

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

December 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Thankful for you

For me, this is a time of year for reflection, and topping my list of things I'm grateful for is our wonderful community. I know I speak for all Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative (FREC) employees when I say that we are thankful to be in such an incredible place. We are fortunate to live in the same place where we work, which makes our ties to this community that much stronger.

Studies have shown that communities where owners occupy the majority of homes are more successful academically, are more physically fit, and have a stronger sense of community. While owning a home may not be possible or desirable for everyone, ownership does matter. It seems to make sense that we treat things we own with greater care.

Chances are you probably don't think too often about your ownership role with your electric cooperative. Every employee of FREC takes pride in the fact that you are an owner of our electric co-op. While at times it may seem easy to take the provision of electricity for granted, we are working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make sure you are well taken care of when it comes to your elec-

A WORD FROM



Garrett Thompson
Chief Executive Officer

tricity needs.

Our community is strong. But think about how much greater it can be when we work cooperatively to tackle our challenges. If we act like owners on a consistent basis, we will put even more care and attention into our community, and we will look locally for solutions. Finding local solutions can help keep money – and people – right here in our community.

We all have a role to play. As your local electric cooperative, we promise to do our part for the community. If you have thoughts about how we can do a better job, please contact us through our website or message us from our Facebook page. You are the owners of this co-op, and we welcome your active participation.

BOARD ROOM highlights

At their October meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization totaling \$55,034.34
- Selected CEO Garrett Thompson as Basin voting delegate
- Approved change in November board meeting date
- Set the annual meeting date as April 4, 2023
- Approved Basin load forecast
- Approved changes to RECare program

May your holiday season be filled with joy!

From everyone at Franklin REC, thank you for your continued loyalty and trust in us.

*This holiday season, Franklin REC will be closed:
Monday, Dec. 26
Monday, Jan. 2*

*For emergencies and outages, our phones are always answered:
641-456-2557.*



Like us on Facebook!

Like "Franklin REC" on Facebook and be among the first to see Franklin REC news, such as updates on major

outages, energy saving tips, information on rebates, employee updates, and much more.



Stay safe during severe winter weather



When severe winter weather hits, power outages can occur, and roadways can be dangerous. Now is the time to prepare for the next severe winter storm.

Prepare your home: Weatherproof your home by sealing air leaks. Inspect chimney flues for wood stoves or wood-burning fireplaces. Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each floor of your home. Protect pipes from freezing. Have enough nonperishable food, water, and medical supplies/medicines for 72 hours. Also have these items ready: a first-aid kit, a flashlight and batteries, a phone charger, hand sanitizer, blankets, and warm clothing.

Prepare your vehicle: Complete annual maintenance, test the car battery and cooling system, use winter tires and replace them if the tread is less than 2/32 of an inch, check tire pressure and wiper blades, add wiper fluid rated for less than minus 30 degrees, and keep the gas tank at least half full.

In addition, consider an emergency kit for your vehicle. According to *Consumer Reports*, it can be less expensive to buy a prepared emergency kit than to purchase items individually. A kit typically includes battery booster cables, an ice scraper, a portable shovel, flashlights, a signaling cone, backup batteries for the flashlight, roadside triangles, a reflective vest, a basic first-aid kit, and a cell phone charger.

Stock your vehicle with gloves, a blanket, a rain poncho, wipes, rags, boots, and a hat. It cannot hurt to also have bottled water and nonperishable snacks in your vehicle in case you become stranded.

Rest assured that Franklin REC crews restore power outages safely and efficiently. For information about electrical safety or storm preparation, visit SafeElectricity.org.

A Storm is Always Ready

ARE YOU?



When Mother Nature threatens a severe storm, be ready by having an emergency kit on hand.

YOUR KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:



Bottles of water
Nonperishable food
Portable phone charger

Flashlights
Batteries
Can opener



First-aid supplies
Hand sanitizer
Prescriptions

Pain reliever
Warm clothing
Blankets



Battery-operated radio
Toys, books and games
Important documents

Money
Baby supplies
Pet supplies

Once your kit is assembled, check it a few times a year to make sure batteries are fresh and that no one has borrowed a necessary item.

Learn more at: SafeElectricity.org



Photo Credit: Rare Form Properties

Insulation and weatherization rebates available

A well-insulated home is one of the most cost-effective means of saving energy and decreasing heating and cooling bills—possibly up to 30 percent, according to Department of Energy estimations.

Visit our website at franklinrec.coop or contact us at 641-456-2557 for rebate details!

Contact us

If a loved one has passed away, and their name is listed on an account with Franklin REC, we would encourage you to contact us to change the name on the account to that of a surviving spouse or child.

Benefits include:

- Becoming a member and owner of Franklin REC
- Accruing patronage
- Receiving, and the ability to cash, patronage checks
- Voting in director elections
- The opportunity to run for the board of directors

Contact us at 641-456-2557 if you need to change the name on a Franklin REC account. You will need the death certificate, the executor appointment, and other items.



Check out the scholarships we have available!
franklinrec.coop

Fight the winter chill and save energy

By Abby Berry, NRECA

While some people love crisp, cool weather, others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Franklin REC is here to help you find ways to manage your energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. **Mind the thermostat.** We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees.
2. **Button up your home.** Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy.
3. **Use window coverings wisely.** Open window coverings during the day to allow in natural sunlight to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out.
4. **Consider your approach to appliance use.** Assess how efficiently you're using your appliances. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads.
5. **Think outside the box.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, add layers of clothing, wear thick socks, and bundle up under blankets. If you have hard-surface flooring, consider an area rug. If you continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call



at 641-456-2557 or take advantage of our free home energy assessments. Franklin REC's energy expert can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at franklinrec.coop for additional energy-saving tips.



When running space heaters, keep in mind that on average, running two 1,500-watt space heaters for eight hours can add almost \$100 to your monthly power bill.

Safety Tip

Heating equipment accounts for 13% of home fires. Place a space heater on a hard surface and make sure clothing, papers and other combustible items are at least 3 feet away from the heater.



Safe
Electricity.org®



Need a recipe?

Looking for a new recipe for the holidays? Visit the *Iowa Electric Cooperating Living* website at ieclmagazine.com and click on Recipes and Recipe Archives. You can search by main ingredient, category, or keyword.

Have a recipe everyone loves? *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* is always looking for recipes for the magazine. If yours is chosen, you will earn a \$25 power bill credit! Take a look at Page 9 in any issue of the magazine to learn how to submit your recipe either by email or by mailing to the magazine's headquarters.



Waltersdorf joins Franklin REC

Franklin REC would like to welcome the newest member of the line crew, Apprentice Lineman Ben Waltersdorf (*pictured above*). Ben is joining the cooperative from Grundy County REC, where he earned his experience as a 1,000-hour apprentice.

Originally from Grundy Center, Iowa, Ben is close to his hometown roots as he makes Franklin REC his new home. Ben enjoys working in the outdoors and the manual labor aspect of the power linemen career. In his free time, Ben prefers to tinker on different items and disassembling and reassembling components. Welcome, Ben!



Franklin REC employees continue to be servant leaders. In October, a number of Franklin REC employees cleaned up the ditches along Highway 3 as part of their commitment to community.



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Online bill pay at www.franklinrec.coop

smart choices

Sign up for our e-newsletter at www.franklinrec.coop



Franklin REC needs your help!

Franklin REC is now accepting submissions for our 2023 summer painting project.

We are in search of a public building, non-profit location, or park in our service territory that needs a fresh coat of paint.

Submit ideas to Franklin REC via phone 641-456-2557, email contact-frec@franklinrec.coop, or our Facebook page.

Deadline is Jan. 31, 2023.



Energy savings: The gift that keeps giving

If you give yourself the gift of energy savings, you can count on it to last all year!



- Purchase EnergyStar appliances. Not only will you save all year, Franklin REC has rebates to help you save now.
- Use SmartHub. Monitor your monthly usage down to the hour. Even unbilled usage shows so that you don't have to wait for your bill to see how much power you are using. Go to franklinrec.smarthub.coop to register, or download the app from the App Store or Google Play for your mobile device.
- Watch our Facebook page, website, newsletter, and magazine for seasonal energy-efficiency tips.

Compete for all-expense paid trip!

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS: The Youth Tour is returning in 2022! Franklin REC will select one student from its service area to participate in the 2022 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. the week of June 18-24.



Eligible students must be a high school sophomore or junior living in the Hampton-Dumont-CAL, West Fork, or AGWSR school districts. If the student attends another school, his/her parent or guardian must be active members of Franklin REC.

Attendees will visit national landmarks, meet with members of our Congressional delegation, learn about the cooperative difference, and develop new friendships.

Visit our website at www.franklinrec.coop for more information on the all-expense paid 2022 Youth Tour. It's a once-in-a-lifetime trip!