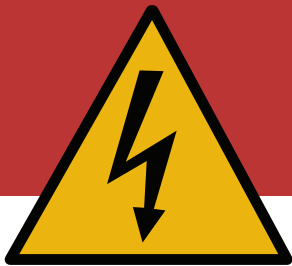




GM'S REPORT



DANGER

ZONE

Proper line clearance important for everyone's safety

When adding a new structure to your property, there are many factors to take into consideration: Is this a do-it-yourself job or should you hire a contractor? What will the dimensions of the completed project be? Which materials should be used?

Another question you must ask yourself — and one that is often overlooked — is whether the distance between the proposed construction and the nearest overhead power line is adequate. Whether you're building a barn or garage, erecting grain bins, or installing a swimming pool, Firelands Electric Cooperative wants to emphasize to our members that skipping this key step can be extremely dangerous, and even deadly.

The stats

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), contact with overhead power lines by a person or equipment resulted in 582 work-related fatalities between 2011 and 2021. This represents 45.7% of the total work-related fatalities that occurred during this same time period. Of these fatal contacts, 69% happened to those in non-electrical occupations.

In addition, the National Ag Safety Database says that an average of 62 farm workers are electrocuted every year, with the most common cause being contact with overhead power lines. Even more startling is the fact that none of the above statistics includes non-work-related fatalities, burns, or other injuries attributed to overhead power line contacts.

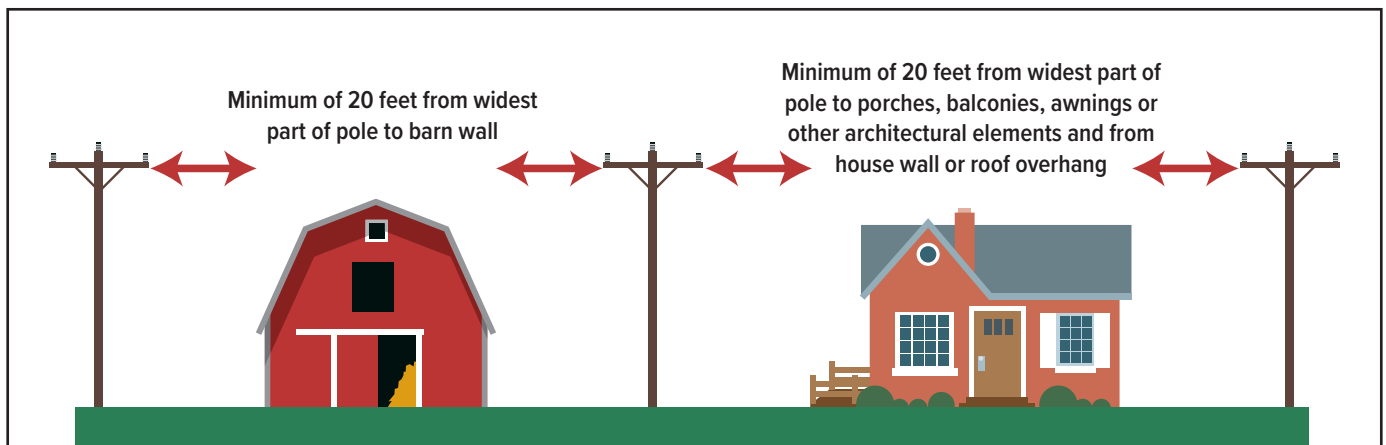
Build smart

For your safety, and that of your family, neighbors, and community, it's important to adhere to the guidelines established by the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) and Firelands Electric



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER

Continued on page 18





FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LOCAL PAGES

Continued from page 17

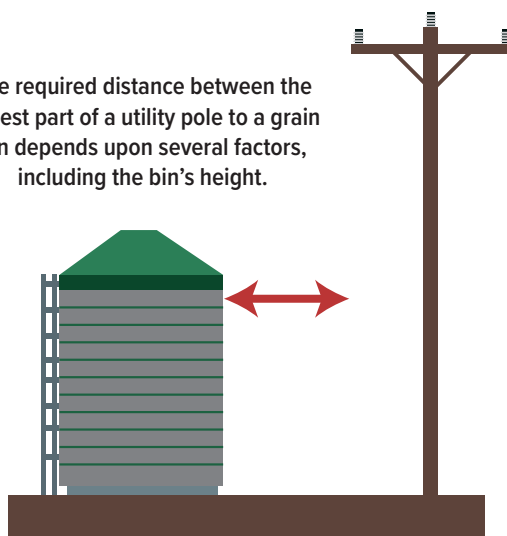
Cooperative when putting up any structure. Buildings, swimming pools, ponds, and grain bins should not have any lines running overhead. (The only exception is the service drop that is connected to a service mast and provides power to a building.)

When it comes to overhead power lines and utility poles positioned alongside a barn, garage, or shed, maintain a distance of at least 20 feet. This also applies to the space between a balcony, awning, or other protruding architectural element. The lateral distance needed between a grain bin and power lines varies, depending upon the bin's height, the type of auger, and proximity to the roadway.

While the graphics included with this article depict basic power line clearance requirements, Firelands Electric always encourages members to contact the cooperative before they break ground on a new project. Taking this extra step before you build could prevent the need for expensive changes in the future.

If you are considering construction projects such as a swimming pool, grain bin, building addition, or outbuilding, or even relocating existing ones, please first contact the cooperative's Operations Department at 1-800-533-8658. Our engineering operations coordinator is happy to meet with you and assist in the safe planning of your project. Firelands Electric is here to help you maintain a safe environment for you and your family — and to prevent mistakes that could endanger lives.

The required distance between the widest part of a utility pole to a grain bin depends upon several factors, including the bin's height.



Height of grain bin	Minimum distance from pole to bin*
15 feet	55 feet
25 feet	80 feet
35 feet	104 feet
50 feet	143 feet
70 feet	193 feet

*These measurements are provided as general guidelines only. Members planning to add any type of grain storage on their property should contact the co-op prior to installation for guidelines specific to their situation.



Happy Labor Day!

The Firelands Electric Cooperative office will be closed on

Monday, Sept. 4

As always, emergency service is available 24/7 by calling 1-800-533-8658.

SAFETY

PRACTICE AND PREPARATION

Linemen complete annual pole-top rescue training

A lineman's education does not stop when he reaches the level of journeyman. Linemen continue to take frequent refresher courses and attend classes to learn the latest technology and procedures in the industry. Firelands Electric's line crews also participate in regular safety training, both at the co-op and through our statewide organization, Ohio's Electric Cooperatives.

In June, the cooperative's linemen completed their yearly pole-top rescue training. Intended to prepare Firelands' linemen in case of an emergency, this training simulates a situation in which a fellow crew member experiences a medical emergency and needs help getting down from the top of a utility pole. The training also includes rescuing another lineman from an extended bucket truck, as well as a CPR refresher.

While we hope they will never need to use this training in the field, Firelands Electric's linemen understand that this type of emergency is a reality in their line of work. And they recognize that practicing for this potential scenario is the best preparation for safely handling an emergency.

To view additional photos from this year's pole-top rescue training, visit our Flickr gallery at www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.





SAFETY

WOULD YOUR HOME PASS INSPECTION?



Electricity is such an integral part of our daily lives that we rarely give it much thought. This also makes it easy to overlook just how dangerous it can be. In fact, electricity is the third leading cause of household fires in the U.S. Improper use of electricity or ignoring damaged equipment can also lead to serious injury, such as shock or burns, or even death.

Let's take a look at some of the staggering statistics* on electrical fires, injuries, and deaths:

- More than 50,000 home electrical fires occur each year, resulting in roughly 500 deaths and 1,400 injuries.
- About 3,300 of these fires are caused by extension cords, which account for about 50 deaths and 270 injuries.

- Electrical outlets cause 40 deaths, 100 injuries, and 5,300 fires annually.
- Portable heaters are the source of 1,400 house fires each year, resulting in 50 deaths and 120 injuries.

Thankfully, the majority of electrical hazards can be avoided. By using this checklist to inspect your home and implementing some simple safety measures, you can better protect your home and family.

Use the checklist on the next page to see how your home measures up.

**Statistics from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Electrical Safety Foundation International, and the National Fire Protection Association.*

CO-OP NEWS

EMPLOYEE MILESTONE

Melissa Wilson — 5 years

Melissa Wilson celebrates five years with Firelands Electric Co-op this month. She joined the operations department as an engineering data analyst in 2018 and was promoted to the position of engineering and operations data coordinator in August 2020.

One of Melissa's primary responsibilities is maintaining and updating the cooperative's digital mapping system, which contains location information and details about the poles, transformers, wires, and other equipment that bring power to Firelands' members.

Melissa also handles pole contacts, where she processes the paperwork needed to ensure that other utility connections on Firelands Electric's poles (such as cable and internet companies) are properly recorded and that the co-op receives compensation for the use of its pole.

Melissa also assists with numerous internal IT duties at Firelands.

Helping to provide an essential service to the community is Melissa's favorite aspect of working at Firelands. "It's rewarding to know that the work we do every day here at the cooperative impacts so many people and businesses," Melissa says.

Melissa and her husband, Josh, have been married for 22 years and live in the New London area. The couple have three children, Peyton, Paige, and Pailee. When not at the co-op, Melissa enjoys supporting her children's many activities, as well as spending time with family and friends.



Melissa Wilson
ENGINEERING AND
OPERATIONS DATA
COORDINATOR

Home electrical safety checklist

Inspect your home for the scenarios below and make any necessary changes right away to keep your home and family safe. As always, never try to tackle a project beyond your skill level. And if you are unsure, contact a professional.

Electrical cords:

- ☐ Do any cords show signs of damage? Are they cracked, loose, or frayed? If so, replace the cord and/or the device it is connected to.
- ☐ Are there cords that pinched or folded in doors or windows, or under heavy furniture? Relocate them to prevent damage, which can cause electric shock or a fire hazard.
- ☐ Do any cords run across doorways, under rugs, or in other high-traffic areas? Move them to a safer location.
- ☐ Are any cords held in place with staples or nails? Remove the fasteners and examine the cord for damage. Replace the cord if needed.
- ☐ Do you rely on extension cords on a daily basis? Extension cords are meant to be temporary. If need be, have a professional install additional outlets in your home.

Wall outlets and switches:

- ☐ Are any outlets or switches missing faceplates? Do they have cracks or other damage? If so, replace them.
- ☐ Do any outlets have several items plugged in using a multi-plug block? Overloaded outlets overheat and create a fire hazard. If you don't have enough outlets for all of your electronic devices, contact a certified electrician to install additional ones.
- ☐ Does your home use "regular" outlets in the kitchen, bath, laundry, or other areas near water. If so, arrange to have ground-fault circuit interrupters, or GFCI outlets, installed. These outlets check for dangerous ground faults by monitoring for discrepancies between the incoming and outgoing current. If an anomaly is found, the outlet interrupts the flow of electricity to prevent electric shock.

- ☐ Are there kitchen appliances, space heaters, hair-care devices, power tools, or other large electrical devices plugged into a power strip? This can lead to overheating or a fire, so always plug these types of appliances directly into the outlet.
- ☐ Do your outlets or switches have discoloration, produce a burning smell, or give you a mild tingling sensation when touched? Call a professional electrician to have them checked for faulty wiring or other hazards.
- ☐ Consider installing arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) outlets, which shut off electricity if it is arcing, or "jumping" between two connectors.

Portable space heaters:

- ☐ Is a heater located closer than three feet from curtains, furniture, or other combustibles? Find a flat, stable surface at a safe distance to relocate it.
- ☐ Do you have space heaters without tip-over protection? Replace the unit with one that has this important safety feature.

Electrical system:

- ☐ Do you have frequent issues with blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers? What about flickering or dimming lights? Call a professional electrician right away to have your home's electrical system evaluated for potential problems.

This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but it does explain how to spot — and correct — some of the most common electrical safety hazards in your home. For additional electrical safety information, visit the Electrical Safety Foundation International at www.esfi.org or the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at www.cpsc.gov.





SAFETY

OUTAGE PLANNING

for those who rely on medical equipment



Firelands Electric Cooperative cares deeply about the health and safety of the people in our community, and we realize that some of our members' health is dependent on having a steady supply of electricity.

As much as we would like to promise that power will always be available every moment of every day, unavoidable outages due to severe weather, vehicle accident, or transmission outage could leave you without electricity. While Firelands' crews can often restore power quickly, sometimes the amount and type of damage could lead to an extended outage. We encourage all our members — especially those with specific health needs — to have an emergency plan in place in the event of a power outage.

Details to consider:

- Talk with family and friends about what you would do if a prolonged power outage occurred. Do you have an alternative place to stay? Does your town or city have an emergency shelter?
- Many medical devices use electricity or are battery-dependent, including breathing machines, power wheelchairs, oxygen, and home dialysis equipment. Read the instructions and talk to the equipment suppliers about backup power options.
- If your devices are battery-operated, make sure you have extras on hand.
- Check backup batteries, as unused rechargeable batteries need to be charged periodically. Portable

battery packs can supply hours of backup energy, but only if they are kept fully charged.

- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about any medications that need to be refrigerated. If the power goes out, a refrigerator should hold its temperature for two to four hours if the door is kept closed. However, it's essential that you and your family members know the requirements for your specific medications. Find out how long medication can be safely kept outside of the refrigerator and know how to quickly replace those that are no longer usable.
- Keep your cellphone charged so that you can call for help or be reached by someone else, in the case of an emergency.

Backup generators

Consider whether your medical needs require investing in a generator. If so, you will want to purchase one with at least enough wattage to cover your essential electrical needs in the event of a power outage.

Standby generators are connected directly to your home's wiring and are typically powered by natural gas or propane. They will start automatically when the power goes out. An approved generator transfer switch, which keeps your generator separated from the electric co-op's power supply, must be installed by a professional. This is both a requirement of the National Electrical Code and is necessary to ensure the safety of the co-op's linemen, your family, and your home.

Portable generators are usually gas-powered and can be moved around. Always place a portable generator outside of your home and garage, away from windows and doors. Make sure to keep enough fuel on hand to last at least 24 hours.

If you have questions regarding power outages, contact Firelands Electric at 1-800-533-8658.

If you rely on health equipment that requires electricity, it's extremely important to work with your medical provider to develop an emergency power outage plan.

CO-OP CONTESTS

Lunch with a LINEMAN

Local students win a behind-the-scenes look at co-op

Three elementary students recently had the unique opportunity to take a private tour of Firelands Electric Cooperative and eat lunch with some of our linemen.

During the month of May, as part of National Electrical Safety Month, Firelands Electric sponsored a contest for children in kindergarten through fifth grade to help teach them the importance of lineman safety equipment. Those who correctly identified at least six of eight pieces of equipment had their names entered into a drawing for a special day at the cooperative.

Students and their adult guests spent the morning of July 26 touring the cooperative's facilities in New London. They had the chance to get an up-close look at bucket trucks, diggers, safety clothing and equipment, transformers, and much more. Following a pizza lunch with several members of the cooperative's line crews, the winners were also able to watch a couple of linemen practice pole climbing. Each winner went home with a bag of electrical safety activities, Firelands swag, and his or her own junior lineman hard hat.



Congratulations to the three contest winners (l-r):

- Jaidun Kemp – fifth grade, son of Chris and Bethany Smith of New London
- Sawyer Howell – third grade, daughter of Andy and Allison Howell of Mansfield
- Lyrica Steele – second grade, daughter of Paul Steele and Lyra Shelton of Willard

"Our annual electrical safety contest is a wonderful way to connect with our younger members," says Communications and Member Relations Specialist Tracy Gibb. "And this year's lunch with a lineman provided an excellent opportunity for the students to really get some one-on-one time with the cooperative's line crews and other staff."

Additional photos from the lunch with a lineman event are available in the co-op's photo gallery at www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.

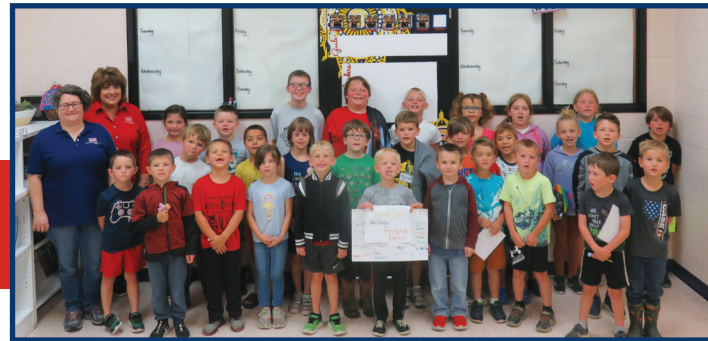


IN THE COMMUNITY

Photo Gallery



To view additional photos from Firelands Electric Cooperative's recent events, visit www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums



On June 28, Firelands Electric's Andrea Gravenhorst, Bob Stokes, and Tracy Gibb spent the morning with students in grades K-4 as part of New London FFA's safety town program. Participants played electrical safety bingo, watched a video about the potential dangers of electricity in their home, experimented with plasma balls, and took part in a safety demo.



Over the July Fourth weekend, several Firelands employees celebrated by participating in the Greenwich, Norwalk, and Rochester parades. A big thank you to them and their families for representing the cooperative.



YOUTH PROGRAMS



Education helps shape the leaders of tomorrow. That's why Firelands Electric includes it as one of our seven core principles. The A Team is a cooperative program designed to encourage students in their pursuit of academic excellence. Students in grades 6 to 8 are invited to participate and be recognized for their hard work and dedication to education.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Winners of July drawing receive Amazon gift cards



Baylee Schwab
Seneca East Middle School
Daughter of Matt and Jodi Schwab



Kaelyn Weaver
Crestview Middle School
Daughter of Dean and Becky Weaver

Send us your grade card and win!
The next drawing will be held on Dec. 10.

How you can win

Students in grades 6–8 who have a minimum of three A's on their most recent report card and whose parents or guardians are members of Firelands Electric Cooperative are eligible to apply. A copy of the report card should be submitted by mail to Attn: The A Team, Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, OH 44851. Report cards may also be emailed to members@firelandsec.com.

Be sure to include the student's name, school, grade, address, phone number, parents' name(s), and email address on your entry.

Complete program details are also available at www.firelandsec.com/team.



Kaylee Lauber
St. Joseph Catholic Middle School
Daughter of Tyler and Annette Lauber



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

ARE TANKLESS WATER HEATERS A WISE CHOICE?

While variations of the tankless water heater have existed for more than 100 years, they've become much more readily available over the past couple of decades. Water heating is the second largest energy cost in most households, making the tankless version's reputation for efficiency appealing to many consumers. But is a tankless water heater the best choice for your home?

Like traditional storage tank-style water heaters, tankless versions can be powered by electricity or natural gas. Traditional models heat water to the desired temperature and then store it in a tank for later use. They must also occasionally run to maintain this temperature so that hot water is readily available. Tankless versions, on the other hand, operate on an "as needed" basis, passing the water through a heat exchanger before it travels through your faucet, showerhead, or clothes washer. This eliminates the need for the unit to "reheat" the water like a traditional water heater does, thus making the tankless unit use less energy.

However, efficiency is just one of several important factors to take into consideration when deciding what type of water heater is right for your home. For starters, tankless water heaters have a higher upfront cost. Ten gallons-per-minute (GPM) is the size unit recommended for a family of four. To achieve this, you would likely need to install two five-GPM electric tankless units, which cost roughly twice as much as a standard 50-gallon electric storage tank-style unit.

This cost difference can be further inflated by installation fees, since a tankless water heater may require an upgrade to your home's electrical system or gas line in order

to handle the new technology. Some owners of electric tankless units have also reported dimming or flickering lights due to the increased draw of power.

The increased efficiency of a tankless unit may also not be worth the added upfront costs. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, a household using less than 40 gallons of hot water per day may see up to 34% greater energy efficiency with a tankless unit. Combined with a longer average lifespan of 20 years (compared to the traditional tank's 10- to 15-year lifespan), a single tankless version's payback may outweigh the higher upfront cost.

However, Consumer Reports found that most families are "heavy" users, requiring 80 gallons of hot water or more per day. This is the equivalent of about three showers, one load of laundry, one dishwasher cycle, and turning the faucet on multiple times. In this "heavy" use scenario, efficiency of a tankless unit is only 8% to 14% better than a traditional tank. Any small savings is essentially wiped out by the higher initial costs.

Also, keep in mind that many homes may require multiple tankless units to meet their hot water needs. A single unit is unlikely to be able to supply enough hot water for several simultaneous uses. For example, one tankless water heater can't keep up if you are doing a load of laundry while someone else is taking a shower.

One final item to take into account is the maintenance of a tankless unit. Like a traditional water heater, tankless versions should have the sediment removed periodically. It's recommended to have the heat exchanger and filter flushed at least

once a year — every six months or less if you have hard water. If you plan to flush the unit yourself, keep in mind that the process is a bit more complicated than with a traditional water heater, and that DIY kits cost anywhere from \$100 to more than \$250. If you hire a professional, the cost could be upwards of \$300 per unit.

The bottom line is that tankless water heaters are well-suited for certain situations. If you don't need to provide a large amount of hot water, such as for an outbuilding or a small addition to your home, and

you have water with little mineral content, a tankless unit may be perfect for the job. However, if you need to supply a larger amount of hot water, it's important to take the above items into consideration before you make that leap.

If you would like additional information about the pros and cons of tankless water heaters, visit www.consumerreports.org/water-heaters/tankless-water-heaters-vs-storage-tank-water-heaters or www.energy.gov/energysaver/tankless-or-demand-type-water-heaters.

APPLIANCE WATTAGE CHART

How much energy do your appliances use? Check out the chart below for the average wattage of several common household appliances and how much they can cost to operate each month.

Appliance	Watts	Hours used per month	Total kilowatt-hours used per month	Energy cost per month*
Space heater	1,500	240	360	\$54.72
Water heater	4,500	120	540	\$82.08
Heat pump	4,800	360	1,728	\$262.66
Baseboard (single)	1,500	360	540	\$82.08
Air conditioner	2,300	240	552	\$83.90
Washer	1,000	210	210	\$31.92
Dryer	3,400	300	1020	\$155.04
Pool pump	1,120	720	806.4	\$122.57
Dehumidifier	470	500	235	\$35.72
Oven	2,300	12	27.6	\$4.20
Toaster oven	1,500	8	12	\$1.82
Well pump	900	90	81	\$12.31
Heat lamp	250	720	180	\$27.36
Sump pump	800	240	192	\$29.18
Game console	180	90	16.2	\$2.46
LCD TV	16	720	11.52	\$1.75

**Actual usage and monthly cost will vary depending upon wattage of your specific appliance and the number of hours it is used each month.*



COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

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

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 31 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaul reviewed the cooperative's most recent annual report, trustee elections, and annual meeting. The board discussed ideas to encourage more members to attend the annual meeting, vote in elections, and run for positions on the board.
- The board approved Cheri Raphael to fill a vacant position on the People Fund Board for District 9 following the passing of Mary Jo Paramore.
- McNaul summarized the tree trimming and outage reports for the past month.
- The board reviewed a report from the safety and training event held on May 31.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reported on activities in the operations department, including the progress on several rebuild projects and the Coulter substation upgrade.

- McNaul reported on all-employee meetings that took place on June 5 and June 20.
- The board selected officers for the upcoming year. Dan Schloemer was elected as president, Bruce Leimbach as vice president, and Carl Ayers as secretary/treasurer.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the May financial reports and provided an update on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- McNaul reviewed efforts to complete cross-training among the cooperative's employees and departments.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reported on recent activities involving the member services and IT departments, including communications during a recent outage.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 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
1-800-533-8658

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

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

Firelands
Electric
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 