



STORM SEASON SAFETY STARTS HERE

At Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, your safety is our top priority—especially when severe weather strikes.

Storms can arrive unexpectedly, unleashing powerful winds, heavy rainfall, and lightning, which can lead to considerable damage. Taking proactive steps to prepare and understanding essential safety measures can greatly enhance the protection of your home and loved ones before, during, and after such events.

To begin your preparations, we encourage you to assemble an emergency kit. This kit should contain vital supplies, including water, non-perishable food, necessary medications, first-aid materials, flashlights, batteries, and important documents. Keeping this kit easily accessible allows for swift evacuation if needed. #1412400 Additionally, safeguard your property by trimming overhanging tree branches and securing loose items around your home—these precautions help prevent dangerous projectiles in high winds.

Creating a family emergency plan is another essential part of storm preparedness. Your plan should clearly outline evacuation routes and designate a meeting location. Make sure all family members are familiar with the plan and practice it periodically to reduce confusion in an emergency.

Staying informed is equally important; monitor weather alerts regularly, as some storms can develop quickly and with little warning.

During the storm, remain indoors and stay away from windows. Seek shelter in a small, windowless room on the lowest level of your home, such as a basement or interior bathroom. Though it may be tempting to watch the storm, this can be dangerous due to flying debris and structural damage.

Electrical safety is especially important during and after a storm. To help protect your devices and reduce the risk of fire or injury, avoid using electrical appliances and unplug non-essential electronics to prevent damage from lightning-induced power surges or unstable power lines. After the storm passes, be extremely cautious of any downed power lines. Assume lines are energized and may cause electrocution or serious injury. Stay back and report any downed lines immediately to local authorities and to Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative.

By taking these thoughtful and proactive measures, you can significantly enhance the safety and security of your home and family throughout storm season.

Stay prepared. Stay safe.

ceo message
Jim Krueger, President & CEO



PLANNING TODAY TO
POWER TOMORROW

As we move into the summer season and begin planning our vacations, it also marks the beginning of our efforts on the cooperative’s strategic plan. This plan will outline our goals for the next three to five years and provide a roadmap for how we intend to achieve them.

Our strategic planning process is a collaborative effort involving our board of directors, the executive team, and an external group that is facilitating thoughtful and productive discussions. Having a strategic plan ensures that every employee understands our direction and is working towards the same goals. #275301 Each person’s contributions are essential to the cooperative’s success, and defining what that success looks like is critically important.

Our commitment as a cooperative is unwavering in our service to our members. Part of this commitment involves being responsible stewards of our resources by making fiscally sound investments that support our vision of being the trusted leader in providing energy, services, and products to our members.

To achieve this, we must carefully consider our resources and determine how best to allocate them to support the cooperative’s operations. This task is challenging as it requires us to address both our current needs and anticipate future needs simultaneously. While planning for upcoming projects and investments, we also consider potential challenges and risks that may arise from those decisions and proactively manage them.

Understanding what success means provides us with a powerful benchmarking tool which allows us to measure our performance and make necessary adjustments along the way.

I look forward to continuing the development of this plan with our team and sharing highlights of our progress in the coming months.

- Jim Krueger

HELP HOLD DOWN
WHOLESALE POWER COSTS

HERE’S HOW: The cost for Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative to purchase wholesale electricity is directly tied to the highest aggregate level of electrical demand occurring during peak demand times. Efforts to hold down the demand related component of the cooperative’s wholesale power bill will help stabilize the retail rates for cooperative members. That’s why we urge our members to “do the summer shift.”

When possible, please AVOID EXCESS ELECTRIC USE during these peak hours, especially on extremely hot days:

Weekdays between 11:00 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Shift your use of these to early morning hours or later evenings:

- Dishwasher
- Clothes washer and dryer
- Oven
- Dehumidifier (put it on a timer)
- Pool Pumps (shut off when not in use)
- Use cool/warm water instead of hot.



member news

OFFICE CLOSED

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative will be closed on Friday, July 4, 2025 in observance of Independence Day. We wish you a safe and fun holiday!

REPORTING AN OUTAGE

If you experience a power outage, please call (800) 734-6421 to report it, with the information below.

- Billing Name
- Service Location
- Phone Number of where you can be reached
- Cause of outage (if known)

WIND DOWN WEDNESDAY

Come find our booth at Wind Down Wednesday in downtown Albert Lea on June 11, and August 13. We hope to see you there!

REBATE OPPORTUNITIES

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative offers a wide range of energy efficiency rebates. Details can be found at www.fmec.coop. Rebate applications must be submitted within 3 months of the equipment or appliance purchase/ installation.

SMALL CHANGE,
BIG DIFFERENCE:
OPERATION ROUND UP®
HELPS 45 LOCAL CAUSES

In the first quarter, the Freeborn Mower Operation Round Up® Program generously donated \$27,808 to 45 local organizations, demonstrating strong community support. The volunteer board of trustees directed funds toward various important causes, such as:

- Educational Institutions
- Emergency Services
- Community Organizations

Schools received funding for educational improvements, fire departments acquired essential equipment, and cultural groups were assisted in preserving local heritage, among other initiatives. #1412400 This program’s success underscores the power of collective generosity in enhancing the community.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- The next application deadline is June 15, with approved funding to be distributed in late July.
- To apply, visit www.fmec.coop/operation-round.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Freeborn Mower Operation Round Up® program operates on an opt-out basis, which means that FMEC members’ electric bills are automatically rounded up to the nearest whole dollar amount, unless you choose to opt out. The average contribution per member, per year, is roughly \$6.00. Donations to Operation Round Up® are tax-deductible.

If you prefer to opt out of this program, please contact our office or visit www.fmec.coop/operation-round.





WHEN THE
POWER IS OUT,
WE GO OUT:
Steps to Safely
Restoring Power



When the power goes out, it can be a frustrating experience, leaving many wondering when electricity will be restored. Power outages can occur for various reasons, such as planned maintenance outages allowing lineworkers to safely make repairs and upgrades, collisions with critical equipment, wildlife encounters, and, of course, weather events. #275301 Regardless of the cause of the outage, the safety of our crew and community is always the top priority at Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC).

Restoring power is not always as simple as flipping a switch. The process begins with crews assessing the situation to identify any immediate dangers to the public, such as downed power lines, which are promptly secured to keep everyone safe. From the moment the crew is notified of an outage, there can be a delay in dispatching lineworkers to the impacted areas, especially given FMEC’s service territory spans two counties, with some members located up to fifty miles from our headquarters.

Critical infrastructure, such as police stations and hospitals, is prioritized to ensure essential services continue running smoothly. Once the most urgent repairs are underway, crews systematically inspect the affected equipment to determine the cause and extent of the damage. This comprehensive assessment allows for the development of a strategic repair plan to restore power safely and efficiently.

Throughout this process, FMEC strives to maintain open communication with members, providing updates on the outage status through various communication channels. Initial repairs focus on areas where the greatest number of members can have power restored quickly, with the remaining members to follow.

Final checks are conducted to verify the stability of the system and the effectiveness of the repairs. After power has been restored, FMEC performs a post-incident analysis to understand the outage’s causes better, and improve future response strategies. While every outage is unique, the commitment of FMEC remains steadfast: to restore power safely and efficiently. If you experience an outage, please contact FMEC at (800) 734-6421.

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.



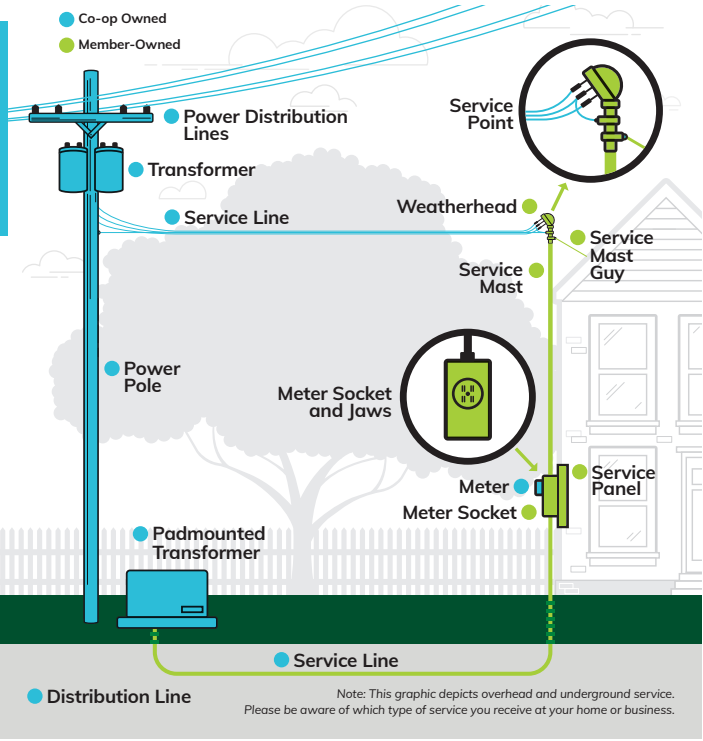
MOBILE APP
Download the
SmartHub app.



WHO OWNS WHAT
Electric Co-op Owned Equipment
vs Member-Owned Equipment

With so many different pieces of equipment that make up the electrical system, it can be confusing when it comes to who owns what equipment at your residence or business.

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in light blue) and the member (in lime green). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. #1967700 Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



GENERATOR SAFETY:
ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR SAFE USE

Generators are invaluable tools for providing backup power during outages, ensuring continuity in essential operations and maintaining comfort during emergencies. However, improper use of generators can pose significant safety risks. Adhering to the following safety tips can help ensure safe and effective generator operation:



PROPER PLACEMENT

Always run generators outdoors, at least 20 feet from buildings, to avoid deadly carbon monoxide buildup.



VENTILATION

Never use generators indoors or in enclosed spaces to prevent the risk of CO poisoning.



FUEL SAFETY

Store fuel in approved containers away from living areas. Refuel only when the generator is off and cool.



ELECTRICAL

Use a transfer switch for home wiring. Plug appliances into outdoor-rated, damage-free extension cords.



LOAD MANAGEMENT

Don't overload the generator. Match its wattage to what you plan to power.



MAINTENANCE

Follow the manufacturer's maintenance schedule. Check for leaks and monitor oil and filter levels.



SAFETY DEVICES

Install CO detectors near bedrooms to alert you to unsafe levels.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Create a family plan. Make sure everyone knows how to use the generator safely.



AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS: A SMART, EFFICIENT CHOICE FOR YOUR HOME AND YEAR-ROUND COMFORT

Air source heat pumps (ASHPs) are an energy-efficient heating and cooling technology that can provide year-round climate control for homes and buildings. They work by transferring heat from the outside air into your home during the winter and from your home to the outside air during the summer, effectively operating as both a heater and an air conditioner.

HOW THEY WORK

HEAT ABSORPTION:

- In heating mode, ASHPs extract heat from the outside air using a refrigerant, even at low temperatures, and transfer it indoors.
- In cooling mode, the process is reversed, absorbing heat from inside your home and releasing it outside.

HEAT TRANSFER:

- The system comprises two main units: an outdoor unit containing the compressor and a heat exchanger, and an indoor air-handling unit.
- The refrigerant cycles between these units, efficiently moving heat to where it's needed or removing it to provide cooling.

BENEFITS

ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

ASHPs are highly efficient, often producing three to four times more energy in the form of heat than the electricity they consume.

COST SAVINGS:

Due to their efficiency, ASHPs can significantly reduce energy bills compared to traditional heating and #1967700 cooling systems.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

By utilizing renewable heat from the air, ASHPs reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel dependency.

VERSATILITY:

They offer both heating and cooling capabilities, making them an all-in-one solution for year-round comfort.

EASE OF INSTALLATION:

Compared to ground source heat pumps, ASHPs are easier and less expensive to install since they don't require extensive excavation.

CONSIDERATIONS

INITIAL COST:

While the operational savings are substantial, the initial installation cost can be higher than some conventional systems.

CLIMATE SUITABILITY:

ASHPs are most effective in moderate climates. In extremely cold regions, their efficiency may decrease, necessitating supplemental heating sources.

NOISE LEVELS:

The outdoor units can produce noise, which may be a consideration depending on their placement and proximity to living areas.

Air source heat pumps are a sustainable, efficient solution for heating and cooling. By harnessing the natural heat in the air, they provide an eco-friendly method to maintain indoor comfort throughout the year, offering significant energy and cost savings. Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative has rebates available for Air Source Heat Pumps and more details can be found at www.fmec.coop or by calling (800) 734-6421.

JUNE IS DAIRY MONTH

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative salutes agricultural producers! June is a great time to call attention to the 2025 agricultural energy efficiency rebates offered by FMEC. See our website for details. There are rebates for equipment such as:

- Dairy Plate Cooler/Well Water Pre-Cooler
- Dairy Refrigeration Heat Recovery with electric backup
- Low/Zero Energy Livestock Waterer
- Exhaust Fan
- Circulation Fan
- Electric Forklift Battery Charger
- Scroll Refrigerator Compressor
- Variable Frequency Drive (VFD)



CLASSIFIED *marketplace*

FOR SALE

VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

2011 CHEVY EQUINOX LT AWD. V6, 72k, heated seats, remote start. \$10,500. Call (563) 419-1738.

2011 RAM LARAMIE 4X4. Blue, Leer topper, new tires/wheels, exhaust. 133k miles, \$15,000. Call (507) 440-4777.

FARM:

HORSE-DRAWN SICKLE MOWER. Call (507) 318-8158.

7 METAL LIVESTOCK WATER TANKS. Assorted sizes. Perfect for raised bed gardens. \$25 each. Text only (507) 269-8992.

SUPERB SD 500V GRAIN DRYER. 480 bushel, 3-phase 30-60 converter, 30' auger w/motor, 1,000 bushel bin. Call (507) 754-5028.

IH 183 CULTIVATOR W/ ROLLING SHIELDS. Good condition. Call (507) 438-4284.

MISC.:

CANNING JARS. Quarts, pints, & jelly. Call (507) 433-7807.

ORBIT 12 SPEED INDUSTRIAL DRILL PRESS. Nice condition. \$75 OBO. Call (507) 373-8459.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT. All in good shape. Call (507) 279-1856.

CUB CADET GARDEN TRACTOR WITH DECK. Kohler engine, power steering. Call (507) 273-6063.

33' 4-SECTION WOOD DOCK. With metal adjustable stands. \$750 OBO. Call (507) 373-7661.

REESE 16 K FIFTH WHEEL HITCH. With slider for short bed pickup. \$200 OBO. Call (507) 383-9122.

LUND 16 FT FISHING BOAT. Johnson 35 HP motor, EZ loader trailer, electric trolling motor. Call/text (507) 369-4239.

ELEGANT GIBSON GIRL BRIDE DOLL. Beautiful creation to cherish. W/stand, \$195 new. Now \$75. Call (507) 373-0093.

2017 LAUNCH RLS RV TRAILER. Very clean. \$14,000. Call (507) 383-2553 or (507) 383-5633.

WANTED

HAMM'S BEER SIGNS. Trays. Call (507) 402-0880.

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 info@fmec.coop or go to the website, use the instructions above, and click on the **NEWSLETTER** tab to electronically submit an ad.

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President: Jim Krueger, President & CEO
Telephone: (507) 373-6421

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 and placed them 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.



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



Business Hours:

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

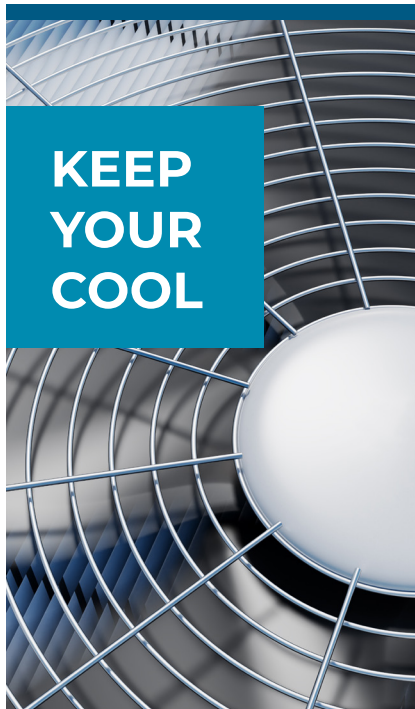
Lobby Hours:

Monday - Thursday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Friday, By appointment only

Board Meetings:

Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

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



KEEP YOUR COOL

*It's not too late to make your home
more comfortable this summer.*

- Is it time to schedule a tune-up of your central air conditioning unit?
- Are you considering installing a new central air conditioner, heat pump, or Wi-Fi thermostat?

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative encourages energy-efficient choices through its rebate program.

Details and downloadable rebate forms are available at:

WWW.FMEC.COOP

LET'S COOK



RHUBARB JAM

Submitted By: Sylvia Dziura

- 5 cups rhubarb, cut into small pieces
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 small package strawberry Jello (regular or diet)
- 16 oz strawberries (or more), chopped

Directions:

Combine the rhubarb and sugar in a large bowl and let soak overnight. The next day, transfer the mixture to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in the strawberry Jello until fully dissolved. Add the chopped strawberries and stir until they soften. Let the jam cool slightly, then spoon into containers and freeze. Yield: Approximately 4–5 cups.

Members may submit one short recipe per month by email to info@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.