



GM'S REPORT

# THE IMPORTANCE OF **PEAK ALERTS**



Dan McNaull  
GENERAL MANAGER

During extremely hot, humid summer weather, Firelands Electric Cooperative may occasionally issue a “peak alert” — meaning that the amount of electricity presently being used (or consumed) by our members is unusually high. This elevated consumption is also referred to as “peak demand.” Peak demand does not indicate a shortage of power, only an increased need for electricity. If this demand becomes excessive, it can have a negative impact on the bills of each and every Firelands Electric member.

## How demand affects your bill

Demand affects every member of the cooperative, all year long. Each month, Firelands Electric pays a wholesale power bill to its generation and transmission supplier, Buckeye Power. These monthly bills include recurring charges for peak demand, which are based on those periods when our members’ collective demand for electricity was at its highest. The charges are assessed every month for the next year, regardless of the demand level during a particular month. In other words, the higher the peak demand, the higher the charges are for the next 12 months — which are then factored into each member’s monthly electric bill.

## How you can reduce demand

Controlling wholesale power costs is basically an issue of managing the cooperative’s demand during peak periods. By reducing energy consumption during peak alerts, members can effectively control the demand charges on their monthly electric bills for the next year. There are many ways that members can help the cooperative decrease electric demand during peak periods.

The first step is to make sure that you are aware of peak alerts. Enrolling in SmartHub allows members to receive emails and/or text messages whenever a peak alert is in

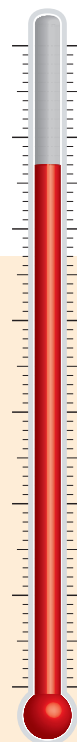
effect. You can also follow Firelands Electric on Facebook or check our Facebook News feed at [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com) for the latest information and alerts.

Small, temporary actions can also reduce your use of electricity during peak periods, lessening demand and providing monthly savings throughout the year. The list below can help get you started. Additional energy-reducing tips can be found by visiting [www.firelandsec.com/energy-efficiency](http://www.firelandsec.com/energy-efficiency) or [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov).

While making minor adjustments to your energy use may not seem like much, if every member lowers the demand for electricity during peak alert periods — even just a little — we can reduce the demand and stabilize the cost of electricity for all Firelands Electric Cooperative members!

## HELP BEAT THE PEAK

- Temporarily turn up your thermostat by only 4 degrees.
- Put your pool pump on a timer so it doesn’t run during peak times (between 2 and 6 p.m.).
- Postpone dishwashing, laundry, and bathing until after the peak has ended.
- Avoid the use of large electric appliances, such as ovens, clothes washers, and dryers.
- Use your microwave oven or grill instead of the oven.
- If you have well water, limit pump usage by refraining from watering plants and lawns.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and appliances. Not only do they use electricity, but they also generate unwanted heat.
- Close all draperies and window blinds to reduce energy loss and lessen cooling system run times.
- Agricultural and commercial operations should delay running electrical motors, compressors, pumps, and battery chargers whenever possible.

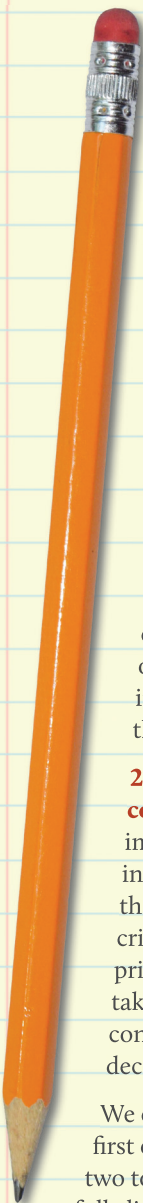




## RENEWABLE ENERGY

# Do your homework

## What to consider before signing a solar contract



If you're thinking about installing solar, it's important to do your research before signing on the dotted line with a contractor. Investing in residential solar is a big decision and doing the necessary groundwork ahead of time can help you avoid costly miscalculations in the future. But how do you begin? Exploring the four areas below can help you get started on the right path.

**1. If you want to install solar to save money, invest in efficiency instead.** While installing solar panels is very appealing as a cost-saving measure, stop to consider simpler and less pricey projects such as adding insulation, sealing air leaks, and completing other improvements that could cut your energy costs immediately. Even if you are not the do-it-yourself type, a conversation with one of Firelands Electric Cooperative's energy experts could reveal some easier and more affordable options that can make as much of a long-term impact on your energy bills — and cost less — than installing solar panels.

**2. Check your contractor once. Check your contractor twice.** As with any major home improvement project, purchasing from the right installer or contractor is every bit as important as the product you are purchasing. Due diligence is critical to ensure you get the best system, for a fair price, installed correctly and on time. And, don't be taken in by high-pressure sales tactics — a quality contractor will give you plenty of time to make the decision that is right for you.

We encourage our members not to sign with the first contractor they find. Instead, obtain bids from two to four companies. A good contractor will be fully licensed and insured, have extensive installation experience, be willing to answer all your questions, and communicate with Firelands Electric Cooperative. It also never hurts to contact your local Better Business Bureau or the attorney general's office to check the credibility of a specific contractor.

**3. Communicate with your co-op!** Firelands Electric should be one of your first contacts when it comes to installing solar. Our experts can answer detailed questions and provide information on what is required for interconnection with our distribution system. We can also review your past energy use and help you determine if any other projects could improve your home's energy efficiency.

**4. How does it all work?** A prospective installer will conduct a feasibility study to determine your property's ability to harness solar power, the possible size of the system, and how much power the system will generate. A reputable contractor will take steps to use your electric consumption history to create a successful system, as well as communicate with Firelands Electric to obtain any required interconnection documents to ensure your solar system meets current electrical and safety standards.

Next, your solar contractor will draft a contract to explain and detail the specifics of your system. Remember, once a contract is signed, you have committed to using that particular contractor and to the installation of solar panels. This makes it vital to do your research before putting your signature on any documents.

Although installing solar panels on your home or business can be exciting, don't lose sight of doing your research, asking questions, carefully scrutinizing any contract before signing, and keeping an open line of communication with Firelands Electric.

Visit [www.firelandsec.com/distribution-generation](http://www.firelandsec.com/distribution-generation) for more information on Firelands Electric Cooperative's net metering and generation interconnection processes. Members can also reach out to our energy experts at 1-800-533-8658 with any questions they might have regarding solar or other renewable energy sources.

Call us  
*Before*



you sign  
a solar contract

### HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT:

- Hidden fees
- Monthly payments
- Connecting to the grid
- Net metering
- Energy production
- Efficiency
- Effects of weather
- Maintenance
- Life expectancy of panels
- Payback

**1-800-533-8658**





## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

# SUDS AND SAVINGS

### Ways to save energy in the laundry room

Your clothes washer and dryer can use a significant amount of energy, and let's face it — laundry is no one's favorite chore. There are several easy ways you can save energy (and money) in the laundry room. The Department of Energy recommends the following tips:

- **Wash with cold water.** Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that clean you'd normally get from washing in warm water.
- **Wash full loads when possible.** Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the load, so fill it up if you can.
- **Use the high-speed or extended spin cycle in the washer.** This setting will remove more moisture before drying, reducing your drying time and extra wear on clothing.
- **Dry heavier cottons separately.** Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.
- **Make use of the "cool down" cycle.** If your dryer has this cycle option, you can save energy because the clothes will finish drying using the remaining heat in the dryer.
- **Use lower heat settings to dry clothing.** Regardless of drying time, you'll still use less energy.
- **Use dryer balls.** Dryer balls, usually made of wool or rubber, will help keep clothes separated for faster drying, and they can help reduce static, so you can eliminate dryer sheets.

- **Switch loads while the dryer is warm.** This allows you to take advantage of the remaining heat from the previous cycle.
- **Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle.** If you use dryer sheets, remember to scrub the filter once a month with a toothbrush to remove excess buildup.
- **Purchase ENERGY STAR-certified washers and dryers.** When it's time to purchase a new washer or dryer, look for the ENERGY STAR label. New washers and dryers that receive the ENERGY STAR rating use about 20% less energy than conventional models.

To learn about additional ways you can save energy at home, visit [www.firelandsec.com/energy-efficiency](http://www.firelandsec.com/energy-efficiency).



Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that brilliant clean you'd normally get from washing in warm water.

## SAFETY

# Know what's below

## Steps for safe digging

Summer's here, and it's the perfect time for outdoor projects. Perhaps you're making plans for a new deck, installing a fence, or giving your lawn a makeover. However you're planning to revamp your yard, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects — especially those that require digging near underground utility lines.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water, and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want — trust us! Firelands Electric Cooperative reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least 48 hours before you start, not including weekends and holidays. Or you can submit a request online by visiting [www.oups.org/edig](http://www.oups.org/edig). Here's how the process works:

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a couple of business days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries, and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below.

## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines, and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

### 2. WAIT

Wait two days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

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### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: [call811.com](http://call811.com)





## EMPLOYEE NEWS

# DAVE SUMPTER CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Journeyman Lineman Dave Sumpter marks his 15th anniversary with Firelands Electric Cooperative this month.

Originally hired as a tree trimmer in 2006, Dave was selected to become an apprentice lineman in January 2007. After completing the electric power utilities program at Marion Technical College, he was promoted to journeyman lineman in June 2011.

This fall, Dave will begin classes at West Virginia University at Parkersburg (WVU Parkersburg) as part of a new partnership between the university and Ohio's Electric Cooperatives' Central Ohio Lineman Training (COLT) program. The partnership applies training at COLT toward the requirements needed for an Associate of Applied Science degree, allowing lineworkers to earn the degree by taking only 15 additional credit hours. "I want to thank everyone involved in getting this program off the ground. I'm excited for this opportunity," Dave says.

As a journeyman lineman, Dave is responsible for restoring power outages; construction of new services; and powerline, outdoor lighting, and substation maintenance. Linemen respond to outage calls 24/7 and in all weather conditions. They often face storms, accidents, and even fires.

Dave enjoys being a lineman, working outdoors where every day is different and presents new challenges. "I like being part of the cooperative team and knowing that I'm part of the effort to provide quality power to Firelands Electric members," Dave says. "Even when the weather becomes challenging, I enjoy my job because I work with a great group of people. I'm grateful to be a part of the line crew, and thankful for the office staff and interactions with our members."



Dave Sumpter  
JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN

A native of Wellington, Dave resides in the rural New London area with his two sons, Thomas Jason (T.J.) and Anthony Jason (A.J.). He and the boys enjoy being silly together and telling corny jokes. In his spare time, Dave also works on household projects, spends time with friends, and watches Buckeye football.

### Is your contact information current?



If you've recently changed your email address or phone number, Firelands Electric won't be able to reach you with important information about your electric service.

Call us at **1-800-533-8658** or email **[billing@firelandsec.com](mailto:billing@firelandsec.com)** to update your information.

The Firelands Electric Cooperative  
office will be closed on

**Monday, July 5**

in observance of Independence Day.  
As always, emergency service is  
available 24/7 by calling  
**1-800-533-8658.**

## GOVERNMENT

# ADVOCATING FOR AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



As a member of Firelands Electric Cooperative, you are among 42 million Americans who can claim ownership in a not-for-profit, member-owned utility that provides electricity at cost. The ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action program is an exciting opportunity for you to raise your voice and participate in the political process.

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) is the political action committee of the nation's electric cooperatives. For almost 50 years, ACRE has been working to support candidates in Ohio and the U.S. who understand and support electric cooperatives and their member-owners. Through Co-op Owners, which is the consumer arm of ACRE, you have the ability to strengthen this support and join over 30,000 ACRE Co-op Owners members who form a strong network dedicated to the long-term success of the electric cooperative program.

If you are not already a member of ACRE Co-op Owners, we hope that you will consider joining this nonpartisan program. Together we will continue to fight for a viable

environment for electric cooperatives and the quality of life of the people and communities that co-ops serve.

Thank you for your continued support of the ACRE program. If you have any questions, would like additional information, or want to sign up for the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action program, please contact Firelands Electric Cooperative at 1-800-533-8658 or return the form provided below.

Visit [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop) to join our growing grassroots efforts and become a part of the team to promote common sense energy solutions and the importance of electric cooperatives.

*Contributions to ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action are not tax deductible. All contributions to ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. Contribution guidelines are suggestions only. You may contribute more or less than the recommended amount. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal.*



**I want to help keep the voice of rural electric cooperatives heard in the political process by participating in ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action.**

### Monthly Bill Addition

- ☐ REGULAR: \$2.08 PER MONTH (\$25/YEAR)
- ☐ CENTURY CLUB: \$8.33 PER MONTH (\$100/YEAR)
- ☐ PRESIDENT'S CLUB: \$41.66 PER MONTH (\$500/YEAR)\*
- ☐ OTHER \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### One-Time Contribution

- ☐ REGULAR: \$25
- ☐ CENTURY CLUB: \$100
- ☐ PRESIDENT'S CLUB: \$500\*
- ☐ OTHER \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I affirm that my contribution has been made with non-corporate funds** (Please make checks out to Firelands Electric Cooperative):

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ COOPERATIVE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Federal Election Law requires the following information for contributions exceeding \$200:

EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Action Committee for Rural Electrification® (ACRE®) are not tax deductible. Contributions to ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. You have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Any contribution guidelines presented are merely suggestions. You are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts, or not at all. NRECA will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount contributed or a decision not to contribute.



## COOPERATIVE UPDATE

# BOARD MEETING *highlights*

*Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met April 27 and covered the following items:*

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 34 membership applications for approval by the board.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed the cooperative's 10-year financial forecast.
- The board reviewed and approved a safety and training report from a meeting held on March 4.
- McNaull reviewed tree trimming and outage reports covering the past month.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the March financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- Director of Operations Don Englet and Trent Fern from Alpha Engineering reviewed the updated 2021–2024 construction work plan. Following discussion, the board approved the plan as presented.
- Appointments were approved for the credentials committee, chairman of the election committee, and tellers for the 2021 trustee elections.
- Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- The board approved a capital credits general retirement in the amount of \$900,000, which includes the remaining balance of 1999 and 35.7% of margins from 2000. Refunds will be issued to current and former members in August.
- Following discussion, the board decided to hold the 2021 annual meeting virtually due to the continuing COVID-19 situation.
- McNaull recognized Trustee Kevin Reidy for receiving his Credentialed Cooperative Director Certification.
- Director of Communications and Technology Andrea Gravenhorst reviewed a report on recent activities involving the member services and IT department. She also reviewed the broadband survey being conducted by the third-party vendor CrowdFiber.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 27. 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 McNaull

#### HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

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

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