

FEC® POWER *Source*

Vol. 19 No. 06

Working Together To Save!

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Farmers' Electric Cooperative (FEC) recently partnered with Energy Pioneer Solutions (EPS), based out of Hastings, Nebraska. EPS is an innovative energy company exploring for lost energy. Their goal is to help power America by finding this “lost” energy in people’s homes, and in doing so, help save millions of dollars, create new jobs, and strengthen both national and environmental security.

All homes, especially older homes are challenged with air infiltration. Heat is gained or lost through these



areas of infiltration. It is EPS’s goal to find these escape routes and close them for good. Using blower door tests, (a blower door is a machine used to measure the air-tightness of buildings. It can also be used to measure airflow between building zones, to test ductwork air-tightness and to help physically locate leakage sites in the building envelope) and other conventional methodology, EPS can find the “leaks” and seal them for our member/consumer.

The assessment is “free” to the FEC member. Once the member is made aware of what it will take, either through adding insulation, caulking, or other form of weatherization, a very attractive, unsecured financing package with terms of four years at

five percent interest is offered. Members can use EPS’s specialist to do the work or they have the choice of doing the work themselves or using a contractor of their choice to seal the leaks. The loan package through EPS would only apply if the member uses EPS to stop the loss. Loan payment installments can also be incorporated into the member’s electric bill.

Because of FEC’s very large service area, and large number of residential accounts, EPS won’t be able to get to everyone at once. FEC will be sending out letters to our members bi-weekly, so keep an eye out for your opportunity for an assessment. Once letters have gone out, EPS will follow up with a phone call. Unfortunately, mobile homes, even on permanent foundations, do not qualify.

To help defray the costs of home energy efficient improvements, FEC continues to offer a cash-back rebate to homeowners adding insulation to their attics. If a home is below an R-30 value and enough insulation is added to bring its attic to at least R-30 (adding a minimum of 4” of insulation), FEC will rebate \$500 to our member. This rebate is limited to one payment per meter.

For more information about EPS and their partnership with FEC, call the Cooperative today. To learn more about energy efficiency measures in your home, visit www.togetherwesave.com.



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Manager's Message...



Lance Adkins, GM

Renewable Energy Has Been A Good Deal!

I received a few comments and a question or two about the discussion on renewable energy from our March newsletter. For the most part, comments were about my statement that Farmers' Electric (FEC) had substantially more renewable energy in our resource mix in 2014 than in previous years and that the cost of the renewable energy was equal to or below the average cost of conventional energy sources like coal and natural gas. One question I have heard several times; if renewable energy cost the same or less than conventional resources, why not purchase more energy from

renewable resources?

First, let's take a look at the energy resource mix from last year. FEC currently has two primary wholesale power suppliers, Southwestern Public Service Company (SPS) and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC). FEC also has a small allocation of federal hydroelectric energy from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) that SPS takes delivery of on our behalf. While the WAPA allocation of hydropower is recognized as renewable energy at the federal level, this resource does not qualify as renewable for compliance purposes under New Mexico renewable energy standards. Approximately 3% of our energy purchases from last year were generated by WAPA federal hydropower.

Our power supply from SPS is generated from a "fleet" of genera-

tion resources that includes coal, natural gas, wind and energy purchased from wholesale energy markets which also includes coal, natural gas, and wind resources. The combined cost of the SPS resource is often referred as the "system-average" cost, with natural gas generation generally the most expensive component of this resource mix. SPS transfers to FEC the renewable energy credits (RECs) associated with the wind energy component so that FEC can accurately represent the energy purchased from SPS generated by renewable resources. Last year approximately 5% of total energy purchased was from wind energy in the SPS generation mix. Wind energy in the SPS mix is generated by wind farms located in both New Mexico and West Texas.

Most of the power supply we receive from WFEC is a "market" resource, like I mentioned earlier, and renewable energy is not separately identified by REC transfer to FEC. As I noted last month, the Brahms Wind farms are directly interconnected with FEC; however, the contract for that power purchase is between WFEC and Brahms, for the sole benefit of FEC. Therefore, the Brahms wind energy does come with RECs to validate the renewable resource for compliance purposes. Energy from Brahms, delivered directly into the FEC electric system, was purchased at a cost below the SPS system-average "avoidable" cost. In addition, FEC saves the value of transmission line loss across the greater wholesale transmission grid since the energy is delivered directly into the FEC system.

"It is great to be able to report that 25% of our energy resource from last year was generated by renewable energy resources, it is even better to report this energy did not cost the members of FEC more than conventional resources."

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is published monthly by Farmers' Electric Cooperative, Inc. Questions or article ideas should be directed to :

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In summary, roughly 38% of our energy last year was generated by coal; roughly 37% was generated by natural gas; 22% was generated by wind, with associated RECs to validate the renewable resource; and 3% was hydroelectric. It is great to be able to report that 25% of our energy resource from last year was generated by renewable energy resources, it is even better to report this energy did not cost the members of FEC more than conventional resources. That represents a great value to the membership!

I'm out of space and we didn't get to the question of "why not purchase more renewable energy?" I suppose that will give me something to talk about in the months ahead.

Until next month,



Powerful Connection



Your telephone is a powerful tool. Especially when it comes to Farmers' Electric. Because we place a very high value on your opinion, we want to hear what you think about our service. We also want to know how we are doing as your neighbor and as part of your community. So, pick up your phone once in a while and give us a call. You may have a great idea on how to improve our service, or you may just want to let us know we're doing a pretty good job. Most people think you get power from us, but the truth is, we really get our power from you.

Ask Willie!

Q. Willie, I hear so many things about electricity that I'm just not sure what to believe. Can you clear up some of the common myths?

A. When it comes to electricity, you have to know the facts. They might save your life one day. Here are some common electrical myths proved false:



Myth: Once an electrical line is down, it is dead.

Fact: The electric current does not always turn off when a power line is down. Even if lines do not show signs of life (arcing, smoking, buzzing, popping), they can still hold a dangerous electrical current. Always treat a downed wire as if it's energized because there is no way for you to know by looking whether it is hot or not. Just stay away, and keep other away.

Myth: All power lines are insulated.

Fact: Most power lines actually are not insulated. The coating on the lines is mainly for weatherproofing and will not offer any protection from the electrical current. Even if a power line is insulated, its insulation can crack due to weather, reducing its safety. No matter the case, it is never safe to touch a power line.

Myth: There is no need to worry about power lines when digging a hole.

Fact: Always call 811 before you dig to have a professional come to your home and locate buried public utility lines, free of charge. No matter the size of a digging project, if you come into contact with a buried power line, you could be electrocuted or seriously injured.

Myth: It is safe to work around a power line at home as long as direct contact is not made.

Fact: Electricity can jump, or "arc," from a line to the nearest conductor—which could be you. Always keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet from power lines. This goes for ladders, pool skimmers, pruning poles and any other equipment. Always be aware of where power lines are so you do not risk electric shock. If you are planning to trim trees or attempt any do-it-yourself project near power lines, always call professionals for the job instead.

Myth: It is safe to remove the third prong from a plug.

Fact: The third prong is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of shock or electrocution. That prong grounds the electrical current. If the outlet is only fit for a two-pronged plug, replace the outlet with a three-pronged one—or, even better, a ground-fault circuit interrupter outlet, which prevents electric shocks.

Myth: Tires insulate my car from electrical dangers.

Fact: If a wire falls on your car while you are in it, the tires do not keep you from being injured by the electricity. The vehicle is the path to ground for the electrical current, so while you remain in the car, you are safe. As soon as you step out of the car, you become the path to ground and are in immediate danger. If you find yourself in a situation where your car has hit a utility pole or power lines have fallen onto or near it, stay in the car and warn others to stay away. Wait for a utility crew to cut the power to the lines. Only exit the car if it is on fire. Make sure to not touch the ground and the car at the same time. Jump from the car, keeping your feet together, and hop away from the scene.

Send your questions to: **Ask Willie, PO Box 550, Clovis, NM 88102**

Safety Under the Sun

Sunshiny Days are an invitation to head outdoors—sometimes for fun, sometimes for chores. Either way, Farmers' Electric Cooperative offers these tips to keep you safe. Products like tillers, lawnmowers, mulchers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers and chainsaws can cut, burn and even blind when directions are not followed. Study each product's manual for safe operation rules and always follow them.

Outdoor electrical appliances and power tools should always be:

- Plugged in and turned on only when in use.
- Stored indoors (with a few exceptions such as electric barbecue grills, which can be covered to remain outdoors) and away from water and excessive heat.
- Used only when all safety guards are in place.



Outdoor electrical appliances and power tools should never be:

- Left unattended, even temporarily. If there is a key, remove it. Put the product where no curious child or unqualified adult can misuse it.
- Carried by their cords.
- Used while wet or close to water.
- Used near sharp edges or in conditions what can damage the product, its cord or its plug.
- Repaired by anyone who is not authorized by the manufacturer or trained to repair the particular product.

Cool Down Refrigerator Costs

As Warm Temperatures settle in for the summer, refrigerators are set to get a workout keeping food and drinks cool for hot and thirsty friends and family members. Follow these tips to reduce the amount of energy your refrigerator uses.

Minimize the number of times you open your refrigerator. Plan accordingly so you don't have to leave the door open for prolonged periods of time. An open door allows warm, moist air to enter, which makes the compressor work harder and longer.

Set the appropriate temperature. Keep your refrigerator set at 35 to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Place your refrigerator in a cool place. Position the refrigerator away from heat sources such as an oven, a dishwasher or direct sunlight from a window.

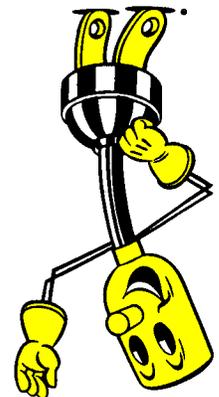


Allow air circulation behind the refrigerator. Leave a few inches between the wall and the refrigerator, and keep the condenser coils clean if you have an older model. Read the user's manual to learn how to safely clean condenser coils.

Check the door seals. Make sure the refrigerator seals around the door are airtight. If not, replace them.

If you buy a new refrigerator, be sure to recycle your old one. Many appliance retailers will pick up and recycle your old refrigerator when you purchase a new one. Putting it in the garage or shop will just add to your bill.

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