



GM'S REPORT

Considering Solar? We're Here to Help.

Today's consumers want options. Many homeowners are looking for a less expensive form of energy. Some are looking for a green energy source. These motives are why some homeowners are exploring rooftop solar panels.

The interest in alternative energy sources is also being fueled by decreasing costs for rooftop solar, the availability of financial incentives, and the abundance of companies offering solar panel installation.

However, as appealing as rooftop solar may seem, it is important for consumers to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy, and actual energy savings. To determine whether rooftop solar is a good fit for their particular situation, homeowners must do their research.

We're here to help

As your trusted energy partner, Firelands Electric Cooperative is here to help. By simply making an appointment with our energy advisor, you can get a FREE assessment of your specific energy situation. As a cooperative, Firelands Electric is not out to make a profit through the sale of electricity. Instead, we exist to provide our members with the best service at the best price, which includes finding new ways to help you use energy more efficiently.

Firelands Electric Cooperative strives to keep pace with the ever-changing energy environment and evolving technology. We are always exploring options that will help you manage your energy use, such as SmartHub's usage explorer tools and offering free energy consultations. Our members can also invest in hassle-free renewable energy through OurSolar, the co-op's community solar program, and our staff has been getting insight into the future of electric vehicles through recent educational workshops.

Is rooftop solar right for you?

To help determine whether rooftop solar is right for you, Firelands Electric's energy advisor will take a look at the:

- overall energy efficiency of the home
- age and pitch of the roof
- orientation of the sun in relation to the home
- tree coverage near the home
- weather patterns for the region



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER

Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. While rooftop solar certainly works for some people, it's not the answer for all.

A good rule of thumb for small-scale solar in Ohio is that it will produce 1,250 kilowatt-hours (kWh) annually for every one kilowatt-direct current (kW-DC) of installed capacity. So, if you have 10 kW-DC installed, your system could potentially generate 12,500 kWh per year (or about 1,000 kWh per month).

When helping co-op members determine whether rooftop solar is right for them, our co-op energy advisor will also consider the many financial aspects:

- Is there a large, up-front payment required or are fees spread out over time?
- Will the homeowner actually own the panels or will they be leased?
- Are there any hidden costs — e.g., does the roof need to be replaced before installing the panels?
- Are there ongoing maintenance fees?
- Are there rebates or other financial incentives available?

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- Is the projected kW output of the system realistic based on your situation?
- What is the estimated energy savings compared to the investment required for the proposed system?
- Is it more cost-effective to invest in other energy-saving measures?

Most importantly, our energy advisor will provide an objective analysis of the total energy puzzle. Taking into account your current energy consumption, the home's efficiency, and the age and condition of the HVAC system and home site, our energy advisor can help co-op members determine whether rooftop solar is the best choice given the homeowners' goals.

Firelands Electric recognizes that consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is valuable, and we stand ready to help our members determine what will work best for their situation.

NESTING PLATFORMS COMPLETED

In early May, Firelands Electric's Evan Clemons, Rob Swiger, and Zach Collins installed the last of three new osprey and bald eagle nesting platforms at Pleasant Hill Lake Park in Perrysville. The project was a joint effort between the cooperative, Muskingham Watershed Conservancy District, and the Greater Mohican Audubon Society.



CO-OP NEWS

OPEN HOUSE PRIZE WINNERS

Congratulations to the prize winners from Firelands Electric Cooperative's Open House, held on Saturday, April 27.

The Smith family of New London was the winner of a 50-inch Vizio Smart TV. Pictured at left are Stacey, Marissa, and Kory Smith. Not pictured is Kevin Smith.

Jim and Kathleen Ropp of Ashland (below left) and Harold and Mary Fries of Willard (below right) each won a \$100 bill credit.



IN THE COMMUNITY

BY TRACY GIBB

READY TO TUMBLE

Like many volunteer fire departments, the one located in New London relies on fundraising to help purchase equipment for the station and its firefighters. In addition to the usual chicken BBQ and pancake breakfast, the group also organizes a race each summer. Held at New London Reservoir Park Campground, Spill on the Hill is not your typical contest. The adult participants in this particular race drive modified children's ride-on toys down a steep hill to compete for the distinction of being named the fastest — all while attempting to remain upright.

Months before the race, participants start searching for secondhand motorized ride-on toys. Everything from pink sport utility vehicles to sports cars to ATVs are fair game. Before the event, batteries must be removed and the drive gear disabled, making the vehicle "free-wheeling." Some also choose to personalize their entries with a custom paint job.

To ensure contestants' safety, only stock wheels are allowed. Drivers must be at least 16 years old and wear a helmet and eye protection. Participants compete in pairs and races are double elimination, giving each driver two chances to advance. Trophies and monetary prizes are awarded to the two drivers who can make it down

the hill and across the finish line before all the other competitors.

There is also a prize for the best spill. With grownups driving child-size toy vehicles, tumbles down the hill are frequent. "Everyone loves the wrecks," says Raymar Davidson, one of the New London firefighters who coordinates Spill on the Hill. "They are a highlight of the day."

Although they can't race, the kids manage to get in on the action. It's tradition for them to launch a volley of water balloons at the drivers to hinder their progress down the slope. "The kids have a blast trying to trip up the drivers," Davidson says.

Contestants pay an entry fee of \$20 per vehicle, while spectators are \$2 each. Event T-shirts, hot dogs, and water are available for purchase, and many items are donated by local businesses. All proceeds from Spill on the Hill benefit the New London Fire Department, helping fund equipment and training.

"Scott Carroll and Ted Evans are a huge help in planning and carrying out Spill on the Hill. Firefighter and Firelands Electric Co-op lineman Chris Rowland announces the races for us. The entire fire department really chips in to make this event work," Davidson says.

In its fourth year, Spill on the Hill will take place at New London Reservoir Park Campground on July 21 starting at 10 a.m. To learn more about this fundraising event, search for New London Fire Spill on the Hill on Facebook or contact the fire department at 419-929-0022.

Places & Faces showcases the people, businesses, and organizations located throughout the Firelands Electric Cooperative service territory.





COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met April 23 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 32 membership applications for approval by the board.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the March financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- The board reviewed the retirement of capital credits for 2019 and voted to refund \$1 million to current and former cooperative members.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reported on the auction of surplus equipment held at the cooperative's former office and warehouse on April 20.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- McNaull reviewed with the board the current status on the sale of the cooperative's former buildings.
- Director of Member Services and Communications Andrea Gravenhorst reported on recent activities involving the member services and IT departments.

- McNaull advised the board of an upcoming workshop on May 14 that the cooperative would be hosting for cooperatives around the state. The workshop will discuss the current and future trends in electric vehicles and charging stations.

Firelands Electric Co-op is democratically controlled and governed by local people committed to policies that result in a safe and reliable electric system, fair rates, financial responsibility, and superior member service.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, July 23, at Firelands Electric's facility, located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London.



FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
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