



GM'S REPORT

# YOUR TRUSTED ENERGY PARTNER

The first in a series of articles on electric vehicles

As your electric cooperative, it's a given that Firelands delivers power to your home, farm, or business. But we also have an additional role — serving as a reliable source for energy information. Providing accurate, up-to-date, and unbiased information on the technology, efficiency, and safety of the electrical industry is something we take very seriously.

Whether it's educating members about downed power line safety or supplying the latest statistics on solar panel generation, Firelands Electric Cooperative is here to help our members make energy decisions that best fit the unique needs of their situations, families, and homes.

You've likely heard or read that most automakers are transitioning a large portion of their new vehicles to electric-only models over the next 10 years.

Regardless of the type of car we drive today, the electrification of the transportation sector will eventually affect most of us.

From time to time, we receive inquiries about electric vehicles (EVs) from Firelands members. With the amount of data available online today, it can be difficult to decipher fact from fiction. To help our members sift through it all, we thought it would be helpful to include a series of articles about EVs in the next couple issues of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.



Dan McNaul  
GENERAL MANAGER

## Electric vehicle FAQs

To launch this series, let's look at some of the most frequently asked questions:

**Q: Why is Firelands Electric communicating about electric vehicles?**

A: It's no secret that consumer interest in EVs is growing, and Firelands wants to provide information so that our members can make informed decisions when considering an EV purchase. Education and awareness are at the top of our priority list.

**Q: Why are Ohio's electric cooperatives involved in EV infrastructure issues?**

A: Electric utilities across the country are planning now to ensure they have the necessary electric infrastructure in place to meet future EV charging needs — without jeopardizing the ability to keep reliable power flowing to homes and businesses. As your local energy provider, Firelands is in a good position to advise and help our members plan for the electric vehicle future.

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## FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LOCAL PAGES

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### **Q: Can I charge my EV using an existing outlet or do I need a special outlet?**

A: All EVs come with a 110-volt-compatible (Level 1) charging unit, which can be plugged into any standard household outlet. For an eight-hour overnight charge, this will enable travel of about 36 to 40 miles a day. If you typically drive longer distances or don't always have time for an eight-hour charge, a 240-volt Level 2 charger takes significantly less time, providing about 180 miles of range over an eight-hour charging period. A Level 2 charger, which requires an outlet similar to your clothes dryer, should be installed by a licensed electrician.

### **Q: Does the outside temperature affect the range of an EV?**

A: Outside temperatures, particularly colder weather, can impact the range of an EV. Unlike a gas-powered vehicle, where the heat comes mostly from the engine, an EV must produce cabin heat while also managing an optimal battery temperature. Since this is accomplished with energy that comes from the battery, it can reduce battery range.

### **Q: Will an EV meet my daily driving needs?**

A: If you are like most Americans and drive an average of 30 miles a day, an EV can meet your daily needs. If you drive further distances on a regular basis, additional planning may be necessary to allow for recharging.

### **Q: What kind of incentives are available for EVs?**

A: Firelands Electric Cooperative offers a rebate of up to \$250 for members who install a Level 2 charger at their home or business. Visit [www.firelandsec.com/electric-vehicle-charger-rebates](http://www.firelandsec.com/electric-vehicle-charger-rebates) for details. There are also a variety of tax credits, rebates, and other incentives available for EV purchases. Visit [www.afdc.energy.gov/laws/electric-vehicles-for-tax-credit](http://www.afdc.energy.gov/laws/electric-vehicles-for-tax-credit) to learn about federal incentives available through the Clean Vehicle Credit program.

### **Q: Should I let my co-op know if I purchase an EV?**

A: If you purchase an EV, please let us know so we can better serve you. As more Firelands members buy EVs, it's helpful to know where they're located in our area so we can ensure we have the necessary infrastructure in place to meet charging needs and provide reliable power.

We understand that making the switch to an EV is a big decision. Whether you're ready to make an EV purchase now or just wondering if an EV can meet your daily driving needs, we're here to help you make an informed decision. Our energy advisors can be reached at [members@firelandsec.com](mailto:members@firelandsec.com) or by calling 1-800-533-8658.

**Coming up:** Over the next couple of months, we'll review additional information on EV charging and how purchasing one may affect the electric demand at your home. We'll also be talking to some Firelands Electric Cooperative members who already own an EV. They will share their personal experiences of buying and driving an EV, providing a glimpse of the realities of being a rural Ohio EV owner.



## Electric co-ops go the extra mile for you

Firelands Electric serves **9 consumers** per mile of power lines. Other electric utilities serve **32 or more consumers** per mile.

Even though we serve fewer consumers along the lines, that won't stop us from going the extra mile for you, our members.

## EMPLOYEE MILESTONE

### Rick Bowers — Lead Lineman

This month, Rick Bowers celebrates 15 years with Firelands Electric Cooperative. Hired as an apprentice lineman in 2008, Rick earned the title of journeyman in June 2012 after completing his lineman certification at Marion Technical College.



Rick Bowers  
LEAD LINEMAN

This past July, Rick was promoted to the position of lead lineman. In his new role, Rick is responsible for running a line crew, which involves everything from routine line maintenance to outage restoration and new service construction. He graduated from Cooperative Leadership Edge, a statewide program designed to hone the skills of future co-op leaders, in December 2022.

In addition to his dedication to Firelands Electric's members, Rick also devotes time to helping

other areas of the world receive reliable, affordable power. He has provided mutual aid to other electric cooperatives affected by heavy storm damage, including traveling to Georgia in 2017 to assist with restoration efforts for the thousands left without power following hurricanes Harvey and Irma. In 2016, Rick traveled with volunteers from several of Ohio's electric cooperatives to La Soledad, Guatemala, as part of a two-week rural electrification project — bringing electricity to the isolated mountaintop village for the first time.

Reflecting on the past 15 years, Rick is especially thankful for the people he has met along the way. "I've had the opportunity to work with linemen from co-ops throughout Ohio, as well as those from other states," Rick says. "Because of their strong values and commitment to their cooperative members, there is a unique bond between linemen, from the very first time they meet."

Rick resides in the New London area with his wife, Natalie. The couple have a son, Sam, and a grown daughter, Alex. When not working for the co-op's members, Rick likes to coach softball, fish, and spend time with his two grandchildren, Vinny and Evie.

*We want to hear from you!*

Your thoughts and opinions about Firelands Electric Cooperative help us 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 conducted 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

15 YEARS





CO-OP CONTESTS

# CHRISTMAS LIGHTING CONTEST WINNERS

For four weeks during November and December, members of Firelands Electric showed off their holiday spirit by submitting photos of their Christmas lighting displays, which the cooperative then shared on our Facebook page.

Thank you and congratulations to our three winners!

Each of the winning entries received a \$50 credit on their January electric bill. To view all of the photos submitted, visit [www.facebook.com/FirelandsElectric](http://www.facebook.com/FirelandsElectric) and open the photo album titled "2022 Christmas Lighting Contest Entries."



**BIGGEST DISPLAY**

Chad and Patty Kingery  
LUCAS



**PEOPLE'S CHOICE**

Derek and Chery Provenzale  
PLYMOUTH

**BEST THEME**

Brandon and Jennifer Weigel  
NEW LONDON



*Happy  
Easter*

The Firelands Electric  
Cooperative office will be  
closed April 7 in observance  
of Good Friday.

Firelands  
**Electric**  
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## SAFETY

# PLAY IT SAFE:

## 10 do's and don'ts when using portable generators

Portable electric generators can offer many benefits during a power outage. However, if they are not maintained or used properly, things can turn deadly.

In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators. If improperly connected, generators can also backfeed electricity onto the power lines, creating a risk of electrocution for lineworkers and your neighbors.

If you have a portable generator, or plan to purchase one, Firelands Electric Cooperative reminds you to play it safe. Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

1. **DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
2. **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
3. **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
4. **DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
5. **DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
6. **DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.
7. **DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
8. **DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.

9. **DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
10. **DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. Also, NEVER plug a generator into a wall outlet. Instead, plug your appliances directly into the outlets on the generator. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute anyone who comes into contact with them, even if the wires have been pulled off the pole.



While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about proper use of portable generators, Firelands Electric Cooperative is here to help. Give us a call at 1-800-533-8658 or contact us at [members@firelandsec.com](mailto:members@firelandsec.com).



## CO-OP NEWS

### TRUSTEE MILESTONES

Firelands Electric's trustees are fellow cooperative members. They are your friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Recently, two of Firelands' trustees celebrated five years of representing their fellow members.

#### ROB TURK, DISTRICT 7 —



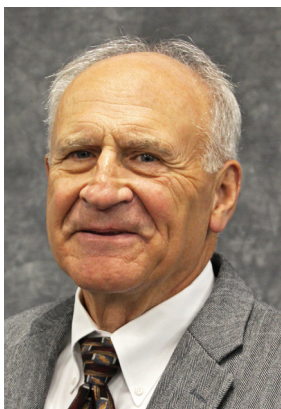
Rob Turk  
DISTRICT 7 TRUSTEE

Rob was appointed to the board in January 2018. He filled the seat left vacant when Dan McNaul stepped down to accept the position of general manager. Rob's background includes management experience with The Coca-Cola Company, where he worked for 31 years.

Despite the financial challenges of having a lower number of members per mile compared to investor-owned utilities, Rob believes Firelands Electric is more efficient because of the co-op's employees and staff. "We have a dedicated and talented group of people who work hard to provide cost-effective, reliable power to our members," Rob says.

Rob and his wife, Kathy, live in the Perrysville area and spend much of their free time sharing their herd of alpacas at various events throughout north-central Ohio. Rob also enjoys woodworking and photography.

#### GENE LAMOREAUX, DISTRICT 2 —



Gene Lamoreaux  
DISTRICT 2 TRUSTEE

Gene, who was appointed to his position in February 2018, joined the board following the passing of long-time trustee Lowell Kreager. Gene has a background in engineering and is retired from Guardian Manufacturing, where he spent 23 of his 46 years serving as company president.

During his time on the board, Gene has been impressed with the advantages that the cooperative business model brings to the table. "While generation methods for the electric industry are ever-changing, I'm confident that the unique structure of cooperatives will allow them to rise up and meet any challenges they may face," he says.

Gene and his wife, Sandy, live in the Greenwich area. In their spare time, they enjoy spending time with their three children and sixteen grandchildren. Gene also likes to attend their school activities and he enjoys hunting.

### Become a candidate for the board



Members of the Firelands Electric Cooperative board of trustees advocate for co-op members' best interests when making decisions that affect your electric service. They understand the needs of their community and are committed to helping the cooperative — and its members — thrive.

And Firelands Electric Cooperative needs members like you to fill these important positions.

In 2023, members will elect trustees to represent districts 1, 3, and 6. 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](http://www.firelandsec.com/service-territory).

Applications to become a candidate for board districts 1, 3, and 6 are due by 4 p.m. on Friday, March 24.

Petitions are available at the Firelands Electric office, located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London. Call 1-800-533-8658 or visit [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com) for additional information on Firelands Electric's board of trustees and the election process.

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



IN THE COMMUNITY

# SNAPshots



## Terrific TEACHERS CONTEST

**Don't forget to nominate  
your elementary school's most  
dedicated teachers by March 9!**

Details and the online  
entry form are available at  
[www.firelandsec.com/contests](http://www.firelandsec.com/contests).



On January 13, nearly 30 Village of New London employees attended a safety event hosted by Firelands Electric Cooperative. Representatives from the village's police, street, water, and sanitation divisions took part. The co-op's Director of Operations Don Englet, Line Superintendent Zach Collins, and Engineering Operations Coordinator Rob Swiger conducted a live-line demonstration. Attendees also received training on spotting electrical hazards and safety protocols to follow in the event of a downed power line.

The cooperative participates in these types of programs throughout the year to help educate first responders and other officials in our service territory about the importance of electrical safety.

Visit [www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums) to view additional photos from this safety event.





## COOPERATIVE UPDATE

# BOARD MEETING *highlights*

*Firelands Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees met Dec. 27 and covered the following items:*

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 43 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaul reviewed plans for an upcoming Firelands board meeting that OEC President and CEO Pat O'Loughlin would be attending on Jan. 24.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reported on recent activities and projects in the operations department, including progress on First Energy/AEP's 69-kV line project in New London.
- McNaul reviewed a recent report on the average cost of electricity in each state. He noted that Firelands was below the average for the state of Ohio.
- The board discussed the FEMA Disaster Relief program. It was noted that the cooperative did not meet the necessary requirements to qualify for aid following the June 2022 storms.
- McNaul reviewed details about the upcoming OEC Winter Conference.

- Schloemer reported on a Buckeye board meeting he recently attended.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the November financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities, including a new recorded call procedure for the collection of overdue accounts.
- McNaul reviewed the monthly tree-trimming and outage reports.
- In Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst's absence, McNaul reviewed recent activities involving the member services and IT departments.

Firelands Electric Cooperative 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 Tuesday, March 28. 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](http://www.firelandsec.com)



#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dan Schloemer  
President, District 1

Bruce Leimbach  
Vice President, District 4

Carl Ayers  
Secretary/Treasurer, District 5

Elaine Oswald  
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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**Electric**  
**COOPERATIVE**  
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