment amount may be adjusted to avoid a significant balance or credit at the end of the budget year in August.

The cooperative's budget billing option is available at no extra cost. You can also participate in automatic budget payments, meaning you can sign up for both auto pay and budget billing. The same amount will be electronically paid from your bank account, debit card, or credit card every month.

For your convenience, Firelands Electric has numerous options for paying your electric bill. Members can make payments by mail, at the drive-up window, or in our night drop box. You can also pay by phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling 1-800-533-8658. Other convenient payment options include:

- **Automatic bank draft** — This service enables you to have your Firelands Electric payment automatically deducted from your checking, savings, or credit card account each month. You save postage costs and time, and your money stays in the bank until the 14th day of each month.
- **SmartHub account** — Firelands Electric's online payment system gives members the ability to schedule future payments, report power outages, and receive important notifications regarding their account.
- **SmartHub app** — The co-op's free mobile application allows members to pay bills and access their electric account information anytime, anywhere, through their mobile device. Members can also receive power outage notifications directly to their phone or tablet.
- **SmartHub Pay Now** — For those members who just want to pay their bill without having to create an online account, SmartHub Pay Now is an easy bill payment system that does not require any registration and can be accessed using your electric account number and last name/business name.

For more information on billing options, please contact Firelands Electric Cooperative at 1-800-533-8658 or email us at billing@firelandsec.com.





CO-OP CONTESTS

YOUR TOP PICKS



Earlier this year, we asked Firelands Electric Cooperative members to share their favorite locally owned businesses with us. And did our members ever rise to the challenge! More than 100 different businesses were nominated as part of our first ever Firelands' Finest contest.

While voting was limited to co-op members only, businesses could be located anywhere in the four counties that Firelands Electric serves: Ashland, Huron, Lorain, and Richland. From the perfect pizza to homemade pies and jams, members were not shy about telling us what they love most about their communities. On the next few pages, we spotlight members' top picks. When you're out and about this summer, make sure to check out a few of the best businesses in the area!

RESTAURANT OR DINER **SOUTH STREET GRILLE**

121 SOUTH STREET • ASHLAND

In late 2020, Sean and Carly Little saw their long-time dream of opening a restaurant in their hometown come true. South Street Grille, located on the one-way street just behind Main in downtown Ashland, offers elevated casual dining and a full-service bar. Steaks, ribs, pasta, burgers, vegetarian options, salads, and an extensive kids' menu are just a handful of the many options available on the menu. With a family-friendly main dining floor, basement bar, and large outdoor patio with live entertainment, South Street Grille has something for everyone.

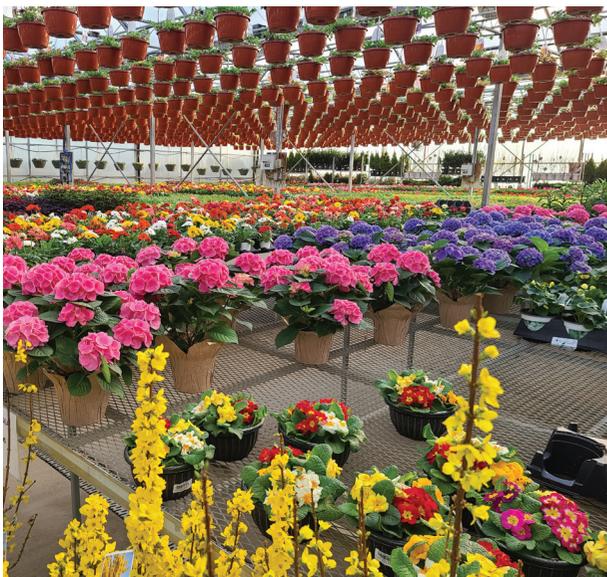
GREEN THUMB **GREEN VALLEY GROWERS**

732 COUNTY ROAD 1775 • ASHLAND

With two acres of greenhouses, an additional large outdoor retail space, and 1,700 varieties of plants, there's always something new to see at Green Valley Growers. Every spring, Tom and Shelley Mohrman's business, located outside of Ashland, is blooming with plants, as well as customers. Tens of thousands of starter annuals and perennials, potted flowers, and vegetable plants are available. Green Valley sows over two million seeds every year and as many as 16,000 hanging baskets are on display on any given day. On Tuesdays throughout April, senior citizens receive a 10% discount. Special markdowns take place starting in mid-June, and fall mums become available in mid-August.



SOUTH STREET GRILLE



GREEN VALLEY GROWERS

BOUTIQUE OR GIFT SHOP BITTERSWEET GIFT SHOP

16 EAST MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON

Bittersweet Gift Shop is the New London area's go-to spot to purchase gifts and home décor. With a huge selection of clocks, wall décor, candle holders, shelving, and more, it's easy to find something to complement any style. The shop also offers seasonal-themed items, such as wreaths, table runners, and other linens. Outdoor décor, like porch signs, solar lights, and windchimes, are often available as well. Nestled inside Gilbert Hardware (owner Jani Myers' other business), Bittersweet Gift Shop is the perfect place to pick up those birthday, wedding, and shower gifts.

PIZZA MR. PIZZAHEAD

10 SOUTH MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON

If there's one food item that people have strong opinions about, it's pizza! After all the votes were counted, one pizzeria rose above the others in our contest. Mr. Pizzahead in New London offers not only the perfect pizza, but also wings and subs. Owned and operated by Nick Bannworth, this local staple offers take-out and delivers to several small-town areas that other restaurants won't, including Fitchville, Ruggles, Clarksfield, Nova, Rochester, and Savannah. Mr. Pizzahead also offers plan-ahead large orders for parties or events. If you're craving a pizza with generous toppings and fresh cheese or a sub loaded with flavor, make sure to call "The Pizza People" at Mr. Pizzahead in New London.



BITTERSWEET GIFT SHOP

MARKET OR SPECIALTY FOOD BEYOND MEASURE MARKET

569A US HIGHWAY 250 • GREENWICH

Located on U.S. Highway 250 between Greenwich and Savannah, Beyond Measure Market opened its doors in 2018, and serves a dual purpose in the community. Besides offering customers a full line of deli meats and cheeses, bulk foods, homemade signature products, baked goods, and fry pies, the market is also part of Mission to Amish People (MAP). MAP helps former Amish get established if they choose to leave their culture, assisting with acquiring documentation, education, and more. Many involved with MAP learn retail skills and earn an income by working at Beyond Measure.

In addition to its much sought-after homemade goods, Beyond Measure also offers subs, salads, fresh produce, ice cream, and gifts. Seasonal open houses and annual yard sales entice many in the community and beyond to visit the market with the World's Largest Horse and Buggy sitting out front.



MR. PIZZAHEAD



BEYOND MEASURE MARKET



CHIM-CHEROO CHIMNEY SERVICES

WILDCARD CHIM-CHEROO CHIMNEY SERVICES

1059 PLYMOUTH EAST ROAD • GREENWICH

Chim-Cheroo Chimney Services has been an area staple for over 30 years. The second-generation, family-owned company was opened in 1988 by Greenwich native Don Rhine. His son, Tom, became a partner in 2008 and eventually took the reins in 2020. Chim-Cheroo is a member of the National Chimney Sweep Guild (NCSG), and all technicians are certified through the non-profit organization Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA). Technicians participate in periodic training about the most recent advancements in the industry. Chim-Cheroo offers chimney cleanings and inspections, and masonry work and installs wood-burning stoves, inserts, and liners in area residential homes. They serve the north-central portion of Ohio and are happy to help with any and all of your chimney needs.



ATTRACTION/ENTERTAINMENT FIRELANDS LABOR DAY FESTIVAL

NEW LONDON RECREATION PARK

The annual Firelands Labor Day Festival is a favorite of those in and around the Village of New London. This year's event, scheduled for Sept. 2–5, will be the 113th festival. With activities available for all ages, it is a true family-oriented event, attracting multiple generations of attendees. The traditional parade will take place downtown on Saturday, while the much-loved fireworks display is planned for Monday evening. Truck and tractor pulls, a demolition derby, kids' games, carnival rides, and lots of great food vendors can be found throughout the event. All proceeds from the festival benefit New London's parks system, which provides numerous recreational opportunities for the public throughout the year.



FIRELANDS LABOR DAY FESTIVAL

GIFT CARD WINNERS

As part of the Firelands' Finest contest, three members who nominated businesses were randomly selected to receive a \$25 gift card from one of our winning businesses.

Congratulations to the following winners of gift cards to the businesses listed:

Rod Sutherland of Nova – Green Valley Growers

Dan Davie of Willard – South Street Grille

Alfred Oney of Greenwich – Beyond Measure Market

Where does my electricity come from?

Join us for the 2022 Cardinal power plant tour to find out!



Located on the Ohio River in Brilliant, Ohio, Buckeye Power's Cardinal Plant provides power to Firelands Electric and the 23 other electric co-ops in Ohio. And, with over \$1 million in environmental upgrades, it's also one of the cleanest coal-fired power plants in the world.

After a two-year hiatus, the Cardinal Plant tour is back for 2022! Scheduled to take place on Wednesday, Sept. 14, this scenic all-day trip is free and available to cooperative members who have not previously toured the plant. Attendees will participate in an informative guided tour of Cardinal, as well as be treated to dinner at Dutch Valley Restaurant and Bakery in Sugarcreek.

The bus will depart from Firelands' facility in New London and will also pick up/drop off at the Ashland County Career Center on State Route 60.

Since the power plant can be a potentially hazardous area, tour participants must be at least 12 years old, unless specifically authorized. There will be a considerable amount of walking, climbing several flights of stairs, and going through some hot and dusty areas. Members with health concerns, those who require assistance walking, or those who cannot walk more than a half mile without resting should not take the tour.

Space is limited and reservations are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Seating for this popular tour fills up quickly, so be sure to sign up early.

If you are interested in attending this year's tour and would like to request your seat on the Cardinal tour bus, please visit www.firelandsec.com/power-supply, contact the member services department at members@firelandsec.com, or call 1-800-533-8658. Members can also sign up by returning the form below to: Attn.: Cardinal Tour, Firelands Electric Co-op, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851.

2022 CARDINAL PLANT TOUR R.S.V.P. FORM

_____ Yes. I am interested in attending the 2022 Cardinal Plant tour on Sept. 14. Please contact me with further information in August. I am aware of the potential risks involved.

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____



CO-OP NEWS

EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

Journeyman Lineman Robert Shepherd



Robert Shepherd
JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN

This month, Robert Shepherd celebrates five years with Firelands Electric. Robert joined the cooperative as an apprentice lineman in 2017. After completing four years of training through the Central Ohio Lineworker Training (COLT) program, he was promoted to journeyman lineman in November 2021.

Robert's position involves a wide

array of duties, including outage restoration, repairing damage caused by storms, constructing new services, and upgrading existing equipment. In addition, Robert also works with the cooperative's other linemen to replace poles and install transformers, switches, and outdoor lighting.

Working for the cooperative's members is the job duty that Robert enjoys the most. "It's so rewarding to be able to help a member with a service issue or simply repair a storm- or accident-related outage to get their lights back on," Robert says.

Robert and his wife, Courtney, live in New London with their daughters Paiton and Morgan. Outside of work, he enjoys spending time in the outdoors and supporting his daughters' many extracurricular activities.

Engineering Services Representative Kurt Shepherd

This month, Kurt Shepherd celebrates ten years as a full-time employee of Firelands Electric. Kurt joined the cooperative on a part-time basis in 2011, working on a special project to audit outdoor lighting located on Firelands' distribution system. In July 2012, he transitioned to the role of engineering services representative, a full-time position within the co-op's operations department.

The bulk of Kurt's duties involve designing and staking new and upgraded electrical services, where he meets with members to assess the current set-up and future power needs of their home or business. "This is my favorite aspect of the job," he says. "I like working with the members and meeting new people every day."

Kurt also provides design and stake services for work plan rebuilds, highway expansion projects, and any other situations that may arise.

Maintaining warehouse inventory and finalizing joint-use proposals for the attachment of cable lines to the co-op's poles round out Kurt's responsibilities.

In December, Kurt earned his associate degree in integrated engineering technology from North Central State College. He resides in the Greenwich area with his wife, Meagan, and their daughters, Hadleigh and Harper. When not working, Kurt likes to spend time with his family and enjoys hunting.



Kurt Shepherd
ENGINEERING SERVICES
REPRESENTATIVE

5 YEARS

10 YEARS

CO-OP NEWS

A FOND FAREWELL

After serving on the Firelands Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees for more than 13 years, W.E. "Andy" Anderson attended his final board meeting as the representative for District 8 on May 24. "Andy has always been a strong advocate for the co-op, its members, and its employees. His dedication, along with his familiar wit and humor, will be greatly missed," says Board President Dan Schloemer.

Appointed in 2009, Andy filled the spot left vacant following the passing of long-time board member Don Stauffer. A cooperative member for 58 years, Andy is also retired from Ashland City Schools, where he taught chemistry and served as the science department chairperson.

In addition to his role with Firelands Electric's board, over the years Andy has been involved with numerous other local groups and organizations. He served for 28 years on the Hillsdale Local Schools Board of Education, held positions on the boards of the Ashland County Farm Bureau and Ashland County-West Holmes Career Center, and spent 40 years as the Mifflin Township zoning inspector. He is currently a member of the Hayesville Lions Club, where he has served for over 50 years.

As a child, Andy watched his grandfather go door to door to sign friends and neighbors up for electric service with Tuscarawas-Coshocton Electric Cooperative (now known as The Frontier Power Company). Since then, he has witnessed many changes in the electric industry. But one thing has remained the same — electric cooperatives' commitment to providing reliable, affordable power to their members.

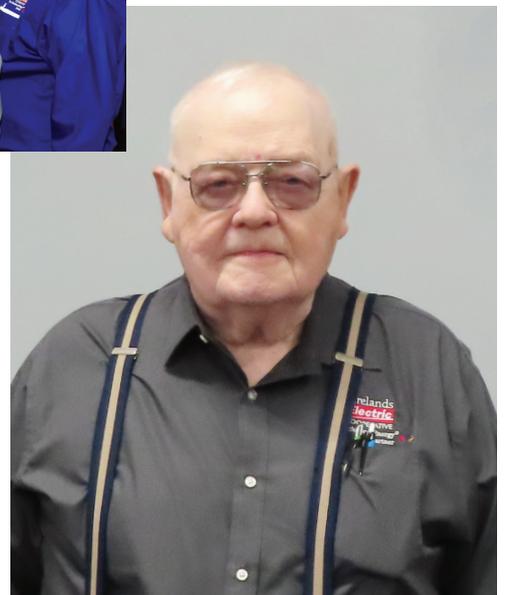
"It's been a privilege to serve on Firelands' board," Andy says. "This group does a

commendable job of working together, blending individual opinions and numerical data, to achieve a common goal of providing reliable power and excellent service to the co-op's members." For anyone considering a position on Firelands' board, Andy also points out that it is a unique opportunity to serve in a role providing an essential service to the community.

"Andy's understanding of business, cooperatives, and people, combined with his willingness to serve, made him the ideal board member," adds General Manager Dan McNaul.

Andy and his wife, Donna, reside in the Ashland area. The couple, who have been married for 66 years, have three children, four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Andy looks forward to keeping watch over the family farm and improving his woodworking and cooking skills during his retirement. "And I plan to just enjoy living," he adds.



After 13 years of serving as the District 8 trustee on Firelands Electric Co-op's board, W.E. "Andy" Anderson retired on May 24.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

A HEATED DEBATE

Should your air conditioner fan be set at on or auto?

When it comes to operating the fan on your air conditioning system, the long-running debate of “on” versus “auto” seems to heat up every summer. Although each setting has its advantages, most experts agree that the auto setting is preferred for maximum comfort and energy efficiency.



Better humidity control

Your air conditioning system not only keeps your home cool, it also reduces humidity levels. A typical cooling system includes an outdoor compressor as well as an evaporator inside. The compressor pulls heat out of your home, while the moisture from that warm air collects in the evaporator. The compressor turns on and off at intervals to allow moisture to drain off the evaporator, reducing humidity levels.

The blower fan is located underneath the evaporator. When the thermostat is set in the on position, the fan continues to operate even when the compressor cycles off. The constant flow of warm, unconditioned air raises the temperature of the evaporator, slowing condensation and recirculating much of that moisture back into your

home. In the auto setting, the fan turns on and off with the compressor, circulating only dry, cool air.

Energy savings

In addition to increasing humidity levels, the continuous operation of the fan in the on setting uses more energy, costing you an extra \$15 to \$20 a month. Also, the increased humidity forces your air conditioning system to work harder to get rid of that moisture, using more energy and further increasing your summer utility bills.

While the debate continues, the answer is clear: The auto setting is the best way to minimize cooling costs while ensuring the comfort of your family.

Firelands Electric’s energy advisor is more than happy to help you figure out the most cost-effective, energy efficient solutions for your home! Call the co-op at 1-800-533-8658 for more information or to schedule your consulting appointment.

Happy
INDEPENDENCE DAY!

The Firelands Electric Cooperative office will be closed on
**Monday,
July 4**

As always, emergency service is available 24/7 by calling 1-800-533-8658.

MEMBER TOOLS

THE POWER OF smarthub

Firelands Electric Cooperative's SmartHub is more than just a way to pay your electric bill. Members can sign up to receive important account notifications via email, text message, or a combination of both. SmartHub users have the ability to add multiple contact numbers and email addresses as well as choose which notifications are sent to each contact. Selections can be changed at any time — giving members complete control.

SmartHub also allows members to monitor their electricity consumption, viewing use from individual

months, days, or even hours. Members can compare the number of kilowatt-hours from two different months and check out their average energy use.

Put the power in your hands! Visit www.firelandsec.com/smarthub-101 to find out how to take charge of your electric account. Download the free SmartHub app from Google Play or the Apple App Store to get started.

NOTIFICATIONS

Billing Alerts

- Payment Confirmation — A payment made through SmartHub has been received.
- Payment Posted — A payment was made to your account through any method other than SmartHub.
- Scheduled Payment Notification — An online payment to your account has been scheduled or canceled.

Service Alerts

- Planned Power Outage
- Power Outage
- Power Restored

Usage Alerts

- Power Usage Alert — Receive notifications when your kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage reaches a threshold that you set. Thresholds can be set for hourly use, total daily use, or both. Notifications are sent each day around 4 p.m. if your usage meets or exceeds these levels.

Miscellaneous Alerts

- Auto Pay — A change has been made to your Auto Pay Program information.
- Contact — Confirmation that you have sent a message to the co-op through SmartHub.

On Demand Alerts

- FEC Peak Alert — Load management is currently taking place for members enrolled in Firelands' voluntary load management program.
- FEC Peak Alert Possible — Conditions are such that a peak alert may occur today.
- FEC Peak Alert Ended — The current load management period has ended for members who participate.

USAGE TOOLS

- Usage Explorer — Members can click through a series of graphs to view usage by month, day, or hour. High, average, and low temperatures for each time period can also be viewed.
- Usage Comparison — Select two different months to compare how much electricity was used.
- Average Usage — Members can view their average electrical usage over a range of dates, which are selected by using the calendar at the top of the screen. Average use can be viewed by the month, day of the week, or time of day.
- Usage Planning Tool — Members can add a "marker" to their account (for example: "Shut off space heater"). This marker shows up on the Daily Usage screen in Usage Explorer to help members identify if the event causes a change in electricity consumption.



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met April 26 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 26 membership applications for approval by the board.
- The board reviewed reports for a safety and training meeting held April 6 and the OEC Safety and Regulatory Annual Review conducted on March 18.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed the cooperative's 10-year financial forecast.
- The board reviewed several options for the retirement of capital credits in 2022. Following discussion, it was decided to postpone a final decision until the May meeting.
- McNaull reviewed plans for the 2022 Member Appreciation Day and annual meeting scheduled for June 18.
- The following individuals were appointed to the credentials committee for the cooperative's upcoming trustee elections: Dennis Rees, Gary Hunter, Steve Gray, John Noss, Evan Hahn, Steve Willike, Steve Taylor, Dave Siess, and Richard Murr.
- Heather Niedermeier Heyman was appointed as the chairperson of the election committee for the upcoming trustee elections.
- McNaull reviewed the ballot and candidate bios for the 2022 trustee elections.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the March financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- McNaull reviewed the monthly tree-trimming and outage reports.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed recent activities involving the member services and IT department.
- Line Superintendent Zach Collins reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- Trustee Kevin Reidy reported on the OREC meeting he recently attended.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 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



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dan Schloemer
President, District 1

Bruce Leimbach
Vice President, District 4

Carl Ayers
Secretary/Treasurer, District 5

W.E. Anderson
District 8

Tom Lucha
District 3

Gene Lamoreaux
District 2

John Martin
District 9

Kevin Reidy
District 6

Rob Turk
District 7

GENERAL MANAGER

Dan McNaull

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
members@firelandsec.com

