



FMEC 1946 CHEVY TRUCK CONVERTED TO ELECTRIC!

What do a 1946 Chevy truck and an electric vehicle have in common? Nothing. Or so we thought. In partnership with Riverland Community College (RCC), Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) set out to imagine the impossible and embrace innovation by transforming the oldest truck in our fleet into an electric-powered vehicle.

Collecting dust in the back corner of our warehouse sat a vintage 1946 Chevy truck that was undrivable. The retired truck was a part of the Rural Electric Association's fleet dating back to the early 1940s. The "what to do with it" question lingered as it felt like the truck represented a small piece of FMEC history that was too special to scrap or offer to a collector. Now, with the help of an automotive professor (who is passionate about electric vehicles) and six students, the truck is fully powered by electricity and has the ability to drive a modest 50 miles on a full charge. It will be a great addition to FMEC's parade vehicle line-up.

One might think that swapping out an old 80-horse gas engine for an electric-powered one was an easy feat, but not so much. #1347702 The modifications necessary to adapt the truck to new modern engine components posed opportunities for the students to solve problems, think critically, and work as a team.

The students worked together on the vehicle for over nine months as Professor Olle Gladso gave the students guidance and direction. "Essentially, we had to start from scratch by removing the old engine," he said. Professor Olle Gladso described it as the "most rewarding, challenging, and at times infuriating" process he has experienced in his teaching career.

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ceo message
Jim Krueger, President & CEO



RATES TO INCREASE

Effective September 2024, electric rates for all Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) members will increase. While this news is difficult to receive, it's equally difficult for us to deliver.

As we all have experienced in area businesses, inflation has also hit our cooperative. Everything costs more. Many expenses are out of our local control. This includes the wholesale cost of electricity, the costs associated with fuel sources, and operating the transmission infrastructure. These expenses are out of our local control. Much of the situation harkens back to state and federal energy policy.

Locally, we do our best to hold down costs while also meeting your expectations. #2091603 The expenses over which FMEC has direct control are under constant scrutiny. However, the cost of poles, wire, transformers, and equipment used in construction and maintenance projects have increased dramatically.

We review all of FMEC's expenses and identify the appropriate way to recoup them. We do this periodically to retain the cooperative's fiscal strength and equitably treat our members. FMEC's commitment to fiscal responsibility, along with its core values of Quality and Service, are each part of this equation.

There are three ways to recover expenses. Please note that the Service Charge and Energy Charge are the only components of the FMEC rate structure that are under our local control.

- **SERVICE CHARGE**
This is used to recover the costs associated with having an energized electric service entrance at your property. This is independent of how much, if any, electricity is consumed at the premises.
- **ENERGY CHARGE**
This recovers the expense of the electricity you consume each billing period and is priced on a per kWh basis.
- **POWER COST ADJUSTMENT (PCA)**
This is a direct pass-through from our wholesale power and transmission supplier as circumstances fluctuate. The PCA has been used to respond to wholesale power changes promptly without necessitating frequent revisions to our retail rate structure. The PCA can appear as a credit or charge, depending on circumstances.

As we move forward with this necessary rate increase, I assure you that our commitment to providing reliable and sustainable energy remains unwavering. We understand that any increase in costs can be challenging, and we do not take this decision lightly. However, these changes are essential to maintaining and improving our infrastructure, integrating new technologies, and ensuring the long-term viability of our cooperative.

We value your trust and support. Thank you for allowing us to serve your energy needs.

member news

OFFICE CLOSED

We will be closed on Independence Day, Thursday, July 4. We wish you a safe and fun holiday!

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION
WILL BE INCLUDED ON JULY
BILLING STATEMENT

The 2024 margins allocation has been completed. If you had service with Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) in 2023, and are a current member, look for your Capital Credit allocation notice on your July billing statement. Inactive members will receive a separate allocation notice.

Capital Credits represent your share of ownership and are held by the cooperative until a general retirement is approved by the Board of Directors. Capital Credits belong to the member until they are fully distributed. Therefore, it's important to keep your current address on file with FMEC, even if you move out of the service area, to ensure retirement checks can be sent to you. Current members receive Capital Credit retirements as a bill credit. For more information, contact FMEC's Accounts Payable, Capital Credits Specialist Joanne Miller at (507) 379-8860 or joanne.miller@fmec.coop.

RATES TO CHANGE

Notice of an upcoming rate increase effective September 2024 was included in your June billing statement. The rate increase is necessary to accommodate the rising costs of infrastructure maintenance and enhancements, ensuring we can continue to provide reliable and quality electric services to our members and the communities we serve.



ELECTRIC CONVERSION CONTINUED...

However, the reward for the students' hard work and persistence has finally paid off, with the inaugural test drive successfully happening on the last day of school. "The students were thrilled, and it gave them a tremendous sense of accomplishment," said Professor Gladso.

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative was proud to partner with Riverland Community College on such an exciting project and looks forward to showcasing the transformed truck at upcoming parades and events around our communities this summer.



PEOPLE BEHIND
YOUR POWER

WELCOME
ALEXIS
KOPISCHKE

Alexis joined the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) employee group on Monday, May 23, as a Meter Data Analyst.

With a background in banking IT services, Alexis brings a fresh approach to her new role. #51502 She's looking forward to working with a good network of people and learning about all aspects of our cooperative.

Originally from Mankato, she recently moved back to Minnesota from living in South Dakota. Alexis is a figure skater who enjoys being outside and spending time with friends and family.

Welcome to our cooperative, Alexis!

THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

This is what sets us apart from other forms of electric utilities:

- Locally owned by the members we serve
- Operated by local management and employees
- Governed by a nine-member board of directors that is elected from fellow member-owners
- Not-for-profit organization
- Our members contribute to and control the capital of the organization
- Profit, above expenses, are returned to our members through the retirement of Capital Credits
- Guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles, our Mission, and our Core Values

WHEN THE POWER IS OUT, WE GO OUT



RESTORING POWER AMIDST THE AFTERMATH OF MAY STORMS

The sound of chainsaws echoed as Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) crews diligently worked to trim fallen branches that had affected power lines in multiple areas of Freeborn and Mower Counties following the series of May storms that caused significant damage to trees and power lines around our service territory. Several power poles were toppled near Hollandale, MN, and in the same stretch, another was snapped in two. Subsequently, another event resulted in outages in our area due to transmission line issues.

An outage is never ideal and can be highly inconvenient. Power outages can be caused by various factors, including weather, animals, accidents, or scheduled maintenance. They may also arise from reasons beyond FMEC’s control, such as transmission issues. Transmission lines function as conduits for electricity, facilitating the transmission of high-voltage power over long distances. These towering structures and cables are commonly visible along major highways across MN. While not under FMEC ownership, their operation is integral to powering our distribution lines, which are smaller lines that supply power to residences and businesses.

Our construction plan includes maintenance and upgrades to improve the resilience of our grid. This includes reinforcing power poles and lines and integrating more robust materials capable of withstanding severe weather events.

Recognizing that different outages necessitate distinct equipment, resources, and expertise to rectify, the restoration timeframe may vary. At FMEC, our commitment to delivering excellent service and reliable power is a fundamental value, and you can be assured that in the event of a controllable power outage, we are dedicated to restoring service as safely and efficiently as possible. #1347702 When a power outage occurs, we are grateful for the patience and support of our communities.

The safety of our community and crew are important to us. We want to remind everyone to please steer clear of downed power lines and report them immediately to our cooperative or your local emergency services.

SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO POWER RESTORATION

When a power outage occurs, we always work to restore power to the largest number of members first before inspecting individual sites.

- STEP 01

High-Voltage Transmission Lines supply electricity to substations. While they rarely fail, these facilities must be repaired before substations will operate.
- STEP 02

Distribution Substations can each serve hundreds or even thousands of members. When a substation is out of service, repairs must be made before electricity can flow to the main distribution lines.
- STEP 03

Main Distribution Lines carry electricity to large groups of members in a geographic area. A problem with a main distribution line will disrupt the flow of electricity to tap lines.
- STEP 04


Tap Lines deliver electricity to the transformers. Transformers may be mounted on power poles or placed on pads for underground service to individual homes, farms, and businesses.
- STEP 05

Individual Sites may remain without power should a problem exist between the transformer and your premises. This is often the case if your neighbors’ power has been restored but there is no electricity at your site. Always report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.




REPORT YOUR POWER OUTAGE


Power outages and emergencies may be reported 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please be prepared to provide your name, account number, service address, phone number, and the cause of the outage if known.



PHONE
(800) 734-6421



ONLINE
Log into your SmartHub account.



MOBILE APP
Download the SmartHub app.

KEEP YOUR COOL

Central air conditioning systems, like all equipment in your home, need regular maintenance. If you're losing your cool over AC that's not meeting your needs, your equipment probably needs a tune-up. Don't sweat over it!

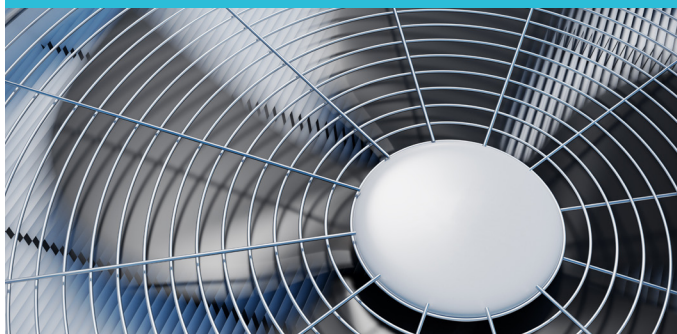
Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) offers a \$25 rebate as a credit on your electric bill for a documented tune-up of your central air conditioning system or air source heat pump. The tune-up must be completed where electricity is supplied by FMEC.

Members are responsible for hiring a HVAC service contractor of choice. #51502 The central air conditioning or air source heat pump must be in operating condition, more than three years of age, and has not received an AC Tune-up Rebate in 2022 or 2023. The rebate application requires documentation.

As with all rebates offered by FMEC, the program is in place through December 31, 2024. Funds are limited, so members are encouraged to submit their requests as soon as possible.

More information on FMEC's numerous rebate opportunities can be found on our website:
www.fmec.coop.

WHAT'S AN A/C TUNEUP?



Hire a professional service technician to find and fix problems with your air conditioning system.

- Clean filters, evaporator coils, and fins.
- Verify there is the correct amount of refrigerant.
- Check for refrigerant leaks.
- Measure the airflow through the evaporator coil.
- Check for and seal duct leakage.
- Examine electric terminals and tighten connections.
- Motors may need to be oiled.
- Examine belts for tightness and wear.
- Check the thermostat for accuracy.



SUMMER SAVINGS TIPS

- While the sun's rays flooding through your window may bring welcome heat during the winter, the opposite is true in summer. Heat gained through windows can put a strain on your air conditioning unit. Using black-out shades can help control this problem.
- If your windows are inefficient and outdated, consider replacements. New technologies and options make today's windows much more energy efficient.
- Summer is grilling time! Cooking outdoors will help reduce the extra heat that would otherwise go into your kitchen. If you have an electric range or oven you'll save on electricity use, too.
- There's little need to cool an unoccupied home. Use a programmable thermostat to help manage the electricity consumed by your AC.
- Hang laundry outdoors to take advantage of a warm breeze.
- Whenever possible, especially on Peak Alert days, do the summer shift!
- Shift your electric use away from the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. During those times, our region's wholesale power costs are the highest. This helps FMEC save money #2091603 on the cooperative's wholesale power bill, which helps control the rates charged to members.

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES



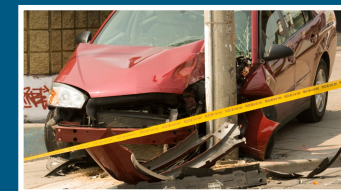
WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.



CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.



ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.



SCHEDULED MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

CLASSIFIED *marketplace*

FOR SALE

VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

2006 GMC ENVOY SLT. One owner, 140,000 miles, good condition. \$4,500. Call (507) 373-8991.

FARM:

JOHN DEERE 4052R w/loader, heated cab, and AC, lots of extras. Call (507) 440-4402.

HOUSEHOLD:

THOMASVILLE DINING ROOM SET. Table, 6 chairs, China cupboard, buffet. Beautiful, excellent condition. Call (507) 373-2958.

PRINT. Framed & matted. "Lovingly Dancing on the Beach". 36" w x 30" h. \$60. Call (507) 402-8071.

NEW FUTON. Heavy wooden log frame, multi-color beige covering w/pillows. \$500. Call (507) 383-3976.

BIG MAN'S RECLINER. Bown cloth, Scotchgarded, hardly used, tags still on it. Paid \$1,700 asking \$500 OBO. Call (507) 202-3034.

MISCELLANEOUS:

1982 SUZUKI GS 550L MOTORCYCLE. \$7,500. Call (507) 325-2427.

2014 KEYSTONE OUTBACK CAMPER. 35', 3 slide-outs, very nice. \$19,500. Call (507) 383-7390.

RED E-RAIL BIKE FOR TWO. Lots of accessories, 27 speed. \$550 OBO. Call (507) 377-2119.

KIDS IMAGINARIUM TRAIN TRACK TABLE w/one drawer. \$100 (new \$250). Call (507) 383-9029.

MEN'S ELECTRA TOWNIE BIKE. 3 speed, "flat foot", red. \$200 OBO. Call (507) 438-1342.

2 - 100# LP TANKS. \$300. Call (507) 460-0248.

ENGLISH SADDLE. Good condition. \$100 OBO. Call (507) 269-8992.

HEWLETT-PACKARD. HP 15-DY5033DX. Model 8L707UA. SKU 6550428. Serial 1684074058. Purchased 11/16/2023. Warranty till November. \$250. Call (507) 373-0902.

JOHN DEERE LAWN CART. All steel construction, dump trailer, air-filled rubber tires. \$300 OBO. Call (507) 226-6024.

LAWN BOY MOWER. 20", electric start, needs battery. \$150. Call (507) 402-1985.

WANTED

CD PLAYER. Under the counter or small free-standing. Call (507) 373-0539.

90CC HARLEY DAVIDSON 1970S MODEL. Call (507) 383-5082.

CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE RULES

Classified Marketplace ads are printed in our monthly **County Lines** newsletter **FREE OF CHARGE** to our current members.

You can review the Classified Marketplace Rules and/or submit an ad at www.fmec.coop. Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab.

You will find a downloadable form on our website: www.fmec.coop. Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab.

You may also email ads to michelle.rayman@fmec.coop or go to the website, use the instructions above, and click on the **NEWSLETTER** tab to electronically submit an ad.

SPOT YOUR NUMBER

WIN A \$25 BILL CREDIT

To reward our faithful newsletter readers, we've randomly selected and hidden three (3) member account numbers in the newsletter, each two times. Hidden account numbers are spelled out numerically. (Ex: #123456)

If you spot your full account number, contact the cooperative by the 15th of the current month to claim your \$25 bill credit.

Congratulations to Craig Westrum and Tyler Olson! They spotted their account numbers in the June newsletter.



FREEBORN MOWER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

PO Box 611
3366 Bridge Avenue
Albert Lea MN 56007

(507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421
www.fmec.coop
info@fmec.coop



Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Board Meetings:

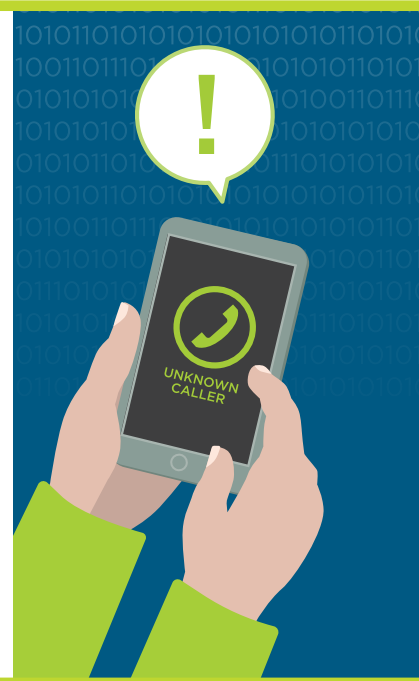
Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

*Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is an
equal opportunity provider and employer.*

SCAM ALERT

It's an unfortunate fact. Scammers and thieves do target utility customers. Threatening calls and demands for immediate payment by wire transfer or prepaid debit cards are tip-offs of a scam. Also, beware of a caller attempting to "verify" your account information or asking for your private information. These are not procedures used by Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC).

FMEC uses several methods to protect your information. We invest in security technology to ensure that our computer network and website are secure. We do not share or sell your private information.



LET'S COOK



RHUBARB CAKE OR DESSERT

Submitted By: Min Westland

- 4 C. fresh or frozen rhubarb, cut up
- 2 pkg. strawberry Jello
- 1/2 - 3/4 C. reg. sugar
- 15.2 oz. white or yellow cake mix
- 1/2 C. melted butter
- 2 C. cold water

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly spray a 9 x 13 pan. Put an even layer of rhubarb on the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle Jello over the rhubarb, then sugar, then cake mix. Top with melted butter and pour cold water over it. Do not stir! Bake 45 min. to 1 hour or until lightly brown. Chill preferable.

Members may submit one short recipe per month by email to michelle.rayman@fmec.coop or by mail at FMEC Newsletter, PO Box 611, Albert Lea, MN 56007. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$10 electric bill credit.