



GM'S REPORT

OUR *Promise* TO YOU

Firelands Electric Cooperative has a New Year's resolution. As we ring in 2019, we promise to continue providing our membership with the best possible customer service and communications.

More and more these days, we use modern technology to enhance our communications and exchange of information with our members. Since 2014, Firelands Electric has offered the convenience of the free SmartHub app, which allows members to make online bill payments, check the status of their electric service, and receive real-time updates on energy use. Nearly half of our 9,100 members have enrolled in SmartHub. Many also take advantage of the new features introduced in 2018, such as outage and peak alert notifications and usage comparison tools.

Moving into the new year, Firelands Electric Cooperative will continue to improve and expand SmartHub's communication features, including text, email, and personalized letters mailed to our members. Plans are in place to develop additional features, such as enhanced information for load management and budget participants and member surveys.

Firelands Electric Cooperative will also be moving forward with new workflow software in 2019. This

program will make internal communications and operations more efficient. Employees in the field will have increased access to data and service orders, and dispatching will become more streamlined. These features will make it easier and faster for our staff to assess outages and other issues.

Although we are working to grow our mobile and paper communication options, connecting with people face-to-face will remain an important part of Firelands Electric Cooperative's philosophy in the coming year. While our new all-in-one facility includes fast, convenient options, like a drive-through window and payment drop box, we appreciate our personal relationship with our members. The long-held traditions of greeting members at the counter and having a live person answer the phone are services we are proud to provide.

Firelands Electric Cooperative still values face time with our members. Listening to our members improves understanding, builds trust, strengthens relationships, and fosters cooperation.

So, how do we serve you better in 2019? The same way many of us try to serve community, society, and family better — by listening. In our office, on telephones, through social media exchanges, and during in-person meetings, we're ready to listen.

When you have questions about energy efficiency, electrical service, or any of our products or services, just ask us. Call or drop in and see us — we're always glad to hear from you!

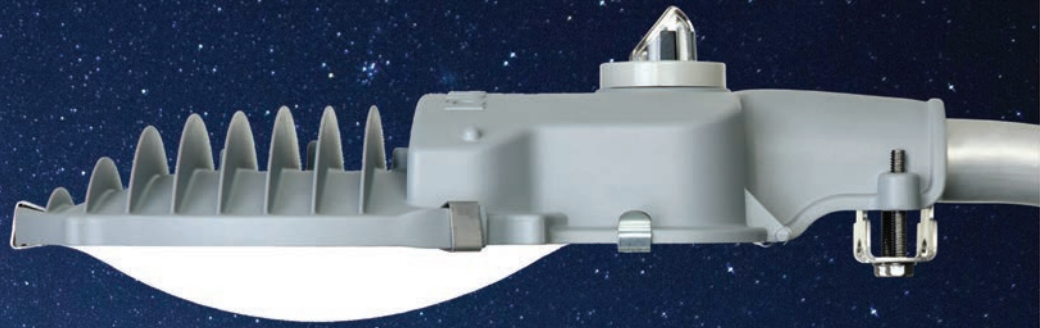


Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER





CO-OP NEWS



Brighten up the night with **OUTDOOR LIGHTING**

Firelands Electric can install a dependable source of lighting that can help provide safety and peace of mind, lengthen your outdoor evenings, and discourage intruders. The cooperative's outdoor lighting program is a convenient way to have all the light you need around your home or business.

The cooperative will furnish and install a light-emitting diode (LED) fixture at a location suitable to both parties, make all necessary electrical connections, and supply electricity for the device, which is controlled by a photo cell for maximum efficiency.

In addition to having extra light around the house, especially during those long winter nights, there are many other advantages to cooperative-provided outdoor lighting:

- **NO ADDITIONAL ELECTRICAL USE** — The power for the light doesn't go through your electric meter. Your monthly charge includes all electricity for operation.
- **FREE MAINTENANCE** — Have you ever thought about how you would reach the bulb to change it or how much the bulb would cost to replace? No need to worry, because Firelands Electric Cooperative will repair the fixture if it's not working properly.
- **SAFE AND SECURE** — A new outdoor light from the cooperative can provide you with the peace of mind that comes from bright, dependable light after dark. Whether you're coming home late from work or shooting basketball with the kids, this light will be a silent sentry watching over your home and its contents — even when you're not home.

Firelands Electric only offers LED fixtures for new applications in its outdoor lighting program. LEDs contain a brighter form of white light than traditional fixtures. In addition to providing a higher light output, they offer more lumens per watt, meaning they shine brighter and longer than halide or high-pressure sodium lights.

Traditional lighting takes time to warm up and turn on. LEDs are instant-on, because they need little heat to operate, even in below-freezing weather. The durability of LED fixtures is unlike other outdoor lighting, because they're manufactured with heavy-duty plastic materials and not glass. LEDs also have a longer life. They can last up to 25 years, depending on how they are used, which can result in significant energy savings.

Firelands Electric changed its outdoor lighting program several years ago to include LED fixtures, due to advancements and improved performance with technology. Adding LEDs was also a result of policy changes issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nearly a decade ago that have resulted in mercury vapor, metal halide, and high-pressure sodium lamps becoming very expensive and nearly obsolete.

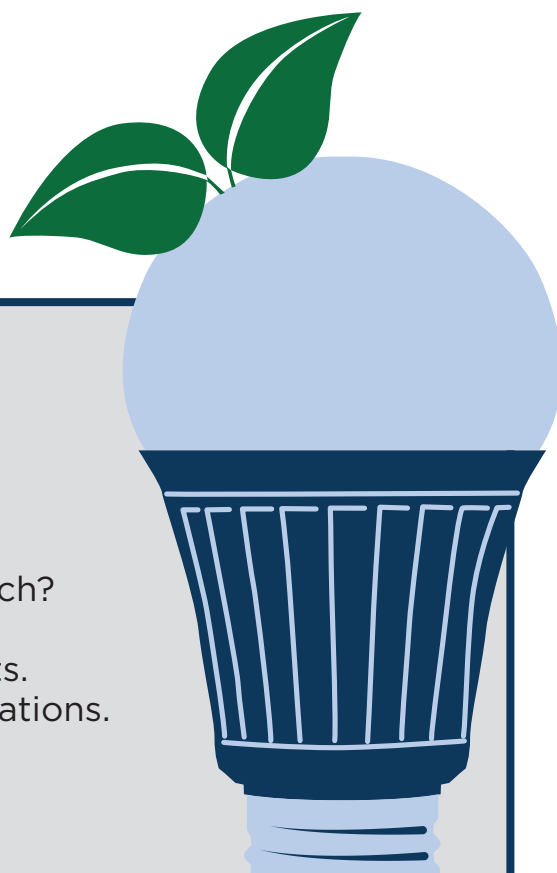
Investing in the latest energy-efficient technologies is less costly than maintaining traditional legacy fixtures. Over the past decade, Firelands Electric has faced multiple wholesale power increases, without making any adjustments to its outdoor lighting program monthly base rate.

Lighting Application	Lamp Type	Wattage	Approx. Light Output Lumens/Kelvin	Monthly Base Rate
AVAILABLE LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED)				
Residential/Commercial	LED	70W	6,000L/5000K	\$10.00
Residential/Commercial/Roadway	LED	110W	13,000L/4000K	\$12.00
LEGACY FIXTURES (no longer available)				
Residential/Commercial	Sodium	100W	9,500L/2100K	\$10.00
Residential/Commercial	Mercury	175W	7,900L/4100K	\$10.00
Residential/Commercial	Halide	150W	13,500L/4000K	\$14.00
Residential/Commercial	Halide Flood	250W	13,500L/4000K	\$15.25
Residential/Commercial	Sodium Flood	250W	17,000L/2100K	\$14.75
Residential/Commercial	Sodium Flood	400W	25,000L/2100K	\$18.50
Residential/Commercial	Halide Flood	400W	36,000L/4000K	\$19.00

Firelands Electric recently revised the pricing of its outdoor lighting schedule for new and existing outdoor lighting applications that will be effective starting Jan. 23, 2019. The cooperative will only install LEDs going forward, for both requests for new outdoor lighting as well as replacements of any existing fixtures requiring maintenance.

The cooperative will install one pole and one span of secondary wire of up to 150 feet in length per light fixture. The monthly base rate includes the fixture, pole, wiring, maintenance, and electricity. If additional poles are required, the monthly rental charge will be increased \$4.00 for each additional pole constructed.

If you are interested in having an outdoor lighting system installed, please contact Firelands Electric Cooperative. You can call the office at 1-800-533-8658, send an email to billing@firelandsec.com, or complete the outdoor lighting contract form available at www.firelandsec.com/content/member-forms.



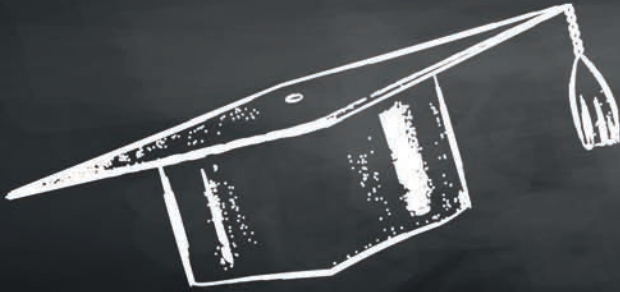
Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Is your hot water tank warm to the touch? Consider insulating it to save 7 to 16 percent annually on water heating costs. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Source: energy.gov



YOUTH PROGRAMS



CLASS OF 2019 College scholarships

Are your parents Firelands Electric Co-op members?

You could win up to \$5,150 in scholarships

- Scholarships available 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. 18, 2019.
- Applicants will be judged on scholastic record, school and community activities, cooperative knowledge, and 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.
- **NEW in 2019!** One student in each division will be chosen to receive a \$300 Judges' Choice Scholarship.
- The top overall winner will be eligible to compete at the statewide competition in April, where he or she can win up to \$3,650 in additional scholarship awards from Ohio's Electric Cooperatives.

Complete rules and applications are available at 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.

**Applications due
Feb. 1, 2019**



Firelands
Electric
COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

YOUTH PROGRAMS

YOUTH TOUR 2019 June 14–20

America's electric co-ops believe in educating tomorrow's leaders. Since the late 1950s, the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to Washington, D.C., to experience our nation's capital up close. Through educational and sightseeing activities, students gain a personal understanding of American history and their role as citizens.

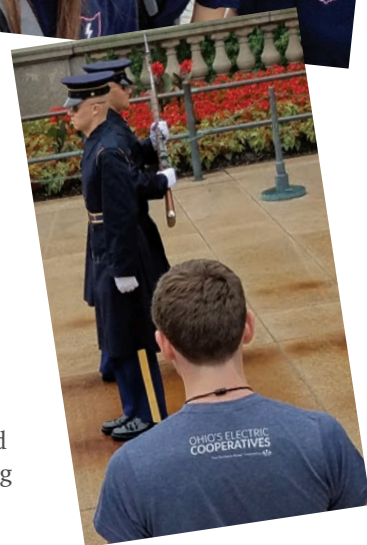
About 40 students from electric cooperatives throughout Ohio participate in this **COMPLETELY FREE** program each year. Students meet at Ohio's Electric Cooperatives in Columbus and travel by chartered bus to Washington, D.C. Chaperones from the community, including parents, teachers, and electric co-op employees, accompany students on this weeklong trip.

Groups are organized at the state level, but over 1,600 students from across the country come together for Youth Day. Students have the chance to meet their U.S. representatives and senators, as well as to hear featured speakers who provide insight into the important roles electric cooperatives play in their local communities.

Students attending Youth Tour also have the opportunity to be selected as their state's representative on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's



(NRECA) Youth Leadership Council (YLC). One student from each state is selected to return to Washington, D.C., in July for a leadership workshop that focuses on the electric cooperative industry. YLC members are also invited to attend NRECA's annual meeting the following spring.



Firelands Electric will select up to two high school sophomores and juniors to represent the co-op on the 2019 Youth Tour, scheduled for June 14–20.

Students must reside in a home served by the co-op and submit a completed application, including an essay, by Feb. 1. Full details and application materials are available at www.firelandsec.com/content/youth-tour-experience.



**Applications due
Feb. 1, 2019**



CO-OP NEWS

Fitchville substation severely damaged

On Monday, Nov. 26, at approximately 9:30 p.m., Firelands Electric Cooperative's Fitchville substation experienced a catastrophic failure. The issue occurred in the center-phase voltage regulator, which led to a fire and significant damage to the substation and equipment.

One of the substation's circuits, including the overcurrent protection device, the bypass switches, and the underground cable that feeds that circuit, were all severely damaged. Firelands Electric Cooperative crews were able to restore service to those affected by temporarily backfeeding from several other substations. Power was restored to all affected members by 11:09 p.m.

The substation's transformer is being tested for damage and will be re-energized as soon as the results indicate that it is safe to do so. Material has been requisitioned to make permanent repairs, but it will be several months until all of this work can be completed. The temporary backfeeding will continue until all repairs are done.

The Fitchville substation was last updated and rebuilt in the summer of 2015.

"Thanks to sound engineering that allowed us to quickly re-route power and to our employees' commitment to providing safe, reliable electricity, the cooperative was able to prevent this event from causing a very lengthy power outage for the 1,013 members served by this substation," Firelands Electric General Manager Dan McNaul says. "We are grateful that the damage was not more severe and that no one was injured."



On Nov. 26, a major failure at Firelands Electric Cooperative's Fitchville substation resulted in a fire and significant damage to several pieces of equipment.



**The next drawing for The A Team is
Feb. 10. For complete details on
how to enter, visit
www.firelandsec.com/content/team.**

IN THE COMMUNITY

BY TRACY GIBB

DAPPER DOGS

In April 2012, Betsy Strine took a leap of faith. After years of working for pet stores and other groomers, she decided to start her own business. Armed with just a box of tools and a folding table in the basement of her old farmhouse, she launched Betsy's Honeycreek Dog Boutique.

Like most fledgling business owners, Betsy was unsure if her plan would succeed. In the beginning, she spent many hours marketing herself. She posted flyers at every place she could think of and talked about her new business with anyone and everyone. "I had to get creative and brave," Betsy says.

Her efforts paid off. Within a year and a half, Betsy had more clients than she could handle by herself. Her husband, Randy, soon joined her on a full-time basis. The couple make a great team, with Randy handling their canine clients' bathing needs and Betsy putting her skills with scissors and clippers to use.

Honeycreek Dog Boutique grooms roughly 30 dogs every week. Their package includes bath, blow dry, cut, nail trimming, and ear cleaning for one low price. A small dog, like a Shih Tzu, starts at \$38, and the only service that costs extra is flea treatment. Even the boutique's six specialty shampoos are included in the package pricing.

The Strines accept animals 40 pounds or less and make it a priority to develop a special relationship with each of the dogs. Many of their regulars are excited when they arrive. "One in particular even runs to the door as soon



PHOTOS BY RANDY STRINE

as the owner opens their car," Randy says.

The boutique is so popular that repeat clients usually schedule their next appointment before they leave. At one point, the Strines simply could not take on any new customers. They have recently expanded their hours to be able to accommodate more dogs, however.

Appointments are accepted Tuesdays and Fridays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesdays and Thursdays 12 p.m. to 7 p.m., and every other Saturday. Betsy's Honeycreek Dog Boutique is located at 2219 County Road 775 outside of Perrysville. To set up an appointment, call or text Betsy at 419-512-2201, or visit them on Facebook for more information.

Betsy's business has come a long way since those early days. A walk-in bathing station and adjustable grooming table now occupy the space where the folding table once stood. And any doubt Betsy had when she started out nearly seven years ago is long gone. "I wouldn't dream of doing anything else," she says.

Places & Faces is a regular feature that showcases people, businesses, and organizations located throughout the Firelands Electric Cooperative service territory.





COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING

highlights

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Oct. 23 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported the cooperative received 50 membership applications for approval by the board.
- The board reviewed a report for workplace safety observation that was held Oct. 11 and safety training reports for meetings held Aug. 23, Sept. 26, and Oct. 2.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the September financials and reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- The capital credits discount rate for estates was updated, making it comparable to the cooperative's average long-term debt interest rate.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed the preliminary 2019 capital budget with the board. A finalized capital budget will be presented to the board at the November meeting.
- The board reviewed a listing agreement for sale of the cooperative's buildings and agreed to proceed with listing the office and primary warehouse.
- Dan McNaull asked the board to approve three appointments to the cooperative's People Fund

board in January. District 4 Trustee Bruce Leimbach nominated Laura Landis, District 5 Trustee Carl Ayers nominated Tom Swindall, and District 8 Trustee Anderson nominated Annis Strine.

- McNaull provided the board with an update on the cooperative's metering system.
- The board reviewed the Operation Round Up report from September.
- Director of Electric Operations Don Englet reported on recent projects and crew activities in the operations department. He introduced Line Superintendent Zach Collins and discussed updates to the NASA Mansfield Transport Corridor Relocation project that is affecting the cooperative's distribution system.
- Director of Member Services and Communications Andrea Gravenhorst updated the board on recent activities involving the member services department and upcoming information technology projects involving the new facility.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Firelands Electric's new facility, located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London.

FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

OUTAGE HOTLINE

1-800-533-8658

OFFICE (effective Jan. 17)

103 Industrial Drive
P.O. Box 32
New London, OH 44851
419-929-1571

OFFICE HOURS

Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
www.firelandsec.com



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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District 9

Kevin Reidy
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Rob Turk
District 7

GENERAL MANAGER

Dan McNaull

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
members@firelandsec.com

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