



GM'S REPORT

A *philanthropic* FORMULA



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER

Helen Keller believed strongly in the power of community. Left both blind and deaf when she was just a toddler, the noted author and activist once famously stated, "Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much."

This same concept lies at the heart of Firelands Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up. A single member's spare change isn't enough to make a significant impact on the greater good of the community. Pooled together with contributions from

other members, however, these small amounts can accomplish something much bigger. In other words, the sum becomes greater than the parts.

To put it in more specific terms, the average monthly contribution per member is only 50 cents. But, when combined with the other 7,986 members who participate in Firelands' Operation Round Up, the program collects about \$3,900 per month and over \$47,000 each year. In 2021, members helped Firelands award 19 charitable grants totaling \$62,810 — all by simply volunteering to have their monthly electric bills rounded up to the next dollar.

The money collected and awarded always stays in the communities where our members live and work. To date, nearly 200 local organizations have benefitted from Operation Round Up grants. In fact, since the program's launch in 1995, members have given back over \$1.25 million to communities in Ashland, Huron, Lorain, and Richland counties. Recipients have included schools, fire departments, childcare centers, healthcare facilities, youth groups, qualifying families and individuals, and numerous other charitable organizations.

Grant recipients are selected through an application process conducted every other month by the People Fund Board. Specifically appointed by Firelands Electric's trustees, this group of co-op members oversees the distribution of funds collected through Operation Round Up.

America's member-owned electric cooperatives have looked out for their communities for over 85 years. They brought electricity to areas without power and worked to improve the quality of life for rural citizens across the nation. Today, co-ops continue this commitment to community through programs such as Youth Tour, scholarships, member rebates, and energy education. And, for an average of \$6 a year, Firelands Electric's members can preserve this legacy through Operation Round Up. Individually, we may only be able to have a marginal effect on our communities — but together, we can move mountains.

Be sure to turn to the following pages for more information about some of the organizations that received Operation Round Up grants in 2021, as well as a brief history of Firelands' program. Additional information and how to apply for a grant are available at www.firelandsec.com/operation-round or by calling 1-800-533-8658.

2021 Operation Round Up Report

Assist with medical facility equipment — Ashland County	\$	5,791
Assist with funding for first responder equipment — Ashland County	\$	9,328
Assist with charitable organizations — Ashland County	\$	6,900
Assist with purchase of first responder equipment — Huron County	\$	9,631
Assist with charitable organizations — Huron County	\$	15,210
Assist with purchase of educational materials — Huron County	\$	975
Assist with building repairs — Huron County	\$	2,000
Assist with funding for first responder equipment — Lorain County	\$	7,975
Assist with first responder equipment — Richland County	\$	3,000
Assist with purchase of educational materials — Richland County	\$	2,000
Total (January 2021—December 2021):	\$	62,810
Total since Operation Round Up started in 1995:	\$	1,250,464



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The original Operation Round Up program was established in 1985 by Palmetto Electric Cooperative, located in the southern tip of South Carolina. Firelands Electric's former District 3 Trustee Donna Woodworth recalls learning about the program during a meeting she attended with the co-op's retired General Manager Gary Wyckoff. "I was so impressed with how they were able to help people through this program," Woodworth says.

Convinced that the Firelands community would support — and benefit from — this type of program, Woodworth advocated for the founding of something similar back home in Ohio. Modeled after Palmetto's original program, co-op members have now voluntarily participated in Firelands' version of Operation Round Up for over 25 years, supporting their fellow members and the community. "I've never regretted bringing this charitable program to the co-op," Woodworth says, "and I'm proud of the fact that members' contributions have been able to help so many."

Firelands Electric's Operation Round Up program held its first organizational meeting in November 1994. Members' January 1995 bills were the first to be rounded up, collecting just over \$3,300. According to the minutes from the March 27, 1995, meeting, Firelands' People Fund Board awarded its first grants as follows:

- Richland County, Monroe Township: \$821.99 for emergency life support system (generator) for a heart patient
- Huron County, Willard: \$300 balance to purchase wheelchair for double amputee
- Huron County: \$500 to OSU Extension toward the Carteens safety program
- Huron County, Norwalk: \$1,483.38 toward medical bills for a liver transplant patient

That first year, Firelands' members contributed more than \$38,000 to Operation Round Up and \$32,294.11 was awarded to local organizations and individuals.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLARD FIRE AND RESCUE

Willard Fire and Rescue received a grant in December for the purchase of a new FLIR K65 Thermal Imaging Camera. First responders use this type of technology for locating people in a smoke-filled room and finding their way through low-visibility areas.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF HURON COUNTY

Last spring, a Firelands Electric Operation Round Up grant helped the Agricultural Society of Huron County replace the concrete flooring in the Heritage Barn, which is located on the Huron County Fairgrounds. In addition to displaying small antiques during the fair, the barn is also used to teach the community about the area's history.

2021 GRANTS



A recent grant made it possible for the New London Police Department to buy equipment that will protect officers and help them better serve the community. Purchases included nitrile gloves, first-aid kits, evidence bags, an air compressor, a portable air tank, and several other items. Pictured are Chief Joe Hicks, left, and Sergeant Lance Capiot, right.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOSPICE OF NORTH CENTRAL OHIO

Hospice of North Central Ohio was the recipient of two Operation Round Up grants in 2021. The organization, which provides compassionate end-of-life, palliative care and bereavement services, used the grants to purchase test kits for monitoring patients at risk of bleeding and sanitizing equipment. Pictured is one of two touch-free hand sanitizing chambers purchased.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW LONDON-GREENWICH RAIL TRAIL

New London-Greenwich Rail Trail is a nonprofit, multi-use recreational trail on the recently vacated Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway route between the two towns. Last spring, a grant from Firelands' Operation Round Up provided funding to purchase 28 signs for marking the trail and posting guidelines.

Affiliated with a charitable organization in Ashland, Huron, Lorain, or Richland counties that could benefit from a grant?

Apply for Firelands' Operation Round Up!

Visit www.firelandsec.com/operation-round for applications and information.

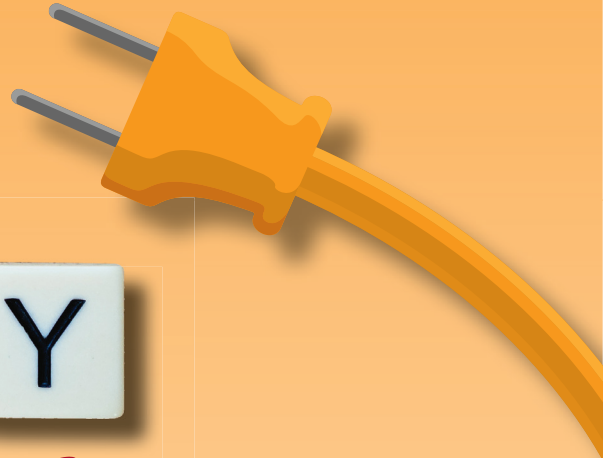


YOUTH PROGRAMS

ELECTRICAL

S A F E T Y

contest



Firelands Electric Cooperative invites children in kindergarten through fifth grade to enter its 2022 Electrical Safety Contest. Children who live in a home receiving power from the co-op are eligible to enter.

Take the quiz

To enter, students simply need to show off their knowledge of electrical safety by taking the quiz provided on the next page. A parent or guardian must also complete and sign the section at the bottom.

Submit the completed and signed quiz by mail to: Electrical Safety Contest, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851. Entries may also be completed online at www.firelandsec.com/contests or scanned and emailed to members@firelandsec.com (maximum file size of 10 MB).

Win a prize

Students who correctly answer at least six of the eight questions will have their name entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of three restaurant gift cards.

In May, as part of National Electrical Safety Month, winners will be featured in the local pages of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine, as well as on Firelands Electric Cooperative's website and social media outlets. The correct answers to the quiz will also be published in this issue.

Official rules are available at www.firelandsec.com/contests. If you have questions, please contact the member services department at 1-800-533-8658.



**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY
FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
BEFORE 4 P.M. ON MONDAY, MARCH 21.**

2022 Electrical safety quiz

Test your electrical safety knowledge by taking the quiz below.

Circle the correct answer to each question or statement.

1. Smoke alarms in your home should be tested how often to ensure they work properly?

- A. Once a month
- B. Once a year
- C. Once a day

2. It is safe to run extension cords under carpet or rugs in your home.

- A. True
- B. False

3. What should you do if you are outdoors and hear thunder?

- A. Hide under a tree until the storm stops
- B. Seek shelter indoors and wait at least 30 minutes
- C. Stand still for 30 minutes

4. It is safe to leave the kitchen with a burner on, as long as it's a short amount of time.

- A. True
- B. False

5. How far should items be kept away from space heaters?

- A. At least 6 inches
- B. At least 10 feet
- C. At least 3 feet

6. Overloaded outlets can overheat and cause a fire.

- A. True
- B. False

7. If a toy or pet gets stuck on an electric pole or power lines, what should you do?

- A. Have an adult call the electric company
- B. Ask an adult to get it down for you
- C. Climb the pole yourself to get it

8. It is okay to play near downed power lines, as long as you are careful.

- A. True
- B. False

Please complete the information below and mail your entry to: Attn: Electrical Safety Contest, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851.

Child's Name _____ Grade _____

Address _____

Parents'/Guardians' Names _____

Phone _____

Email _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____



CO-OP NEWS

LENDING A HAND

Adhering to the principles of concern for community and cooperation among cooperatives is something Firelands Electric takes quite seriously. While the majority of our support stays local, Firelands is also part of a much larger network of electric cooperatives who lend a hand to other co-ops and their members in need — both throughout the state and across the country.

Kentucky donation drive

In early December, some of the most violent tornados in history made their way across western Kentucky, destroying more than 1,000 homes in their path. In response, employees and trustees of Ohio's electric cooperatives collected monetary and personal care item donations to aid co-op members and communities affected by the storms, especially those in Graves and Marshall counties.

The drive was conducted in partnership with the Kentucky Rural Electric Disaster Fund and West Kentucky Rural Electric Cooperative. Donations included quilts, blankets, scarves, hats, toothbrushes, paper products, and many other items.

Rally for Rappahannock

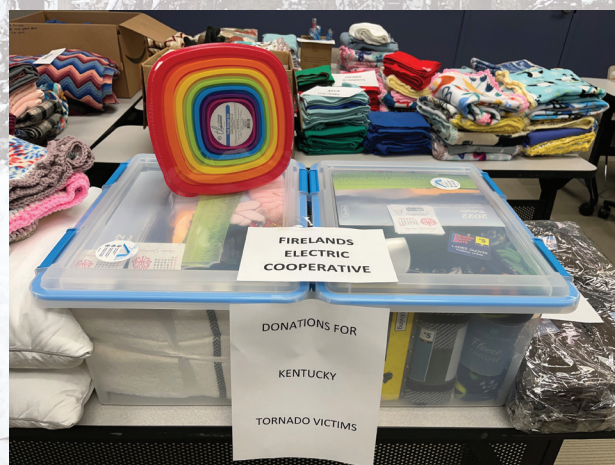
While most of us celebrated the new year, Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC) in Woodford, Virginia, was digging out from Winter Storm Frida, which dumped a foot of heavy, wet snow and ice in the co-op's territory. The large co-op, which covers 22 counties, faced the daunting task of restoring power to about 98,000 of its

170,000 members and replacing roughly 400 broken utility poles. One thing was clear — REC was going to need reinforcements.

Ohio's electric cooperatives answered REC's call for help on Jan. 4, and a caravan of 44 crew members and equipment from 18 co-ops headed south. Firelands Electric's journeyman linemen Rick Bowers and Robert Shepherd were among those who volunteered to assist with REC's restoration efforts.

After battling poor road conditions and stranded traffic on I-95, Bowers and Shepherd spent the next eight days working 14- to 18-hour shifts alongside linemen from Ohio and 54 other electric co-ops across the nation. In addition to Ohio's crews, linemen from Missouri, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia came to REC's aid.

"Co-ops come to each other's aid in times of need," says Firelands Electric's General Manager Dan McNaull. "It's just part of who we are. So, when we heard that REC needed our help, our linemen didn't hesitate to volunteer."



Ohio's 24 electric cooperatives delivered more than \$17,000 in donations and household items to Kentucky families impacted by December tornadoes.

integrity community commitment
accountability innovation



In January, Firelands journeyman linemen Rick Bowers and Robert Shepherd spent eight days helping restore power to members of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative in Virginia following a massive winter storm.



FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
LOCAL PAGES

We want to hear from you!

Your thoughts and opinions about
Firelands Electric Cooperative help us to serve you better.



In March, Firelands Electric Cooperative will be working with NRECA Market Research Services to complete member satisfaction surveys.

The surveys will be both by phone and email, but not everyone will be contacted. If you are contacted, we would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to share your opinions of the cooperative.

We strive to provide all members with safe, affordable, reliable, and clean electric service. By participating in the survey, you will help us make decisions that benefit you, your family, and your neighbors.

Thank you!

All information is confidential.

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

CO-OP NEWS

BECOME A CANDIDATE FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Firelands Electric is governed by a board of trustees who are also members of the cooperative. Co-op trustees are your friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow community members.

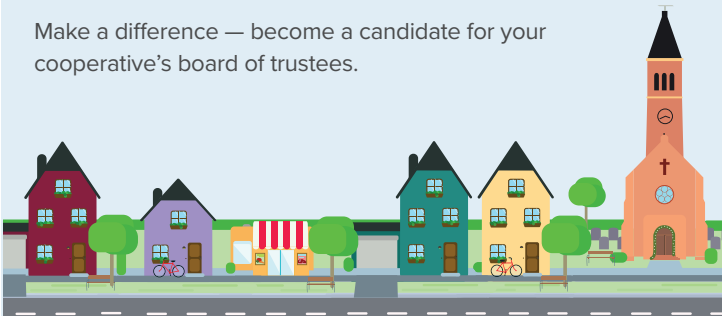
It is the board's responsibility to represent co-op members' best interests when making decisions affecting your electric service. Trustees must be strong leaders who understand the needs of the community and can help the cooperative thrive. Firelands Electric needs members like you to fill these important positions.

In 2022, members will elect board members to represent districts 4, 5, and 8. Any co-op member in good standing who resides in one of these districts is invited to become a candidate for a position on the board. Those interested are required to submit an election application with 20 signatures from co-op members within their district. To view a map of the districts, visit www.firelandsec.com/service-territory.

Applications to become a candidate for board districts 4, 5, and 8 are due by 4 p.m. on Friday, March 18.

Petitions are available at the Firelands Electric Cooperative office, located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London. Call 1-800-533-8658 or visit www.firelandsec.com for additional information on Firelands Electric Co-op's board of trustees and the election process.

Make a difference — become a candidate for your cooperative's board of trustees.



CONTEST REMINDER

Don't forget to
nominate your

favorite local businesses
by March 11 for our first ever
Firelands' Finest Awards!

Details and the online entry
form are available at
www.firelandsec.com/contests.

Looking for
outage update
information?



@FirelandsElectric

Find it on the
cooperative's
Facebook page!



FYI

Four interesting **FACTS** about electricity

Electricity turns dark into light, makes hot foods cold and cold foods hot, and searches the internet. It is essential to our everyday lives — so much so that we rarely even think about how it works or where it comes from. Let's take a look at four interesting facts that you may not know about electricity.

1. Keeping electric transmission at optimal levels is a delicate balancing act.

A vast and intricate system of equipment controls the flow of power in a strictly balanced way. Too much power is wasteful, while not enough could be disastrous. It's one reason utility companies must be strategic when adding renewable power to their energy sources. A coal or natural gas power plant can increase or decrease generation fairly quickly to meet changing energy demands. But solar energy and wind power depend more on the whims of Mother Nature, adding an extra layer of difficulty to power management.

2. Electricity must be used shortly after it's generated.

Electricity has a very short "shelf-life." It needs to be used almost immediately once it's generated. Someday, technology advances could be a gamechanger in this area, but technology isn't quite there yet. Large-scale

battery storage is rapidly improving, which could offer a way to add more solar and wind energy. While it still has a long way to go, electric storage technology in the future could allow us to store energy created when it's breezy and sunny for use at a later date.

3. Power out? Blame a squirrel.

While severe weather and downed trees cause the majority of power outages, if your electricity goes out during nice weather, it could be caused by a squirrel.

We all know to play it safe around electricity, but squirrels don't. They run and chew near transformers, substations, and utility poles where they can disrupt high-voltage equipment, resulting in a power outage.

But it's not just squirrels. Raccoons, birds, and other animals can find their way into dangerous places. There's no official recordkeeping of wildlife-caused power outages, but estimates across the U.S. run as high as 20%.

4. Highways could charge electric vehicles in the future.

Researchers are looking for a way for electric vehicles to charge while they're being driven. "Wireless dynamic charging" projects are underway around the world. The idea is similar to wireless chargers you can buy for your

home electronics, such as the kind where you can just set your phone near a charger rather than actually plugging in.

Of course, charging cars while they're driving along the freeway is a lot more ambitious. But some developers predict that within five years, in addition to today's special high-occupancy-vehicle lanes for rush-hour traffic in large cities, there could be stretches of vehicle-charging lanes. See page 24 for an article about a test project right here in Ohio!

Electricity is such an integral part of our everyday life that it's easy to forget about it. Every now and then it's good to think about all of its benefits — and look at some of its possible exciting features in the future.



PHOTO BY MEGAN ZOPF

A large number of power outages are caused by squirrels and other critters.

CO-OP CONTESTS

And the winners are . . .

During November and December, members of Firelands Electric Cooperative showed off their holiday spirit by submitting photos of their Christmas lighting displays.

The cooperative shared the photos on our Facebook page, where the public voted for their favorite by clicking the “Like” button beneath the photo. The contest ran for a total of four weeks, and the entry receiving the most likes at the end of each week was announced as the winner on the following Monday. Each of the four winners received a \$50 credit on their January electric bill.

More than 860 votes were cast on the 31 entries that Firelands Electric received. Thank you to all who entered and congratulations to our winners: William Cutlip of Shiloh, and from New London, Tammy Csehek, Jeffery Amburgey, and Trent and Haley Robuck.

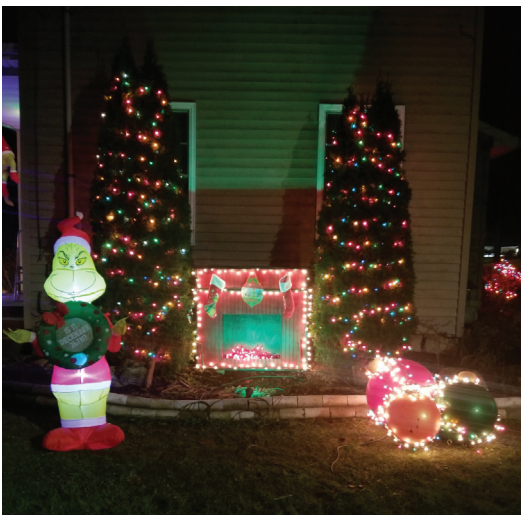
To view all of the submitted photos, visit www.facebook.com/FirelandsElectric and open the photo album titled “2021 Christmas Lighting Contest Entries.”



Jeffery Amburgey
NEW LONDON



William Cutlip
SHILOH



Tammy Csehek
NEW LONDON



Trent and Haley Robuck
NEW LONDON



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Dec. 21 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 51 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed reports for a safety and training meeting held Dec. 3 and the NESC clearance review conducted on Oct. 26.
- McNaull reviewed the final budget and board meeting dates for 2022.
- The board reviewed the November 2021 OEC Statistical Report.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the November financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- McNaull reviewed the monthly tree-trimming and outage reports.
- The board discussed the tree-trimming budget for the remainder of 2021.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- McNaull reviewed the cooperative's long-range plan for distribution system upgrades through the year 2045.
- The board discussed arrangements and topics for the upcoming NRECA annual meeting.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed recent activities involving the member services and IT department.
- Trustee Kevin Reidy reported on a recent OEC meeting that he attended.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22. 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

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Electric
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