



GM'S REPORT

# Ring IN THE NEW YEAR WITH REBATES

More than 50% of Americans make New Year's resolutions, and saving money is usually at or near the top of the list. But, according to *Forbes* magazine, about 80% of resolution-makers abandon their goals by February. Why? One report suggests that it's because the resolution was too vague. Simply declaring you will spend less money in 2022 isn't enough. Successfully sticking to a resolution requires a solid, clearly defined plan. Fortunately for Firelands Electric members, the cooperative's rebate programs are a perfect fit for any money-saving strategy.

Firelands Electric's rebates range from \$25 to \$800 and include purchases large and small. Rebates are available for HVAC systems, water heaters, certain kitchen and laundry room appliances, and even insulation. While purchasing a new geothermal or heat pump system isn't what most people would consider "saving" money, replacing these and other large appliances can sometimes be a necessity. Thankfully, your cooperative can make the process a bit easier on your wallet.

A complete list of available rebates, along with their guidelines, is on the next page, but below is a small sample of how much you can save:

- Geothermal system: \$800
- Heat pump: \$300-\$500
- Water heater: \$150-\$300
- Refrigerator or stand-alone freezer: \$100
- Dishwasher or washing machine: \$50

As an added bonus, with the purchase of new household appliances and heating and cooling systems, you'll save money on your electric bill. Any time you upgrade to a newer version of an appliance, you're getting a unit that uses power more economically than

what you had before. Plus, the efficiency minimums required by Firelands' rebate programs meet or exceed those of ENERGY STAR-certified models which, on average, are 30% more efficient than noncertified appliances. And when it comes to saving energy and money, every little bit can add up!

But, what if you're not in the market for a new furnace or fridge? Not to worry. Firelands Electric members have additional programs available to them that will fit nicely into their 2022 savings resolutions. One such program is the cooperative's FREE energy consultations. Making an appointment with our knowledgeable energy advisor is just a phone call away. Members can get help with finding ways to reduce their electric use, researching possible HVAC or generator solutions, evaluating the pros and cons of installing solar, and much more. If you would rather explore money-saving efficiency information at your own pace, a quick trip to the Energy Education tab on our website, [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com), may be the perfect fit. Filled with links to numerous resources and energy use calculators, our website can help you answer many of your energy questions.

There's no doubt that many of us would like to get a better grasp on our finances. If you've made a New Year's resolution to do just that, visit our website, give us a call at 1-800-533-8658, or set up your FREE energy consult today. Happy New Year — and happy saving!



Dan McNaul  
GENERAL MANAGER





# MEMBER REBATE PROGRAMS

Effective July 1, 2021 - June 15, 2022

PROGRAM TYPE	AMOUNT	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
HVAC SYSTEM & LOAD MANAGEMENT REBATES		
All-Electric geothermal systems	\$800* rebate	Installation of a new or replacement all-electric geothermal or heat pump system <b>with a Cool Returns load management device installed</b> . Communicating systems that are incompatible with the load management device will receive the rebate, less \$100*.
All-Electric heat pump systems	\$500* rebate	
Dual fuel geothermal and air-source heat pump systems	\$300* rebate	
All-Electric ductless or mini-split heat pumps	\$300* rebate	New or replacement geothermal or air-source heat pump unit added to any fossil fuel furnace. Communicating systems that are incompatible with the load management device will receive a \$200* rebate.
LOAD MANAGEMENT INCENTIVES		
Central air-conditioning systems	\$100* bill credit	Installation of a <b>Cool Returns load management device</b> on a new or existing central cooling unit that does <u>not</u> qualify for other member program incentives.
ELECTRIC WATER HEATER INCENTIVES		
New standard electric water heaters (no existing switch)	\$300* bill credit	Installation of a new or replacement electric water heater that has a 50-gallon or larger tank capacity, with an E.F. of 0.91 or higher that <u>does not already have a load switch</u> .
Replacement electric water heaters (existing switch)	\$150* bill credit	Same as above, except tank has an existing load management switch installed.
Electric heat pump or communicating water heaters <i>(only available on units incompatible with RCS switch)</i>	\$150* bill credit	Installation of a new or replacement electric heat pump or communicating water heater that meets the energy efficiency standards above.
	\$50* bill credit	Installation of load management device on an electric water heater that doesn't meet the cooperative's energy efficiency standards. Solar and on-demand/tankless water heaters do not qualify for this incentive.
ENERGY STAR APPLIANCE REBATES		
Refrigerator & freezer	\$100* bill credit	Purchase of an ENERGY STAR®-certified appliance to replace an existing appliance. Purchase receipt, proof of removal of old appliance, and proof of ENERGY STAR certification required.
Dishwasher & clothes washer	\$50* bill credit	
Dehumidifier	\$25* bill credit	Installation of an ENERGY STAR®-certified dehumidifier with a minimum capacity of 70 pints/day. Purchase receipt for the new appliance and proof of ENERGY STAR certification required.
WEATHERIZATION REBATES		
Air-sealing upgrades Insulation upgrades	\$400* Rebate \$800* Rebate	Air sealing and insulation upgrades must be installed by a licensed contractor. All qualifying upgrades must be installed in an electrically heated residential home and meet or exceed required energy specifications.
ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) REBATES		
Electric Vehicle (EV) Level 2 Charger	\$250* Rebate	
		Installation of a new, UL-listed electric vehicle (EV) Level 2 (240-volt) charger. Maximum of two rebates per residential member or six per commercial/industrial facility.

\*A complete listing of specific eligibility requirements for all incentives is available on Firelands Electric Cooperative's website, [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com).

## YOUTH PROGRAMS



June 18-24, 2022

**Application deadline:**  
**Jan. 21, 2022**

### High school sophomores, juniors, **and seniors\*!**

Apply for a life-changing leadership experience in Washington, D.C.

#### What is Youth Tour?

The Ohio's Electric Cooperatives Youth Tour is an annual leadership program sponsored by Firelands Electric. A weeklong, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., Youth Tour gives outstanding high school students the opportunity to meet with their congressional leaders at the U.S. Capitol, make new friends from across the state and country, and see some of America's most famous historic monuments.

**For more information and to apply,**  
**visit [www.firelandsec.com/youth-tour-experience](http://www.firelandsec.com/youth-tour-experience).**

*\*Due to the cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 trips, applications for the 2022 Youth Tour have been expanded to include current sophomores, juniors, and seniors.*

## Class of 2022 SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduating seniors who live in a home served by Firelands Electric Co-op have a chance to win one of ten college or one technical-trade school scholarships.

**For complete rules and applications:**

- Visit [www.firelandsec.com/children-members-scholarship](http://www.firelandsec.com/children-members-scholarship)
- Call the co-op at 1-800-533-8658
- Ask your high school guidance department

**Application deadline:**  
**Jan. 21, 2022**

**Firelands  
Electric**  
COOPERATIVE  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative





## CO-OP NEWS

# Trustees tour southern territory

On Nov. 18, Firelands Electric trustees and several staff members toured the southern section of the cooperative's service territory. Covering over 100 miles, the trip gave trustees a first hand look at the distribution system in this area, including several segments with planned upgrades. Trustees also surveyed difficult terrain and hard-to-access line locations that often create challenges for Firelands' linemen.

The tour was an opportunity for trustees to see parts of our distribution system where construction work has been completed, as well as areas that will need to be upgraded in the future to improve reliability and power quality. Points of interest included the Greenwich metering point; Ashland, Coulter, and Jeromesville substations; Hillsdale Local Schools; Jeromesville and Hayesville area dairy farms; Pleasant Hill Campground; West Shore Drive near Charles Mill Lake; and the area southeast of Bailey Lakes.



Above, Director of Operations Don Englet provides trustees with information at the co-op's Ashland substation.

At top right, Firelands trustees and staff pose for a photo in front of the Coulter substation. In the back row (l-r) are Line Superintendent Zach Collins, District 1 Trustee Dan Schloemer, District 2 Trustee Gene Lamoreaux, Director of Operations Don Englet, General Manager Dan McNaul, and District 4 Trustee Bruce Leimbach. Shown in the front row (l-r) are District 7 Trustee Rob Turk, District 8 Trustee W.E. Anderson, District 9 Trustee John Martin, and District 5 Trustee Carl Ayers.

At right is one of several dairy farms visited during the recent tour of the southern part of the cooperative's service territory.





## TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

# Looking for members like you!

Petitions to become a candidate for co-op board available Feb. 1

In 2022, Firelands Electric Cooperative members will elect board trustees to represent districts 4, 5, and 8. Any member of the co-op who is in good standing and resides in a district with an open spot on the board is welcome to run for that position.

Nomination petitions to become a candidate for the 2022 elections will be available at the Firelands Electric office beginning Feb. 1. Potential candidates are required to submit an election application and collect 20 member signatures from within their district by Friday, March 18. A map of the board districts is available at [www.firelandsec.com/board-trustees](http://www.firelandsec.com/board-trustees).

### What is expected of a Firelands Electric Trustee?

The Firelands Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees meets monthly to review the financial and operational data of your electric cooperative. Board members hear and discuss reports from the cooperative's general manager and department supervisors, as well as provide guidance for management decisions.

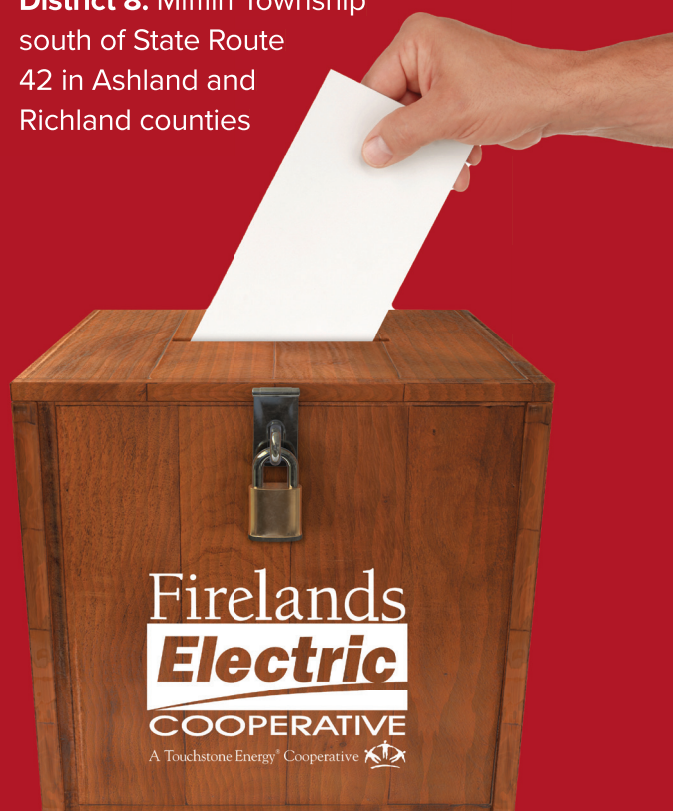
The duties of a Firelands Electric trustee include:

- Attend all regular meetings on the 4th Tuesday of each month, the cooperative's annual meeting in June, as well as other state, regional, and national meetings and training sessions.
- Determine the cooperative's rate schedules and fees.
- Approve major work plans for ongoing maintenance and improvement of the co-op's distribution system.
- Approve contracts for financing, services, and power supply.
- Monitor the financial condition of the cooperative and make decisions on budgets and capital credits.

Representing your fellow members as a Firelands Electric trustee is an important job. Trustees must be dedicated and committed to the cooperative and its principles. They must strive to do what is best for the cooperative and all of its members, which may conflict with the desires of individual members or special-interest groups.

Additional information on the role of a Firelands Electric trustee and how you can become a candidate will be mailed out to members of districts 4, 5, and 8 in January. If you have questions about becoming a candidate for trustee, contact our office at 1-800-533-8658.

- **District 4:** Clarksfield and Rochester townships, Fitchville Township east of State Route 250, and north of CSX rail in New London municipality and New London Township
- **District 5:** Monroe, Green, and Lake townships
- **District 8:** Mifflin Township south of State Route 42 in Ashland and Richland counties





## COOPERATIVE CONTESTS

### 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. Nearly 400 members submitted entries between Oct. 1 and Nov. 1 for a chance to win one of three prizes.

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



**Grand-prize winner of a 5-quart Oster DiamondForce XL air fryer and cookbook:**

Len Leber of Shiloh (right)

**Winner of a 10-inch, 8 GB digital picture frame:**

Maria Eiben of New London (top right)

**Winner of a 32 GB Fire HD 8-inch tablet:**

Beverly Victor of Mansfield (above)





## COOPERATIVE CONTESTS



Do you have a favorite local restaurant, market, or garden center? Perhaps you know a unique gift shop or top-notch pizza place in our area? If so, nominate them for our first-ever Firelands' Finest award!

From now through March 11, Firelands Electric Cooperative members can nominate their favorite local businesses in each of seven categories:

- Pizza
- Restaurant or diner
- Market or specialty food
- Boutique or gift shop
- Attraction/entertainment
- Green thumb (landscaping, gardening, florist)
- Wildcard (any business that doesn't fit into one of the other categories)

Businesses *do not* have to be cooperative members but must be located in one of the four counties served by Firelands Electric. The business with the most nominations in each category will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine and on Firelands' social media.

### FIRELANDS' FINEST NOMINATIONS

Member name

Member account number or address

Businesses nominated (include name, city, and category):

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Visit [www.firelandsec.com/contests](http://www.firelandsec.com/contests) to nominate your favorite local business by March 11.

#### The rules:

1. You must be a Firelands Electric Cooperative member to nominate a business.
2. A business does not have to be a co-op member to be nominated, but must be located in Ashland, Huron, Lorain, or Richland counties.
3. Nominate small, locally owned businesses only. No national or regional chains, please.
4. Only one nomination per member, per category.
5. Nominations are open until 4 p.m. on Friday, March 11.

Members who submit a nomination will be entered into a drawing for a gift card from one of the winning local businesses.

*Unable to make a nomination online? Complete the form at left and return to Attn: Firelands' Finest, Firelands Electric Co-op, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851. (Feel free to list your nominations on a separate sheet of paper if needed.)*



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

# HEAT PUMP 101

Since heat pumps keep your home both toasty in winter and cool during the summer, they are a popular HVAC choice. Their efficiency ratings also make them an economical option. Fossil fuels, like propane and natural gas, are around 90% efficient, but electric heat pumps average over 250% efficiency. Which heat pump system is right for you? A brief lesson in the science behind them, and the different types available, should help you decide.

### How air-source heat pumps work

An air-source heat pump system consists of a compressor and two coils made of copper or aluminum tubing. One coil is located indoors, and the other is located outdoors. In the winter, liquid refrigerant in the outdoor coil converts into a gas after absorbing heat from the air. In the indoor coil, heat is released from the gas version of the refrigerant as it condenses back into a liquid.

How does cold air provide heat? Hot and cold are relative terms. All outside air down to absolute zero (-460 F) contains some heat. An air-source heat pump extracts some of this heat and moves it indoors to provide space heating. In the summer, an air-source heat pump works in reverse to provide highly efficient cooling. It takes heat from the warm indoor air and moves it outside.



Air-source heat pumps use a single unit to keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer.

### Ducted vs. mini-split air-source heat pump

If your home has forced air, a centralized air-source heat pump can work well. The compressor outside your home, which looks like an air-conditioning unit, is connected to your home's existing duct system. Like any furnace, the temperature is controlled through one main thermostat. This is a solid solution if your home already has quality ductwork.

If your home doesn't currently have ductwork or it's poorly designed or leaky, a ductless mini-split heat pump might be your best bet. With a mini-split heat pump, tubes connected to the outside compressor carry refrigerant to one or more air handlers, which are mounted high on a wall to distribute air. Thermostats regulate each air handler, providing separate control of different zones in the home.

Ductless heat pumps are often used in combination with a central heating and cooling system. Ductless mini-splits are an excellent option if you don't have central air ducts (like with baseboard heat) or you only need to heat or cool part of your home.

### Geothermal (or ground-source) heat pump

Several feet underground, the temperature remains constant year-round, typically between 45 and 75 degrees, depending on where you live. With a geothermal heat pump, heat is transferred into or out of the ground by pipes buried in a horizontal loop 10 feet underground or drilled up to 400 feet vertically into the earth. The pipes carry water to a compressor, which uses a refrigerant to transfer the heat to or from your home's ducts, similar to the air-source heat pump.

A geothermal heat pump system is extremely energy efficient (sometimes up to 300%!) since the earth's temperature is warmer than the outside air in the winter and cooler than the outside air in the summer. But this efficiency can come with a high initial price tag because of the cost to install the pipe loop or drill the hole for a vertical pipe.





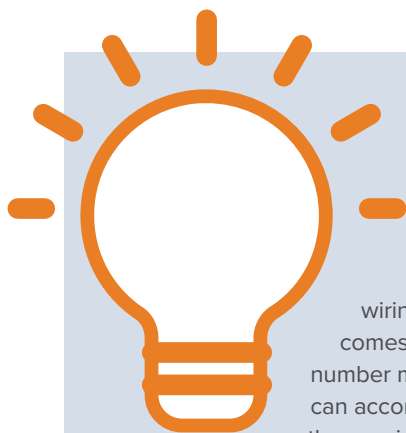
### A note about ductwork

Ductwork in some homes is not designed well or doesn't heat or cool every room evenly. Long stretches of ductwork provide little air to some rooms, and it's typical for some rooms to lack return air registers. Also, ductwork is often leaky, which creates comfort issues. If leaky ducts are located in unheated areas such as crawl spaces or attics, it will increase your heating and cooling costs. Poor ductwork will make any type of central heating or cooling system much less effective. Some HVAC contractors can repair or correct ductwork problems if it is accessible.

### How your cooperative can help

Firelands Electric Cooperative offers member rebates on the installation of new heat pumps or geothermal heating and cooling systems. The cooperative also has a professional energy advisor who can help you determine the best solution for your home and answer any questions you may have about your home's energy efficiency — all at no cost to you. To get more information or schedule an appointment, call the Firelands office at 1-800-533-8658. Rebate information is also available online at [www.firelandsec.com/member-programs](http://www.firelandsec.com/member-programs).

A ductless mini-split heat pump system includes an outside condenser (left) and an inside wall unit (above). It's an economical and efficient option for homes without existing ductwork.



## ENERGY notes

What do you know about the electrical wiring in your home? When it comes to wire, a smaller gauge number means thicker wire, which can accommodate more amps than a wire with a higher gauge.

The gauge of the wire you use is typically associated with electrical safety, but not necessarily with energy efficiency. It actually has a place in both situations, however.

Firelands' energy advisor has seen many homes with instances of 14-gauge wire connected to 20-amp and even 30-amp breakers. Not only are such connections a violation of the National Electrical Code, which provides specific guidelines for electrical installations, but they also present a fire hazard. The more amps you have, the heavier the wire should be. For example, a 20-amp breaker should use 12-gauge wire, while a 30-amp breaker needs a thicker 10-gauge wire. Using wire that is too small can cause the conductor to overheat without tripping the breaker, leading to serious damage or even an electrical fire.

In addition to being a fire hazard, undersized wiring is also inefficient and will increase energy consumption. The smaller wire has less area to conduct electricity, creating greater resistance to the flow of power. Essentially, it "jams up" and results in what is referred to as power loss, where the amount of electricity coming from a source is more than the amount actually reaching an appliance or endpoint. This results in wasted electricity and inefficiency, costing you money and possibly damaging connected appliances.

If you think your home has undersized wiring, contact a licensed electrician to evaluate your situation and make any upgrades needed. In the long run, it can save you from unnecessary expense, as well as protect you from fire or damaged property.



**Bob Stokes**  
ENERGY ADVISOR



## EMPLOYEE NEWS

# EVAN CLEMONS CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Journeyman Lineman Evan Clemons celebrates 15 years with Firelands Electric Cooperative this month. Evan started his co-op career as a groundman in January 2007 and was promoted to apprentice lineman just a few short months later. After receiving his lineman certification from Marion Technical College, Clemons was promoted to his current position with the co-op in June 2011.

As a journeyman lineman, Clemons handles everything from power lines, transformers, and reclosers to operating large equipment for placing poles. His current responsibilities involve a significant amount of line construction, including both new services and upgrading existing poles and other equipment. Repairing storm and other damage to get power restored as quickly and safely as possible is also part of his duties.

"Every day is different in linework," Clemons says. "I enjoy the variety and working outdoors each and every day."

Clemons and his wife, Megan, live in the New London area with their daughter, Sophia. When he's not working for Firelands' members, Clemons like spending time with his family. He especially enjoys showing livestock with Sophia and encouraging her involvement in the show ring.



Evan Clemons  
JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN



Robert Shepherd is pictured (right) with Firelands Electric's Director of Operations Don Englet.

## RECENTLY PROMOTED

Congratulations to Firelands Electric Cooperative's Robert Shepherd!

In November, Robert was promoted to journeyman lineman. He joined the cooperative as an apprentice lineman in July 2017. Over the past four years, Robert has completed extensive coursework and training with Ohio's Electric Cooperatives' Central Ohio Lineworker Training (COLT) program. In addition, Robert has participated in over 8,000 hours of on-the-job training with his fellow linemen at Firelands.





# STAY SAFE:

## DON'T TOUCH ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Utility equipment is all around us — from those “green boxes” in backyards to fenced-in substations, and wooden poles along the highway. As members of Firelands Electric you are the owners of the co-op — but we need your help to keep our equipment secure and our community safe. Here are some facts and tips about utility equipment. If in doubt, don't touch it — call us first for assistance!

### METERS

Members, or contractors hired by members such as electricians or home remodelers, should NEVER pull an electric meter. Call us at 1-800-533-8658 to schedule a meter pull — it's easy and free!

### POLES

Utility poles aren't bulletin boards. For the safety of our workers, never post signs or flyers on a utility pole. Staples or nails can damage safety gear and injure utility workers.

### TRANSFORMERS

Never sit or play on those “big green boxes,” which are actually underground electric transformers. Use caution with tools such as tractors and mowers around them and avoid planting trees and shrubs within 10 feet of the transformer.

### SUBSTATIONS

Utility substations are private property clearly marked with “no trespassing” signs — and for good reason. Coming into contact with equipment inside a substation can cause serious injury or even death. Stay away, and call us if you ever see anything suspicious around one of our substations.

For more safety tips, visit us online at [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com)



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

# BOARD MEETING *highlights*

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

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 39 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaul reviewed reports for a safety and training meeting held Sept. 2 and job site observations conducted Sept. 30 and Oct. 11.
- Donald Hite, District 4, and Evan Hahn, District 5, were nominated for open positions on the People Fund/Operation Round Up board. Trustee Anderson is still considering potential candidates for District 8. Action will be taken on nominees at the November meeting.
- McNaul reviewed the monthly tree trimming and outage reports.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the September financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- McNaul discussed the 2022 budget, as well as power costs and revenue from 2016 to 2021.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department, including progress on the Hillsdale School construction project, and recapped the planned outage held Oct. 20.
- McNaul reviewed plans for the board tour of the southern portion of the cooperative's territory on Nov. 18.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed recent activities involving the member services and IT department.
- McNaul reported on the fall managers' meeting that he attended.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 25. 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](http://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 McNaul

**HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?**

Email your ideas to:  
[members@firelandsec.com](mailto:members@firelandsec.com)

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