



ROLLING HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

Rolling Hills Electric Co-op, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Bob Fredrickson, President
Ellsworth – District 1

Paul Wilson, Vice-President
Burr Oak – District 2

Justin Trost, Secretary
Concordia – District 3

John George, Treasurer
Lebanon – District 2

Eric Andersen, Trustee
Jamestown – District 3

Michelle Brokes, Trustee
Wilson – District 1

Mike Brzon, Trustee
Courtland – District 3

Corey Dlabal, Trustee
Wilson – District 1

David Dubbert, Trustee
Beloit – District 2

Tom Marr, Trustee
Formoso – District 2

Staff

Douglas Jackson General Manager

Contact Us

3075B U.S. Hwy. 24 P.O. Box 339
Beloit, KS 67420
785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572

Like us on Facebook

On Facebook, search for “Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.” and like our page for continued updates, energy efficiency tips, cooperative news and outage updates.



A Message from Your Trustees

Your board of trustees unanimously favor amending and fully restating the cooperative's bylaws. We ask that you review the following information, which lists many of the proposed changes and reasons we are asking you to vote yes on the question of adopting a new set of bylaws.

Bylaw Amendment, Background and Information

We as your board of trustees have unanimously determined that it is desirable and in the best interest of both the members and cooperative to update, amend and fully restate the cooperative's bylaws. The current bylaws were adopted in 2001 to become effective on Jan. 1, 2002, with the consolidation of the three cooperatives that formed Rolling Hills. The 2001 bylaws were based on similar bylaws from many cooperatives formed in the 1930s and 1940s.

Times have changed. We are all aware of the significant changes that have occurred in the last 19 years not to mention the last 80-90 years.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) recognized the need for cooperative bylaw changes and has provided guidelines for cooperatives to use in bringing their bylaws up to date. The NRECA in its introductory remarks to the bylaw guidelines noted that the older form of bylaws did not address several challenges and changes facing rural electric cooperatives today.

Those challenges and changes included (1) a restructured electric industry; (2) the provision of diversified goods and services by cooperatives; (3) changes in state or federal law; and (4) increased interest and questions from members, competitors, legislators and regulators. In general, it was recognized that the older form of bylaws may not fully address the needs of today.

Therefore, your trustees have invested a significant amount of time and effort to bring to you a fully revised set of bylaws. The proposed bylaws clarify, expand and confirm several existing provisions of the current bylaws. Your trustees' believe the proposed bylaws, will provide significant benefits to you as both an individual member of the cooperative, as well as to your cooperative as a whole, which ultimately benefits you.

The Proposed Bylaws Changes and Updates Include the Following:

- ▶ Confirmation that your trust, LLC, corporation, estate, association and other entities created by members are entitled to membership in the cooperative.
- ▶ Confirmation that members have access to board meetings and minutes along with clear processes for obtaining member appropriate records.

Continued on page 16D ▶

OPERATIONS UPDATE

New Meters



Marc Martin

The operations department is more than pleased with the timely transmission of information from the new meters. As of Feb. 14, nearly 6,700 single phase AMI meters have been installed. Installations continue in the Mankato district and as necessary in the Ellsworth district.

We do ask that you continue to report your outage by calling 785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572. Also, if you have registered your account(s) on the SmartHub App, you should be able to view whether you are out of power and when your power has been restored. You may also check Rolling Hills Electric's Facebook page for outage information.

The weather has been mostly cooperative to continue planned work in the field. Our scheduled pole replacements, substation upgrades and clearing rights-of-way will be ongoing in order to provide safe, reliable and affordable service to our members.

WATT'S HAPPENING

Annual Meeting Set for April 17



Linnea Beebe

Planning is underway for the upcoming Rolling Hills Electric Annual Meeting to be held Friday, April 17, 2020. Mark your calendar now to join us for a delicious meal,

door prizes and a chance to visit with your Rolling Hills Electric employees and trustees.

Also, each member will receive a gift upon registration. It is a great time to visit with friends and family who you haven't seen in a while or to meet new acquaintances.

In a few weeks, you will be receiving the annual meeting booklet in an envelope along with the proposed bylaws booklet, information and ballot to cast your vote whether to approve or dismiss amending and fully restating the cooperative's bylaws. Your trustees and management have spent several

April 2020						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

months reviewing and revising the proposed changes.

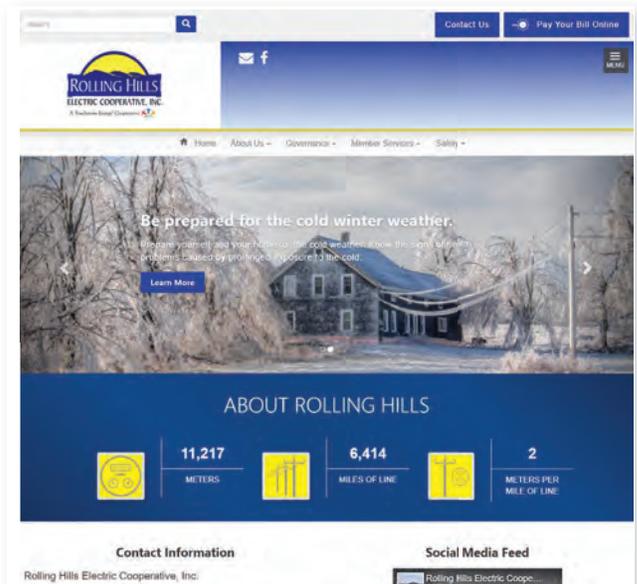
We look forward to receiving your ballot by mail, or dropping it by the office or any of the night depositories by April 10. Ballots will also be accepted at the annual meeting between 5:30 and 7 p.m. if your vote was not previously received. The member certification must be signed on the back of the envelope for the vote to be counted. The tallied results of the proposed bylaw changes will be announced during the business meeting.

Rolling Hills Cooperative Launches Updated Website

If you have not had a chance to check out the new website, please do. Go to WWW.ROLLINGHILLS.COOP. It is a secure site with more features and information than our previous site. Websites are continuously a "work-in-process" so check back regularly to see what has been added or updated. We greatly appreciate the assistance that was provided by Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. with the new website.

The SmartHub feature remains in the upper right corner of the screen. If you have not registered your account(s) on SmartHub, you would really appreciate the information that is at your fingertips. For example, several Rolling Hills Electric members have service for water wells they don't visit regularly. Sometimes, the float may become lodged and water is being pumped non-stop. This may not be brought to your attention until the next bill or possibly later. By reviewing your usage information on SmartHub, you could be alerted to a similar potential issue before you receive your bill.

Under the governance tab, you will find Rolling Hills Electric's board policies in addition to the rules, regulations and bylaws. If you missed reading or want to reread a previous issue of Rolling Hills' insert in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine, it can be found under the member services tab.



Smart Security Options for Your Home

Many consumers are beginning to realize the convenience and comfort that smart home technologies provide. Smart home devices are different than traditional devices because they are connected to the internet and have the potential to communicate with other electronics. A smarter home can save time and reduce stress, especially with a smart home assistant that can integrate all the devices together, like Amazon Alexa or Google Home.

Homeowners search for peace of mind when it comes to the protection of their family, and smart security devices are a great way to keep your home secure. Most smart home security options are accessible remotely through smartphone applications (apps). Whether at work or on vacation, you can keep an eye on your home at any time, in any place. Here are some smart security technology options.

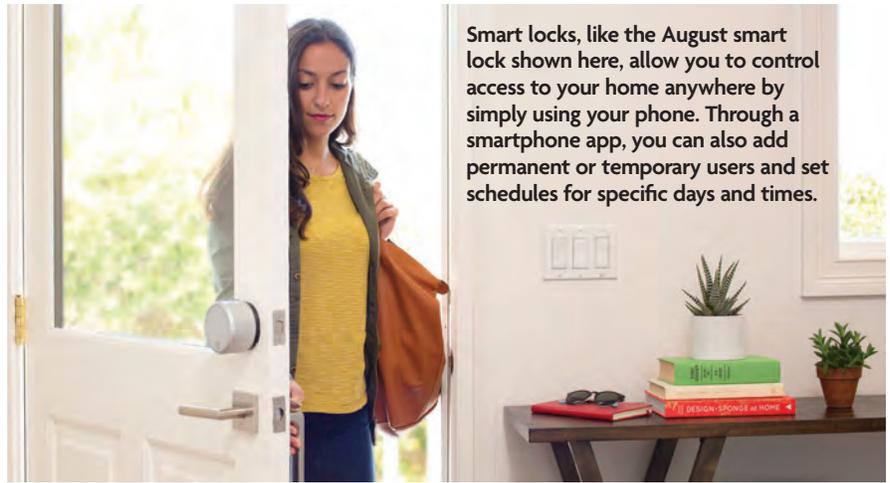
Smart Security Cameras

Security cameras are one of the basics of technology used to monitor your home. Many models are weatherproof, making them suitable for indoor or outdoor use. Wireless cameras are a great option for placement anywhere inside or outside the home, but wired versions are less expensive. There are many smart security cameras available on the market that offer a variety of features like free cloud storage, built-in spotlights or motion-activated sensors.

Camera prices vary based on features and capabilities, but if a wired model will meet your needs, you can purchase the Wyze security camera for about \$40 on Amazon.com. If you want to go wireless and can pay a little more, a model like the Ring Spotlight Cam costs about \$200 and is a solid option.

Smart Doorbells

If you want to see who's at your front door at any time, a smart doorbell can do just that. Many smart door-



Smart locks, like the August smart lock shown here, allow you to control access to your home anywhere by simply using your phone. Through a smartphone app, you can also add permanent or temporary users and set schedules for specific days and times.

bells can capture footage up to a few hours or can keep footage just before a disturbance was detected. Smart doorbells are similar to smart security cameras but are built into the doorbell instead of being mounted separately. A key difference is that a smart camera captures footage all the time, while the smart doorbell only captures footage when it detects motion or when someone rings the doorbell.

Most smart doorbells cost about \$200 and up, but if you're on a budget, the Ring Video Doorbell is available for \$100 on Amazon.com and can be powered wirelessly by battery or connect to your home wiring.

Smart Locks

Another option to upgrade your traditional security to a smarter version is by installing a smart lock system. You can control access to your home anywhere by simply using your phone. Through a smartphone app, you can also add permanent or temporary users and set schedules for specific days and times. In addition to safety, smart locks can solve many minor issues, such as forgetting your keys, locking the door before bed or letting a friend in when you're not home.

Most smart lock systems connect to your Wi-Fi network or Bluetooth.

If you use a smart home assistant, like Amazon Alexa or Apple HomeKit, consider smart locks that can be paired with your existing system. Depending on the bells and whistles, smart lock systems range from \$150 to \$400.

Smart Security System

For smart security across your entire home, a smart security system is the best way to reduce your overall safety concerns. Having an entire home smart device system ensures all smart devices in your home will work together, for example, having all the doors unlock automatically if the smoke alarm goes off.

There are DIY home security systems that are typically cheaper, and there are professional home security systems that cost more in subscription fees for professional monitoring, which also contacts emergency responders in case of emergency.

Depending on your needs and budget, all of these smart security options can significantly improve your home security. With a little research, you can determine the products that make the most sense for you and your family. Smart security technologies can make it easier for you to relax knowing you can control your home's security right from the palm of your hand.

A Downed Line Always Means Danger

If you see a downed power line after a storm or at an accident scene, NEVER get out to help or go near the downed line. Always assume a downed power line is energized and deadly. This also applies to any electrical equipment, including pad-mounted transformers (green boxes), other utility cabinets or fenced substations.

If you are involved in an accident with a downed line or other utility equipment — whether in a car, tractor, or any other type of vehicle or equipment — do not get out. If you exit the vehicle and walk away, you could be electrocuted. Instead, call 911 and wait for the utility to arrive to cut the power.

If you must leave a vehicle due to smoke or fire, make a solid jump out with your feet together and without touching the car or truck, and then hop — DO NOT WALK — with both feet at the same time at least 30 feet from the vehicle. Hopping helps prevent two different voltages of electricity from entering your body at the same time, which can cause shock and electrocution.

A Message from Your Trustees *Continued from page 16A*

- ▶ Clearly confirming that members have the right to address the board at board meetings.
- ▶ Updates in the voting processes to clearly allow member voting by mail or by mail in conjunction with a member meeting. The changes state the process for member voting on matters required to be handled at a formal member meeting, even if the member cannot attend a member meeting because they live a significant distance from the cooperative's office, have an impairment, or other commitments.
- ▶ Confirmation of the mail ballot process on matters called for a vote other than those votes required to be held in conjunction with a member meeting.
- ▶ The changes will allow the future use of electronic voting and remote participation in member meetings.
- ▶ The changes will make it easier for entities to vote, by authorizing and confirming that the person signing the membership agreement may vote, on behalf of the entity, without the complication of having to provide a corporate or other resolution authorizing the vote.
- ▶ Providing that nominations to the board must be by a petition signed by at least 20 cooperative members, thus eliminating nominating committees and any perception that the board controls the nomination process.
- ▶ The establishment of clear processes for removal of a trustee in appropriate circumstances.
- ▶ The establishment of clear qualifications for service as a trustee as well as clear standards of conduct for your trustees.
- ▶ Confirmation that the cooperative may provide additional services to members, other than just electricity.
- ▶ Providing a clear process for the suspension or termination of members who use electricity from the cooperative in an illegal, unsafe or other inappropriate manner.
- ▶ Clarify the member obligations to comply with the cooperative's rules and regulations for the purpose of protecting your cooperative employees from electrical shock, protecting cooperative equipment and making the electric distribution system safer and more efficient.
- ▶ Providing for mandatory arbitration of member claims against the cooperative, if those claims cannot be resolved by agreement, thus helping reduce the risk to the cooperative, and its individual members, which can occur with runaway juries.

For the above reasons your trustees request your yes vote in favor of amending and fully restating the cooperative's bylaws.

You will be receiving a copy of the amended and fully restated cooperative's bylaws for your review in addition to your notice of annual meeting soon. We look forward to receiving your vote and seeing you at the annual meeting.

**SINCERELY,
YOUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.

Source: energy.gov

