

A WORD FROM



Garrett Thompson
General Manager

What happened during the February rolling outages?

decision to "shed" load was not made locally.

Numerous media outlets defined these outages as "scheduled"; this was not the case. Instead, these outages were "predicted" by numerous factors, such as usage history, current demand, weather conditions, and so on.

Our employees reacted and communicated to our members as quickly as they received updates from SPP. Ideally, we would have been able to reach out to every Franklin REC member prior to the disruption. Please know that we are working on an email distribution software system to communicate with everyone more easily.

In a situation such as this, we do post to our Facebook page regularly to keep our members informed. Continue to check Facebook and our website throughout such occurrences.

Did we send power to Texas?

As you can imagine, the details and innerworkings of the electrical grid become complicated rather quickly. To spare you from the engineering speak and calculations, the short answer is no. Rather, SPP initiated rolling blackouts to keep Franklin REC members from having an experience similar to that of the Texas residents.

SPP wanted to avoid a catastrophic failure over the entire 14 state grid. A failure of that magnitude has the potential to leave all Franklin REC members without power for days or weeks. I believe every one of us would prefer to be without power for an hour rather than multiple days in the bitter cold.

Did our area wind turbines freeze?

Franklin REC does not own or oper-

ate any wind turbines, but I can give a general answer to this question. No, they were not frozen because wind turbines installed in areas that regularly drop below freezing have a heater installed. Texas, Oklahoma, and so on, do not regularly drop below freezing, so no heaters are installed on those wind turbines.

What is Franklin REC doing to help alleviate this problem in the future?

We are currently working with Corn Belt Power, who is also working with SPP on this matter. We are still gathering information and in the preliminary stages of discussions, but rest assured, Franklin REC is representing you and speaking up for the members of this great cooperative.

We are continuing to refine our mass email distribution software. Please contact the office if your email has changed or if you would like to verify that an email address is on your account. We plan to use this feature for outages, tree trimming updates, alerting members to potential scams, annual meeting updates, and so on.

Franklin REC is also looking into economical ways to reach the membership via text and automated phone calls. Please watch for additional information in this arena.

Once again, we want to sincerely thank you for your patience and understanding during these trying times. We understand it was not an easy time for many of our members.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free reach out to me by calling the office or emailing me at gthompson@franklinrec.coop.

With the extreme cold temperatures throughout much of the country in the middle of February, South-west Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission organization, issued an energy emergency alert (EEA) through our generation and transmission supplier, Corn Belt Power Cooperative.

SPP covers 14 states, stretching from North Dakota to the panhandle of Texas. That territory is home to 17.5 million consumers, and the last thing SPP wants to do is cut power to those homes and businesses. So, what happened?

Below I have answered a few questions we received during and after the rolling blackouts.

Why wasn't advanced notice given?

We apologize for being unable to alert our members ahead of time and understand your frustration. The reason we are not able to alert our members ahead of time is, due to the nature of the situation, we were not notified in advance of a substation being taken offline. Substations were taken offline to shed load to avoid catastrophic equipment failure. As part of these rolling blackouts, Franklin REC would like to emphasize that the

Handle irrigation equipment with care

Many farmers rely on irrigation systems to water crops. Just like with moving all other farm equipment, moving irrigation pipes can be extremely dangerous around power lines—especially if the pipes are made of aluminum, a great conductor of electricity.

Remember these tips:

- Have a qualified electrician, who knows irrigation systems, install and maintain your irrigation's electricals, which must meet National Electrical Code.
- Inspect the pump and wiring before the start of each irrigation season and consult your electrician with any concerns.
- Shut off and lock the master control switch before servicing.
- Always consider your location and the length of the pipe you are holding. Make sure the pipe's reach will not come near or into contact with power lines.
- Do not store, handle, or assemble irrigation pipes under or near overhead power lines.
- If lightning strikes your irrigation equipment, it could mean that the system is no longer grounded.
- Talk to your family and workers about irrigation safety. Tell them to ALWAYS look up before moving any equipment and do not use an electrical system that is damaged or not properly grounded.

We care about your safety. Please contact us with any concerns about electrical issues, power lines, irrigation equipment, or any other electrical safety concerns.

Keep IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT

and **water streams** 15 feet away from overhead power lines.



SafeElectricity.org

research collected from National Agriculture Safety Database



Image by Rita E from Pixabay

Support local farmers

You and the farmers in your community each have something the other one needs during this pandemic. Families are cooking at home more often, so they need fresh produce and meat. And farmers—and anyone who is trying to stay in business while everyone is limiting trips to the store—need your support to keep their heads above water.

To stay safe while visiting a local farmer's market, keep a few common-sense precautions in mind:

1. Call and ask the organizers what measures they are taking to keep their customers and vendors safe. Ask about social distancing and masks.
2. Shop at an open-air market rather than at an enclosed one.
3. Avoid the rush. Schedule your visit during off-peak hours. If you arrive and find that the market is overly crowded, abandon the trip.
4. Shop alone so you don't contribute to overcrowding.
5. Don't touch anything that you don't intend to buy.
6. Do not taste any free samples.
7. Wear a mask and stay six feet away from people.
8. Look for pre-bagged items.
9. Sanitize your hands as soon as you're finished shopping.
10. Thoroughly wash your produce as soon as you get home.

What's Your Appliance Safety IQ?



Clothes Dryer

Children have been electrocuted when hiding behind dryers; some pets also like to nap there.

Install a childproof lock on the laundry room door, as well as on your washer and dryer—especially front-loading models.

Clean lint screen between loads, and thoroughly clean the vents and duct system at least twice a year.

Make sure hoses, seals and connections do not leak and are secure.



Refrigerator

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance.

Clean the coils every six months to a year.

Keep an eye out for dust or lint under or behind your fridge and remove it to let your refrigerator breathe.

If you have young children in your home, make sure your refrigerator is not a tipping hazard. Consider using an appliance anchor that secures your tall appliance to the wall.

SafeElectricity.org



Hot Water Heater

Make sure your hot water heater is well-maintained.

Make sure it does not have excessive pressure buildup by testing the relief valve (or have it tested) at least once a year.

Ensure vents are connected securely and that the correct parts are used to avoid carbon monoxide production.

Have all components of the appliance inspected regularly (at least once a year) by a technician.

What is beneficial electrification? By Anne Prince, NRECA

If you're like most Americans, you're interested in saving money on energy costs and in doing your part to help the environment.

Wouldn't it be great if you could do both? You can—through a concept called “beneficial electrification.” This utility industry term represents the innovations in energy technologies creating new ways to use electricity instead of on-site fossil fuels, such as propane, natural gas, and fuel oil, in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs.

Electricity is becoming cleaner

As your electric cooperative is able to tap into more renewable options in the future, your electric appliance has the potential to become greener and more energy efficient.

Large appliances have a typical lifespan of about 10 years. Therefore, you are able to benefit from the flex-

ibility of the grid in addition to the increased efficiency of the appliance. In other words, the high-efficiency electric oven you have today could be powered by renewable sources in the near future. This is not the case with gas appliances where you are essentially locked into the technology of that gas appliance for the 10-year lifespan.

For consumers looking for more environmentally friendly options, choosing electric appliances, tools, and cars over those powered by fossil fuels is an easy solution.

How we're doing our part

Your cooperative is striving to take advantage of the advances in technology and the opportunities of the market as they become available. This means we can leverage the flexibility of the grid to offer a wider range of renewable energy selections as we continue to bring safe



and reliable power to our community.

Reach out to us, your trusted energy partner, to discuss renewable energy options and to learn about more ways to reduce your energy use. When you participate in the energy-efficiency programs and incentives we offer, you're doing your part to save energy and better our environment.

Together, our usage reductions can lead to significant savings of money and emissions. And that means a brighter future for all of us.

Are you ready for a new electric water heater?

Contact us for information on the Marathon water heater, offering durability, lightweight design and a limited lifetime tank warranty for original purchaser.

Generous rebate available!



Three electrifying kitchen appliances to save time and energy By Abby Berry, NRECA

In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup than your oven or stove.

If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying options:

1. **Air fryers** use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food—this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. They are fairly small, so they won't take up much of your counter space, and with everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup will be a breeze. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200+.
2. **Electric griddles** are convenient because you can cook everything at once—like a “one-pan” meal, and the possibilities are endless. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30.
3. **Pizza makers** are compact, countertop machines using less energy than your traditional oven. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas, and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150+.



Photo Credit: Hamilton Beach

To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit our website.

Meet your candidates for Franklin REC's board of directors

The members listed below are running for the Franklin REC's board of directors. Voting will take place by mail-in ballot or at the drive-through annual meeting April 6, 2021. Annual meeting notices will be mailed mid-March.

District 1 - Electing 1 for a 3-year term

Matthew Roelfs, Ackley



A member of Franklin REC since 2001, Matt and his wife Megan live on the southern

edge of the county between Ackley and Iowa Falls. They will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in June, and are the parents of seven children, ages 8 to 20, with five still living at home.

Matthew attended Ackley-Geneva High School and earned his bachelor's degree from Central College, Pella.

He was employed in quality assurance at Vermeer Mfg. in Pella and in sales for Iowa Veterinary Supply in Iowa Falls.

Since 2014, he has owned Iowa Steel Masters in Ackley, where steel panels and trim for agricultural, residential, and commercial use are manufactured. He is also the vice-president of the Ackley Development Commission.

Brenton Schwab, Dows



Brenton has been a member of Franklin REC for over 16 years. He and his wife Rebecca live in Dows.

Brenton graduated from Iowa State University and has been a district sales manager in the seed industry for over 20 years. He has also farmed since 2001.

For 10 years, he was member of the Franklin General Hospital board of trustees.

District 2 - Electing 1 for a 3-year term

term

Don Greimann, Hampton



Don (incumbent) has been a member of Franklin REC since 1978 and has served as a director since 1996.

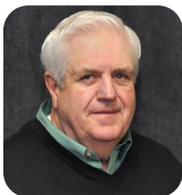
He holds Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Certificates and is Director Gold Certified through NRECA.

He and his wife, Alice, live on a farm southwest of Chapin where they raise corn and soybeans. They have two daughters and three grandchildren.

Don is a graduate of Sheffield-Chapin High School and began farming in 1973. In 1987, he started working at Greimann Brothers, Inc., in Chapin, where he is part-owner. He is a member of Zion St. John Lutheran Church in Sheffield.

District 3 - Electing 1 for a 3-year term and 1 for a 2-year term

Dale Schaefer, Rockwell



Dale (incumbent) has been a member of Franklin REC since 1971. He has been a director since 1985 and

served as board secretary-treasurer for 25 years. For the past 12 years, he has served on the Corn Belt Power Cooperative board and is currently vice president. Dale holds Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Certificates and is Director Gold Certified through NRECA.

Dale and his wife, Lana, live on a

farm southwest of Rockwell where they raise corn, soybeans, and cattle. They have two sons, one daughter, and seven grandchildren.

After graduation from Rockwell-Swaledale High School, Dale attended Muscatine Community College in Muscatine. He returned to the area and started farming in 1973. He is a member of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Rockwell and has served on church boards.

Darwin VanHorn, Latimer



Darwin (incumbent) has been an REC member since 2019. He and his wife of 28 years, Koreen,

live eight miles north of Latimer and seven miles west of Chapin and have three sons: Ben, 22; Jacob, 20; and Samuel, 15.

Darwin is a graduate of CAL Community High School, Latimer, and Iowa State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications. After graduation, Darwin worked in advertising and marketing. In 1999, he began a second career in ministry. For over 21 years he has served in roles as a youth director and youth pastor in northwest and north Iowa. Darwin helped launch Youth for Christ in Hampton in 2009 and served as the area director until last summer. In addition, he has farmed with his parents since 2013.

He has served as a chamber of commerce ambassador, on the Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity board, as a YMCA and local youth sports league volunteer/coach, on Kiwanis, as a local daycare board member, and on the Franklin County Ministerial Association.

ANNUAL MEETING - APRIL 6

Plan to attend Franklin REC's drive-through annual meeting Tuesday, April 6. Watch for more detailed information in the mail, in your email, on Facebook, and on our website.

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