

# FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

### Scholarship Deadline April 1

Students who intend to continue their education beyond high school are encouraged to apply for the 2021 Farmers Electric Scholarship. Students must be enrolled full-time at an accredited college, university or vocational/technical school for the 2020-2021 school year. The student must have a parent or legal guardian who is a member of Farmers Electric and resides within the cooperative's service territory. Visit [www.farmersrec.com](http://www.farmersrec.com) for more information and application.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static. Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's air filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.



P.O. Box 330  
Greenfield, IA 50849  
FarmersREC.com | (800) 397-4821

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

## Take Advantage of 2021 Rebates

Contrary to many investor-owned electric utilities, electric cooperatives like Farmers Electric want to help you save money by maximizing the efficiency of your home, appliances and other electronics. That's because we are not in the business of making a profit. Anything above and beyond our operating costs are given back to our members as capital credits.

If it's time to replace your water heater, upgrade your old appliances, or maximize the efficiency of your home, make sure to check out the incentives Farmers offers and save!

### NEW EQUIPMENT /APPLIANCE INCENTIVES –RESIDENTIAL (PARTIAL)

#### Air-Source Heat Pump, including mini-splits

- Cold Climate Heat Pump: \$400/ton
- Standard Air-Source Heat Pump: \$200/ton
- Hybrid Air-Source Heat Pump Bonus: \$200/ton
- ENERGY STAR Bonus: \$250/unit
- ENERGY STAR Central Air Conditioning: \$100/unit

#### Indoor Air Quality

- Energy/Heat Recovery Ventilator: \$250/unit
- ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer: \$40/unit
- ENERGY STAR Electric Clothes Dryer: \$20/unit

#### Outdoor Lighting

All LED lighting fixtures must be ENERGY STAR or DesignLights Consortium™ qualified.

Outdoor lighting must be dusk-to-dawn with no manual switches or motion sensors (no outdoor floods). Lighting fixture rebates cannot exceed 50% of costs. Household limit of \$600 annually.

- 20-34W: \$10/fixture
- 35-49W: \$20/fixture
- 50-74W: \$40/fixture
- 75-124W: \$50/fixture
- ≥ 125W: \$60/fixture

**Electric Vehicle Level II Charger:** The cooperative will rebate 50% of the installed cost, up to \$500, for Level II chargers requiring a 240/280 volt input supply. The primary charging location of the vehicle must be at the home address of the member served by Farmers.

### APPLIANCE RECYCLING:PULL THE PLUG

Call our toll-free Pull the Plug hotline at (855) 838-7817 to request collection and recycling of your old, working refrigerator, freezer or window air conditioner, up to three operable units per address. Pick up and recycling is done by the cooperative's contractor.

- Refrigerator: \$35/unit
- Freezer: \$25/unit
- Window Air Conditioner: \$25/unit

For a full list of 2021 residential, agricultural and commercial rebates, please visit [www.farmersrec.com](http://www.farmersrec.com) or call (641) 743-6146 with any questions.



# Is Your Contact Information Up to Date?

**A**s times change, so do the ways people can contact us. Farmers Electric strives to provide our member-consumers with the best possible service, so it is sometimes necessary to update our records. Some reasons we may contact you include:

**Planned outages:** We like to notify members in the affected areas of any planned outages so they can properly prepare.

**Service restoration:** We may need to contact you for more information regarding an outage or service issue. Having correct contact information on file speeds up the power restoration process.

**Billing matters:** You will receive reminders if your bill is overdue or subject to disconnection. We may send reminders by mail, e-mail or call you on the phone.

**Patronage checks:** We want to make sure our member-consumers are given what they are owed when it's time to distribute patronage checks.

**Other notices:** The cooperative may contact you regarding important information about our services and programs.

Ways you can update your information:

- Log in to SmartHub and click "My Profile."
- Complete the form at right and mail or drop off to Farmers Electric Cooperative, 2389 Highway 92, Greenfield, IA 50849.
- Give us a call at (800) 397-4821 or send us an email to: farmers@farmersrec.com.

## Update My Info

First & Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

What information are you updating?

New mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

New phone number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home     Work     Cell

New e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

## WINTER ENERGY-SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

This winter, you can pitch in at home to help save energy!

Read the energy-saving tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.

M	U	S	F	A	K	S	E	R	U	A	Z	T	H	H
B	E	T	M	I	V	L	R	J	C	K	M	T	J	L
B	M	H	F	R	R	H	Q	E	Q	M	S	K	V	W
T	D	G	G	F	W	E	D	G	G	U	N	M	J	L
K	V	I	K	I	B	L	P	X	N	R	V	L	T	Z
V	Y	L	X	L	W	K	S	L	H	Y	A	S	L	P
S	P	N	P	T	K	Q	I	F	A	E	Z	H	H	K
N	J	C	I	E	T	G	V	O	S	C	P	S	C	W
Z	K	M	C	R	H	A	N	U	O	V	E	R	Y	O
G	N	I	H	T	O	L	C	R	U	S	D	M	A	F
G	I	Z	C	I	F	J	B	P	I	N	L	G	F	P
H	M	J	W	O	V	D	B	L	Y	V	I	E	J	V
B	C	Q	K	I	N	W	L	I	N	E	N	B	N	T
H	N	E	W	X	V	R	I	D	V	C	B	B	T	G
C	U	J	M	Q	S	C	Y	M	P	Q	D	Q	K	T

### WORD BANK:

- Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow **sunlight** in to warm your home.
- Instead of turning up the thermostat, add more layers of **clothing** to keep your body warm.
- If you have a **fireplace**, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.
- Unplug **chargers** when they're not in use. They consume energy even when they're not charging phones and other devices.
- Ask an adult to check the **air filter** for your home's heating and cooling system. Filters should be replaced regularly to help the system run more efficiently.
- Always turn off **lights** when you leave a room.

## Youth Tour 2021 Cancelled

**D**ue to the ongoing uncertainties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, Iowa's electric cooperatives have made the decision to not participate in the 2021 National Electric Cooperative Youth Tour scheduled for June. The current plan is to return to offering the June trip to Washington, D.C., for deserving high school students in 2022.

## Winter Safety

As winter rolls on in Iowa, many of us find that February is the month to hunker down, wait out the cold, and dream of warmer temperatures coming right around the corner.

Until then, however, keeping your family safe during these cold and snowy months is a must. Here are a few safety reminders to help combat the worst of winter's fury.

### Keep a hard copy of emergency contacts and important numbers.

To avoid being completely isolated and vulnerable in the event you experience a power outage at home, keep an up-to-date physical document of emergency contacts and other important numbers that you can locate, even in the dark.

### Don't wear cotton if you're planning to spend time outdoors.

The main reason for this is cotton absorbs moisture which can work against your natural body heat. Opt instead for fabrics like wool, silk or polypropylene for inner layers.

**Know your weather-related vocabulary.** Having a grasp on what certain winter weather terms mean can help you prepare accordingly.

**Avoid alcohol.** Despite that warm feeling we think we get from our favorite adult beverages, the intoxicant actually lowers your body's core temperature.

**Unplug your space heater when not in use.** While space heaters can help us feel cozy at home, they can also be a fire hazard. The best way to avoid risk is to unplug the space heater when not in the room. Not only will you save money from not heating up an empty room, but you'll also mitigate the risk of it overheating or malfunctioning potentially causing a fire.

# Committed to a Co-op Culture for All

Over the years, you've heard me expound on why and how Farmers Electric is different. Our cooperative business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater good of the community.

Electric cooperatives like ours have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

When our electric co-op was founded, each member contributed an equal share in order to gain access to electricity that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of this co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We know members of our community have different needs

and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues under consideration by the co-op. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to reflect the needs of all corners of our community.



**CHARLIE DUNN**  
CEO

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today's world is radically different than it was when Farmers Electric was founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain just as relevant today. We recognize that today's co-op members expect more, and my pledge to you—the members we proudly serve—is to promote a cooperative culture of inclusion, diversity and equity for all.



Space heating and cooling account for a large portion of the average home's energy use. A programmable or smart thermostat can help you control the temperature of your home and save energy.

# Life is better WITH CHOCOLATE



If there's one thing American consumers are sweet on, it's chocolate!

In terms of dollar sales, Valentine's Day is the third biggest holiday/season for the \$22 billion U.S. chocolate industry, according to *U.S. Food Market Outlook 2018*. Market research firm Packaged Facts estimates Valentine's Day, with its heart-shaped boxes, trails Easter and Christmas in terms of market share, but scares up a victory over Halloween, which came in fourth.

Just how much chocolate do Americans buy every year for Valentine's Day? Turns out, 58 million pounds of chocolate are purchased in the seven days leading up to Feb. 14. And its not just for couples - 43% of Americans will buy themselves candy for Valentine's Day, according to *Candystore.com*.

Each month, the cooperative places a call for recipes in various categories. Winners receive a \$5 credit on their account, with their recipes appearing in the next month's issue. Plan now to participate by mailing your entry with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mailing it to: [HWeston@farmersrec.com](mailto:HWeston@farmersrec.com).

**MARCH:** Brunch recipes

Want a chance to get \$5 off your next electric bill? Enter a recipe in our recipe contest each month!



## Layered Fridge Brownies

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 box brownie mix
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1/2 c. powdered sugar
- 2 - 8 oz. container whipped topping (such as Cool Whip®)
- 2 - 5.9 oz. packages instant chocolate pudding
- 3 c. milk



Photo: Just a Pinch Recipes

Make brownies according to box directions for a 9x13 pan and let cool. With electric mixer, beat cream cheese and powdered sugar. Fold in all of whipped topping and spread over brownies. Combine pudding and milk and prepare according to package directions. Spread evenly over layer 2 and chill in fridge. Top with second container of whipped topping. You can also add fun stuff to the top such as chocolate sauce or chocolate curls or change up the flavor of the pudding.

*Amy Jo Thompson, Bridgewater*



## Chocolate Haystacks

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 c. margarine (1 stick)
- 2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 6 T. cocoa
- 2 c. oatmeal
- 1 c. coconut



Photo: Steemitimages.com

Combine butter, sugar, milk and cocoa in medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir constantly until mixture comes to a full boil; remove from heat. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients and mix well. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper. Chill until firm.

*Jan Krantz, Alton*



**Farmers Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Open Lines is a monthly publication of Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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The mission of Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc., is to deliver safe, reliable, affordable electricity and other services to improve the quality of life within our communities. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.