



GM'S REPORT

# DECODING PEAK ALERTS

What they are, why they're important,  
and how you can help

Now and then, during extremely cold winter weather, Firelands Electric Cooperative may issue a "peak alert." This means that the amount of electricity currently being used, or consumed, by our members is unusually high compared to the forecasted power loads. There isn't a shortage of power, only the probability of an elevated need, or demand, for electricity. However, if this demand becomes excessive, it can have a negative impact on the bills of each and every one of our co-op members. So, exactly how does power load demand affect the cost of electricity — and what can be done about it?

## Defining demand

First, let's take a look at the difference between consumption and demand. Simply put, consumption is the amount of product used over an extended period of time, while demand is the maximum amount needed during a short time frame.

Suppose you have two 5-gallon buckets. Both buckets can hold, or "consume," the same amount of water. However, if one is filled at a rate of 1 gallon per minute, while the other at 5 gallons per minute, the buckets each have a different "demand." The second bucket uses the same amount of water, but during a much shorter period. Compared to the first bucket, the second one would require a larger — and more expensive — faucet or pump to keep it filled.

This same concept also applies to generating electricity. The more power consumers use during a specific time span, the larger the power plant and transmission lines needed to meet this demand.

## The bottom line

Rest assured, when a peak alert is issued due to high demand, it does not mean there isn't enough electricity to go around. It simply means that the co-op's power supplier, Buckeye Power, must pull out all the stops to meet members' needs. While our power plants have plenty of capacity to do this, it does take additional resources. This may include increasing manpower, using more fuel, or bringing additional and costlier generation equipment online. Like with any industry, the more resources required to



Dan McNaull  
GENERAL MANAGER

*Continued on page 20*



Continued from page 19

## ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP

In addition to the load management program, I'm asking all Firelands Electric Cooperative members to help decrease our electric demand during peak alerts by following these simple steps:

- Temporarily adjust your thermostat by 4 degrees.
- Postpone dishwashing, laundry, and bathing until after the peak has ended.
- Avoid the use of large electric appliances, such as ovens, space heaters, clothes washers, and dryers.
- Turn off unneeded lights and appliances.
- Close all draperies and window blinds to reduce energy loss and lessen heating system run times.

These small adjustments may not seem like much, but 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 cooperative members!

For more information on Firelands Electric Cooperative's load management programs and other ways you can help control peak demand, visit [www.firelandsec.com/content/member-programs](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/member-programs).

*Thank you for helping your co-op beat the peak!*

*Dan McNaull*

create a product, the more it costs to produce — costs that must be passed on to the consumer.

In the case of electric cooperatives, this higher cost is dispersed among Ohio's 24 distribution cooperatives, including Firelands Electric. As a not-for-profit cooperative, Firelands provides power to its members at wholesale cost. Unfortunately, if the co-op is charged a higher rate to purchase and transmit electricity, it will eventually affect co-op members' monthly bills.

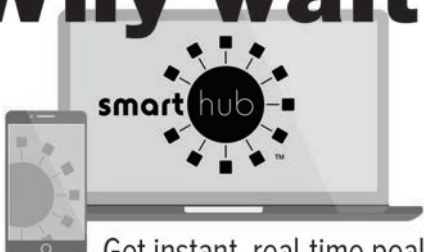
But there is good news! Firelands Electric Cooperative has programs in place to help avoid the high demand and increased costs associated with peak demand. And, with some simple planning, members can do their part as well.

### Steps you can take

One of the easiest ways to reduce electric use during times of high demand is to join the more than 4,600 Firelands Electric members who voluntarily take part in the co-op's load management program. The installation of a cooperative-owned device on an electric water heater or HVAC system allows brief, temporary regulation of the power flowing to these appliances during a peak alert. Known as a PeakBuster device, these small, gray boxes are only activated on the hottest and coldest days of the year — typically less than ten times per year. Members rarely notice when load management is implemented and can sign up to receive email or text notifications from SmartHub when a peak alert is in effect.

By volunteering to have a PeakBuster device installed in their home or business, a member can help control the demand for electricity when it is needed most. Plus, there are rebates and incentives available from the co-op just for participating!

# Why wait?



Get instant, real-time peak alert and outage notifications with SmartHub text messaging

<https://firelandsec.smarthub.coop>

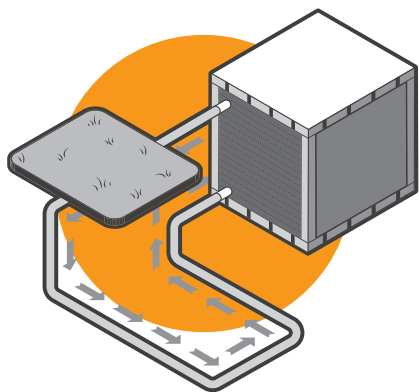
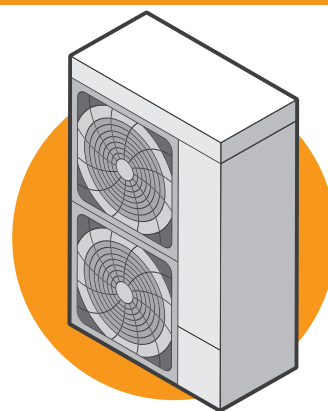
**Firelands Electric COOPERATIVE**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

# Types of Heat Pumps

### Air-Source Heat Pumps

- Most commonly used type of heat pump
- If added to an existing fossil fuel system (i.e., propane, natural gas, fuel oil, or wood), can reduce heating costs by up to 40%. *(In Ohio, temperatures can drop low enough that you will need an auxiliary or backup heating system, such as fossil fuel or electric resistance.)*
- Can reduce heating costs by about 50% when compared to baseboard heaters or electric furnaces
- Newer, more efficient systems now offer a practical heating alternative in colder regions like the Northeast and Midwest.

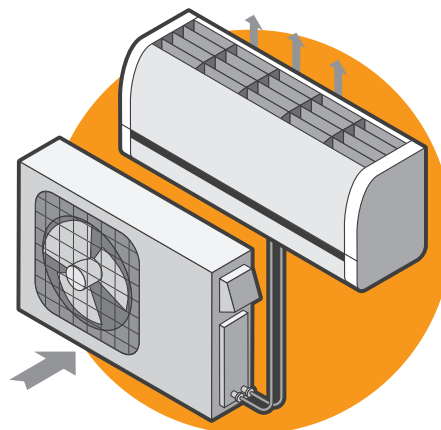


### Geothermal Heat Pumps

- More expensive to install but provide more energy savings for heating and cooling
- Moves heat through pipes buried underground or submerged in a large body of water
- When compared to a conventional heating system, can reduce energy use by 25 to 50 percent
- Effective in extreme climates
- Not ideal for smaller lots and certain soil conditions

### Ductless Mini-Split Heat Pumps

- Easier to install, quiet, small in size
- Flexible for heating and cooling individual rooms and smaller spaces
- No ductwork required, and is an economical alternative to baseboard heaters



Heat pump systems should be installed by a licensed professional.

Visit [www.firelandsec.com/content/member-programs](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/member-programs) for information on rebates available to members who install a new heat pump in their home.

Sources: Dept. of Energy and Consumer Reports





## YOUTH PROGRAMS

# *Class of 2020* **COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Do you live in a home served by Firelands Electric Co-op?  
You could win up to \$5,300 in scholarships

- Scholarships are available to graduating seniors in both boys' and girls' divisions.
- Applicants must have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale.
- Finalists in the Firelands Electric scholarship competition will be interviewed at the cooperative office on Feb. 17, 2020.
- Applicants will be judged on scholastic record, school and community activities, cooperative knowledge, and a personal interview.
- The first-place Firelands Electric Cooperative Scholarship in each division is \$1,500.
- Four runners-up will also receive scholarships in each division. One student in each division will also be chosen to receive a \$300 Judges' Choice Scholarship.
- The top overall winner will be eligible to compete at the statewide competition on April 15, where he or she can win up to \$3,800 in additional scholarship awards from Ohio's Electric Cooperatives.

Complete rules and applications are available at [www.firelandsec.com/content/scholarship-opportunities](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/scholarship-opportunities), by contacting Firelands Electric's member services department at 1-800-533-8658, or by visiting your high school guidance department.

**Application deadline:  
Jan. 31, 2020**

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

# HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS:

*You could be selected for a life-changing leadership experience in Washington, D.C.*

**June 19–25, 2020**

### While on Youth Tour, students will visit:

United States Capitol  
World War II Memorial  
Smithsonian Institution  
Lincoln Memorial  
Vietnam War Memorial  
Washington National Cathedral  
Arlington National Cemetery  
Gettysburg Battlefield  
... and much more!

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

### What is Youth Tour?

The Ohio's Electric Cooperatives Youth Tour is an annual leadership program sponsored by Firelands Electric. A weeklong, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., Youth Tour gives outstanding high school students a personal understanding of American history and their role as a citizen. During this one-of-a-kind tour, participants have the opportunity to meet with their congressional leaders at the U.S. Capitol, make new friends from across the state and country, and see many of the famous Washington, D.C., sights.

Electric cooperatives from 43 states send about 1,800 delegates each year, including nearly 40 students from co-ops throughout Ohio. Firelands Electric Cooperative will choose up to two delegates to participate in the 2020 Youth Tour.

### To apply for the Youth Tour applicants must:

- Be a high school sophomore or junior.
- Reside in a home receiving power from Firelands Electric Cooperative.
- Submit a completed application, including portion completed by a school official.
- Write a 500-word essay on a topic related to electric cooperatives.



**Application deadline:  
Jan. 31, 2020**

**Complete rules and application materials are available at [www.firelandsec.com/content/youth-tour-experience](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/youth-tour-experience).**



## CO-OP NEWS

# Co-op hosts government guests



State Representative Bill Reineke and John Metcalf, general manager at Mid-Ohio Energy Cooperative, during a November legislative event held at Firelands Electric Cooperative.

Firelands Electric Cooperative hosted a regional legislative open house at the facility in New London on Monday, Nov. 18.

The event brought together state legislators, congressional staffers, and electric cooperative leaders to discuss policy and operational issues important to the member-owned organizations. Firelands Electric employees also provided tours of their facility, which opened in January 2019.

The open house was held in partnership with Ohio's Electric Cooperatives, the statewide trade association representing the 24 Ohio-based electric cooperatives, and several of Firelands Electric's neighboring cooperatives, including North Central Electric Cooperative, Lorain-Medina Rural Electric Cooperative, Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, Mid-Ohio Energy Cooperative, and Consolidated Cooperative.

State Senators Nathan Manning, R-North Ridgeville, and Kristina Roegner, R-Hudson, attended the event, as did State Representatives Bill Reineke, R-Tiffin; Gayle Manning, R-North Ridgeville; and Joe Miller, D-Amherst. David Cordonnier, Caroline Bick, and Brandon Gibson also attended, representing U.S. Representatives Troy Balderson, R-Zanesville; Jim Jordan, R-Urbana; and Anthony Gonzalez, R-Rocky River, respectively.

To view additional photos from the open house, visit [www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums).



## We're looking for members like you!

In 2020, Firelands Electric Cooperative members will elect board trustees for districts 1, 3, and 6. Any member of the co-op who is in good standing and residing in a district with an open spot on the board is welcome to run for that position. Potential candidates are required to submit an election application and collect 20 member signatures from within their district by Friday, March 20.

A map of the board districts is available at [www.firelandsec.com/content/board-trustees](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/board-trustees).

Additional information on the role of a Firelands Electric Co-op trustee and how you can become a candidate is available on our website at [www.firelandsec.com](http://www.firelandsec.com). Complete details about the election process will be published in the February issue of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.

**Nomination petitions to become a candidate for the 2020 elections will be available at the Firelands Electric Cooperative office beginning Jan. 30.**



## YOUTH PROGRAMS

# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The A Team recognizes students in grades 6–8 for their hard work and dedication to education. Students whose parents or guardians are members of Firelands Electric Cooperative and who have a minimum of three A's on their most recent report card are eligible to enter.



A drawing will take place at the end of each grading period, and three students will be chosen to receive an iTunes gift card. Winners will also have their photo published in an upcoming issue of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine and be featured on the co-op's website and social media outlets.



The deadline for the next drawing is Feb. 10. For complete details on how to enter, visit [www.firelandsec.com/content/team](http://www.firelandsec.com/content/team).

## Cold weather comfort

What better way to warm up on a blustery winter day than with a big bowl of homemade chili.

This familiar and favorite comfort food is also a great value!

- ground beef = \$4.20
- beans = \$2.20
- diced tomatoes = \$0.90
- oil = \$0.50
- tomato paste = \$0.90
- onion and garlic = \$0.70
- seasoning = \$0.60
- electricity = \$0.23

**TOTAL: \$10.23 (6 servings)**

*\*Costs are based on average ingredient prices using a 280W, 6-quart slow cooker for 6 hours on the low setting.*





## COOPERATIVE UPDATE

# BOARD MEETING *highlights*

*Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Oct. 22 and covered the following items:*

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported that the cooperative received 46 membership applications for approval by the board.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the September financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- General Manager Dan McNaull provided a recap of the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action breakfast held at Firelands Electric's facility on Sept. 30.
- The board reviewed and approved the capital budget for 2020.
- Following a presentation by Trent Fern from Alpha Engineering, the board discussed and approved the 2020-2023 work plan.
- McNaull reviewed the cooperative's monthly outage report for October.
- The board discussed openings on the People Fund board. It was decided to delay making the final appointments until the November meeting.

- The capital credits discount rate for estates was updated, making it comparable to the cooperative's average long-term debt interest rate.
- Trustee Kevin Reidy reported on the Ohio's Electric Cooperatives meeting he recently attended in Columbus.
- Director of Operations Don Englet reviewed recent activities and projects in the operations department.
- Director of Member Services and Communications Andrea Gravenhorst reported on recent activities involving the member services and IT departments, including recent additions to SmartHub's features.

Firelands Electric Co-op 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 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 28, at Firelands Electric's facility, located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London.

### 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

Steve Gray  
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 