



GM'S REPORT

NEW YEAR — NEW TECH

According to *Forbes* magazine, less than 25% of people who make New Year's resolutions stick with them for more than a month, and only 8% are successful at accomplishing them. That's why I typically avoid making them. But if you are inclined to making New Year's resolutions, why not aim to become more energy efficient? As your energy partner, Firelands Electric Cooperative has the tools and technology to help you reach this goal — and avoid becoming a "resolution statistic."

SmartHub

One of the most convenient tools Firelands Electric has available for co-op members is SmartHub. The app, which many already use to pay their monthly electric bill, is also a tool for monitoring your energy consumption. Featuring state-of-the-art technology, SmartHub allows members to examine their electric use by the month, day, or even hour.

Members can determine their average electric use, compare current and previous months, or utilize the Plan and Save feature to track changes resulting from the installation or removal of items such as a space heater, swimming pool, extra refrigerator, or large appliance. Members who sign up for the Power Usage Alert can even get notices sent to their email or phone when they use a certain amount of power over a specific time period, based on parameters they choose within the app. Having this kind of information at your fingertips can help pinpoint when and where you use the most power, so you can make adjustments accordingly.

Your solar partner

For some, being more energy efficient means going green. With increased availability and affordability, the interest in residential solar panels continues to climb. The ever-changing technology and abundance of information out there can be overwhelming. Determining the best option for your particular situation can be difficult, but Firelands Electric's energy advisors are here to assist. For example, they can help you determine if solar is a good fit for your home and how much electricity you can expect to produce, explain

how the cooperative's net metering policy works, and project your new total energy costs with the additional monthly solar payments. Staying up to date on the latest energy data and technology is what our energy advisors do, and getting their assistance is just a phone call away.

EV charger rebate

Some energy-conscious members may be interested in reducing their consumption of other sources of power. For instance, they may turn to an electric or hybrid vehicle to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. Firelands Electric offers help for these members as well. Those who install a Level-2 (240-volt) EV charger at their home or business may be eligible for a \$250 rebate. Chargers must be new and meet safety requirements. Visit www.firelandsec.com/electric-vehicle-charger-rebates for details. You can also check out the cooperative's new online Electric Vehicle Calculator at www.firelandsec.com/energy-education to compare fuel costs, miles per kilowatt-hour, and emissions of several different models.

Each and every day, promotions for new products and technologies appear in droves on our phones and computers and in the media. It's hard to know which ones may work for your particular energy needs — or if they are even legitimate. If still in doubt after doing your research, give our energy advisors a call and get their insight. Just don't give up your New Year's resolution to save energy and money, because Firelands Electric Cooperative's energy advisors are happy to assist. If you have questions about the latest in efficiency technology, give them a call at 1-800-533-8658.



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER



IN THE COMMUNITY

NESTING POLE INSTALLATION
PHOTOS BY IRV OSLIN

CLEARED FOR LANDING



In November, Director of Operations Don Englet, Line Superintendent Zach Collins, and Journeyman Lineman Rick Bowers helped Pleasant Hill Lake Park install a 65-foot pole for eagle nesting. A 6-foot-square platform, which can support about 3,600 pounds, sits atop the pole and will provide a safe space for eagles in the area to nest.

The new pole joins five osprey nesting platforms already at the Perrysville-area park. Firelands Electric was involved with installing four of these five existing platforms.

The project also gave Firelands' linemen a chance to test out the co-op's new tracked derrick-digger. Designed to access the roughest terrain, the derrick-digger was the perfect piece of equipment for the nesting platform installation. "This new machine will give the cooperative accessibility to areas that are either too wet or too steeply sloped for trucks to reach," Firelands Electric General Manager Dan McNaull says. "It will also allow crews to do more line work from the field side of ditches, resulting in fewer instances where trucks will need to be parked on the roadway."



For more information on Pleasant Hill's nesting platforms or to view their live osprey cam, visit <https://pleasanthillpark.mwcd.org/osprey-and-bald-eagles-nesting>.

VIEWS FROM THE *Lines*

FIRELANDS ELECTRIC CO-OP

PHOTO BY LINE SUPERINTENDENT ZACH COLLINS



PHOTO BY LEAD LINEMAN FRED HARTMAN

Firelands Electric's linemen have the opportunity to experience some unique views of our communities. The perspective from high atop a utility pole or from an extended bucket can be quite different than from the ground.

In the fall, we asked our linemen to submit photos showing off their unusual views so that we could share them in *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine and on our social media outlets. We also held an informal contest by having people like their favorite photo on Facebook.

Congratulations to Line Superintendent Zach Collins, whose photo of Apprentice Lineman Robert Shepherd (above) received the most votes! To view additional photos, visit www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.

PHOTO BY LEAD LINEMAN PHIL PICKERING





YOUTH PROGRAMS

Class of 2021 **COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

- Graduating seniors who live in a home served by Firelands Electric Cooperative are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale.
- Finalists in the Firelands Electric scholarship competition will be interviewed at the cooperative office on Monday, Feb. 15, 2021.
- Applicants will be judged on scholastic record, school and community activities, cooperative knowledge, and a personal interview.

Complete rules and applications are available at www.firelandsec.com/children-members-scholarship, by contacting Firelands Electric's member services department at 1-800-533-8658, or by visiting your high school guidance department.

Scholarships will be awarded as follows:

- First place: \$1,800
- Second place: \$1,600
- Third place: \$1,400
- Fourth place: \$1,200
- Fifth place: \$1,000
- Sixth place: \$750
- Two Honorable Mentions: \$500 each
- Two Judges' Choice awards: \$500 each
- **NEW!** Technical-Trade Scholarship: \$750

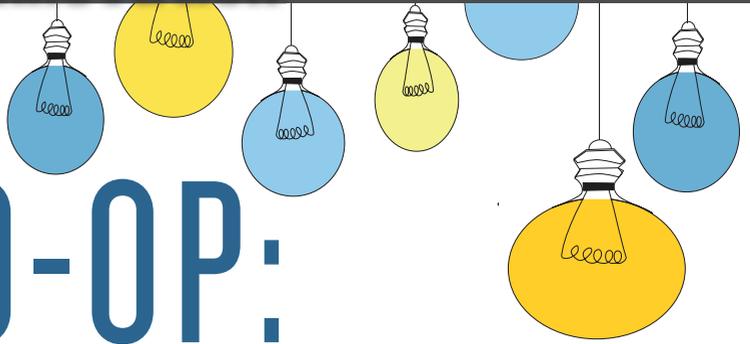
The first-place winner will also be eligible to compete at the statewide competition in Columbus on April 13, where he or she can win up to \$3,800 in additional scholarship awards from Ohio's Electric Cooperatives.

**Application deadline:
Jan. 22, 2021**

Visit www.firelandsec.com/children-members-scholarship for complete rules and applications.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

CAMP CO-OP: ~ Winter edition



Many families have been spending more time at home lately. And let's face it —when the weather gets cold and snowy, kids can be prone to developing a nasty case of cabin fever. Firelands Electric Cooperative has come up with a fun way to help our member families alleviate the boredom.

Camp Co-op: Winter Edition gives member families a chance to win a kit filled with books, games, and activities. Geared toward children between the ages of 5 and 12, kits may include a selection of books, Magic School Bus science kits, a build-your-own solar robot, Snap Circuits, and more. Each kit will be different, but all will focus on electricity and energy education. At least one winter activity, such as a snowball maker, snowman kit, or winter-themed game, will be included in every kit.

How to enter

Firelands Electric Cooperative members with children ages 5 to 12 living in the home may enter to win one of 10 Camp Co-op kits. Simply complete the form at right and return to: Camp Co-op, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851. Members may also submit an online form at www.firelandsec.com/contests.

Entries must be received by 4 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 20, and are limited to one per member family. Winners' names will be published in a future issue of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.



CAMP CO-OP: WINTER EDITION CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Please complete the information below and mail your entry to: Co-op Month Contest, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851.

Entries may also be completed online at www.firelandsec.com/contests. Deadline to enter is 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 20.

Member's name

Service address

City/State/ZIP

Phone

Email

Names and ages of children in the home



CO-OP NEWS



CO-OP MONTH CONTEST WINNERS

To celebrate National Co-op Month, Firelands Electric held an exclusive drawing for its members during the month of October. A total of 368 members submitted entries between Oct. 1 and Nov. 2 and had a chance to win one of five prizes.

Thank you to all who entered and congratulations to all of our winners!



Grand-prize winner of a 32-inch Vizio LED Smart HDTV:

Dave and Nancy Hicks of North Fairfield (right)

Four winners of a 32 GB Fire HD 8-inch tablet:

Janene Reiderman of Willard (top)

Reid and Patricia Abel of New London (middle left)

Joan Allen of Jeromesville (center)

Lel Harlan of Ashland (middle right)



CO-OP NEWS

INTERESTED IN SOLAR? ASK NOW TO AVOID SURPRISES LATER!

- 1. Be clear about your goals**
Are you making this investment to reduce your electric bill or for environmental benefits? Research the practicality of reaching these goals.
- 2. Choose the right contractor**
A good contractor will take time to understand your goals and determine if your home is a good candidate for solar.
- 3. Understand the process and details of connecting to the grid**
Key considerations are the interconnection application process and fees, and the co-op's net metering policies.
- 4. Make your home energy efficient**
Members looking to save money with solar often find energy efficiency investments provide a better payback and resale value for their home.
- 5. Read the contract fully**
Read the fine print to avoid misunderstandings about financing, transfer of ownership, maintenance, and other important details.

Solar panels are a major home investment. Your cooperative's energy advisors can provide some valuable advice throughout the process so there are no surprises down the road.

Visit www.ohiosolar101.com/fec for more information or contact Firelands Electric Co-op's energy advisors at 1-800-533-8658 with your questions.

STAY CONNECTED



FOLLOW US ON:

FACEBOOK: @FirelandsElectric

TWITTER: @Firelands

INSTAGRAM: firelandsec



LOOKING FOR MEMBERS LIKE YOU!

In 2021, Firelands Electric Cooperative members will elect board trustees for districts 2, 7, and 9. Any member of the co-op who is in good standing and resides in a district with an open spot on the board is invited to run for that position. Nomination petitions to become a candidate for the 2021 elections will be available at the Firelands Electric office beginning Feb. 5. Potential candidates are required to submit a completed application and collect 20 member signatures from within their district by Friday, March 19. A map of the board districts is available at www.firelandsec.com/board-trustees.

Additional information on the role of a Firelands Electric Cooperative trustee and how you can become a candidate will be available on www.firelandsec.com at the end of January. Complete details about the election process will be published in the February issue of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Oct. 27 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 48 membership applications for approval by the board.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the September financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- The board reviewed and approved a report from a safety meeting held Oct. 16.
- General Manager Dan McNaull presented the proposed capital budget for 2021, which was approved following discussion.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- McNaull reviewed the outage report for September and the status of the current tree trimming program.
- Via telephone, Brian Stavish of CFC reviewed the co-op's Key Ratio Trend Analysis for the previous year.
- McNaull reviewed a report on vehicle-related outages from 2015 through 2020.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed a report on recent activities involving the member services and IT departments.
- McNaull asked the board to approve three appointments to the cooperative's People Fund board for 2021. District 2 Trustee Gene Lamoreaux nominated Gary Hunter, District 7 Trustee Rob Turk nominated Steve Aron, and District 9 Trustee John Martin nominated Mary Jo Paramore. The appointments of all three were approved.
- The board reviewed the recent virtual NRECA regional meeting.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 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
419-929-1571

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

