

Franklin REC COVID-19 update

Since the pandemic began, our goal at Franklin REC has been to safely return to normal interaction with our members while following CDC and Department of Public Health guidelines. Below is our plan to accomplish this goal. We do want to reiterate the following are subject to change should there be an outbreak or if guidelines are amended.

CREW:

- Summer working hours (6:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) began May 26.
- Until June 8, the crew drove separate trucks.
- Trucks are sanitized daily.

MEMBER SERVICES:

- June 1, energy assessments and load management installations resumed on members' premises.
- Employees and homeowners must wear masks when a Franklin REC employee enters a member's home. We have enough masks to share with members. Please let us know before or upon arrival if you need a mask.

OFFICE:

- The front door will remain locked until July 1.
- June 1, we began allowing members entry into the lobby if they wear a mask, which are stocked inside the first lobby door for those who do not have their own.
- Employees are required to wear a mask while assisting members at the front counter. Once members leave, the counters and door handles are sanitized.
- Offices and shared spaces are sanitized daily.



Bradburn's tenure ends

Almost four and a half years after joining Franklin REC as general manager, Becky Bradburn has left Iowa for the warmer temperatures of Texas.

Bradburn, who took the helm in January of 2016, is the new chief financial officer at Bandera Electric Cooperative in Bandera, Texas. Her last day at Franklin REC was May 22.

Before she left, Becky commented, "I would like to thank the members, directors, and employees for their support during my time at Franklin REC. It has truly been a blessing to be a part of the Franklin REC family!"

The Franklin REC board of directors will be conducting a search for a new general manager. The cooperative's attorney, Denny Puckett, will be helping the board with their search. In the interim, former general manager Fran Buckel will be stepping in part-time to assist the cooperative.

We wish Becky the best in her new adventure!

Economic development director named

Katie LaBree, Franklin REC's new economic development director, loves being a part of the impact of economic development. "It's pretty amazing to walk with a business owner from idea to ribbon cutting. I can't imagine a better job!" she commented.

LaBree, who has a degree from the University of Jamestown in Jamestown, North Dakota, is from Elk River, Minnesota; is the part-time director of the Franklin County Development Association; and is the owner of Nash Creative Co., a graphic design and marketing business. She lives in Aplington with her husband, two children, and two dogs.

Of her new position, LaBree said, "I am most looking forward to working with the REC staff and working for the members! I am excited to be a part of the team and help grow the community!"



Stuck at home? Conserve electricity

With the kids studying at home and parents teleworking over the past couple of months, you may have seen an increase in your energy bills.

Like any period of higher-than-usual indoor activity it's normal for electricity use to spike.

And if students have stay-at-home summer school, your family might continue to increase its use of computers, lights, TVs, game consoles, and other electrical devices that can run up electricity use.

The antidote: Follow smart, common-sense conservation practices to keep energy use in check:

As the weather warms up, delay turning on the air conditioning as long as your home is comfortable with open windows and running ceiling fans.

When you do switch on the a/c, keep it at the highest comfortable temperature. For every degree higher you set the thermostat, you can cut your energy use by up to 4 percent.

Insist that everyone turn off the overhead lights when leaving a

room, power down the TV when nobody's watching, disconnect the computer and printer at the end of the day, and switch off exhaust fans once the steam clears from the bathroom after a shower.

Unplug cell phone chargers when not in use. Whenever you leave an unused device plugged into the wall, it continues to draw electricity.

Hold off on running the clothes dryer and dishwasher until after dark. When many people are home during the day, electricity is often used at the same time. It places less of a burden on the overall electrical system when we spread out our energy use.

Clean the a/c filter every month. With more-than-usual activity in the house, filters can clog sooner. A clean filter lets air flow easily, placing less of a burden on the air conditioning system as it keeps everyone comfortable indoors.

Contact us for more energy-saving ideas.

Summer Energy-Saving Tips

Costs associated with cooling your home can make up a large portion of your summer electric bills. Stay cool and save money with these energy efficiency tips!



NO-COST TIPS

Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.



Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you're away.



Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave a room.



LOW-COST TIPS

Plant trees and shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.



Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.



Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space. Solar lights are easy to install, low maintenance and provide free electricity.

IS OWNING A HOME YOUR DREAM?

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homewardiowa.com

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ESKANTONEN

PHILIP ROTH LUMISEN TAHRRA

Save with rebates!

Your electric cooperative offers members a variety of incentives for new electric heating and cooling systems, including air source and geothermal heat pumps. Rebates are also available for insulating and weatherizing your home.



Contact us for details and rebate forms

Let's talk about phone scams

While the rapidly changing energy market has created more options for consumers, it has also resulted in more utility scams.



Source: 123rf.com

These scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist, and consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their utility service.

Avoid phone scams

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. This person will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a very short, urgent time frame to pay the "past due" amount.

You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. Never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly.

Use trusted sources

In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor – your local electric cooperative. We are a community-focused organization that works to efficiently deliver reliable and safe energy to our members.

Remember, we're just one call or click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills – we're here to help.

Don't Let Tragedy Strike

30


Around 30 people are **killed** each year from lightning strikes.



$\frac{2}{3}$

of lightning fatalities are associated with outdoor **recreational activities**.



SEEK SHELTER

In a four-sided building or an enclosed hardtop vehicle at the first sight of lightning.

Never swim when lightning is in the area.



WAIT 30 minutes

...after the **last rumble** of thunder before heading back outside.

TOP 3 
sports-related lightning fatalities

1) Soccer 2) Golf 3) Running

 Safe Electricity.org

Source National Weather Service, NOAA

Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke

Heat is a major weather-related killer in the United States, killing hundreds of people each year.

- If you or someone else experiences heavy sweating and weakness, immediately seek a cool environment, drink water, and apply a cool compress.
- If these symptoms progress to high temperature, vomiting, and unconsciousness, seek emergency medical attention.

Try to prevent heat-related illnesses by seeking out cool environments, drinking lots of water, and wearing light clothes. Source: EnergyEdCouncil.org



What's hot or cold and makes a big energy-bill impact?

It's your HVAC, or heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system. According to the Department of Energy, a typical home uses a whopping 48 percent of the energy pie just to heat and cool.

There are some things you can do to increase HVAC efficiency, which can help reduce your energy bills:

Overall HVAC

1. Schedule a pre-season checkup by a professional HVAC technician.
2. Change all filters regularly.
3. Purchase a programmable or smart thermostat.

Air conditioning

1. Keep heat-producing appliances away from your thermostat.
2. Close curtains and blinds during

the hottest part of the day.

3. Make sure your outdoor condenser unit is clean and free from debris.
4. Use your clothes dryer and oven during the cooler parts of the day.

Furnace

1. Instead of turning up the thermostat, use blankets and wear sweat-shirts or sweaters.
2. Don't let warm air escape. Keep your windows and doors shut, and if you have a fireplace, make sure the flue is closed and glass doors are shut when not in use.
3. Reverse the direction of your ceiling fans to clockwise to force the warm air that rises downward.
4. Make sure your vents and radiators aren't blocked by rugs or furniture.



5. If there are rooms you're not using, shut the vent and close the door.
6. Keep curtains and blinds closed at night to help insulate your house; open curtains and shades on south-facing windows during the day to let in the sunlight.



Toll-free number to be discontinued

Effective July 1, Franklin REC will no longer have a toll-free phone number. **Members will still be able to reach us 24 hours a day at 641-456-2557.**

If you have our toll-free number programmed into your phone, be sure to make the change.

SPARKS of news

Board room highlights

At their most recent meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Accepted a grant from the USDA to assist with the construction of the new Hampton Dental office.
- Approved allocating \$266,427.10 of 2019 margins to members, \$79,127.22 to the Reserve for Contingency, \$1,000 to the Educational Fund, and \$57,786.49 to the Statutory Surplus.
- Approved refunding the membership patronage of \$313,900 from 2001, 2002, and 2019.
- Adopted policies related to the CARES Act for COVID-19.
- Approved borrowing \$220,000 from the SBA's Payroll Protection Program.

Marathon water heaters

In the market for an electric high-efficiency water heater? We have just what you need, and rebates are available.

To qualify, the water heater must be installed in a co-op member's home or business where we provide electrical power. We also require a load management agreement to be signed.

Call us for information on our 50-gallon, 85-gallon, or 105-gallon Marathon water heaters!



INtouch® is published monthly for members of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative
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OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
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