



## ROLLING HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE **NEWS**

### Rolling Hills Electric Co-op, Inc.

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



### FROM THE MANAGER

## Co-ops Have a ‘Different’ Bottom Line



**Doug Jackson**

Author Anthony J. D'Angelo observed that, “Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.”

To a large degree, this reflects Rolling

Hills Electric's philosophy toward our consumer-members and the broader service territory we serve. As a cooperative, we have a different “bottom line.” While our priority is always to provide reliable and safe energy, there is another equally important part of this equation. Your well-being and that of the larger communities we serve are of paramount concern.

To us, you are not just a customer; you are a member of our co-op and without

you, we would not exist.

In the 1930s and 1940s, three cooperatives were founded to fulfill a vital need in our communities that would not have otherwise been met. Concerned local leaders came together to build these co-ops and bring electricity where there was none. In January 2002, these three cooperatives became one as Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.

At that time, members of the communities understood we were different because they likely knew someone who helped to create the cooperative in one way or another. For most people, our founding and its circumstances have been long forgotten. Over time, folks in the communities may have come to think of us as simply another energy provider. But we are not. We are a co-op that is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the

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## Thermostat Reminder

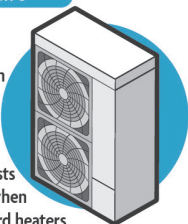
Your heating system works harder when the outdoor temp drops. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting.

## TYPES OF HEAT PUMPS

There are three main types of heat pump systems. Use the information below to determine the system that's best suited for your climate and home.

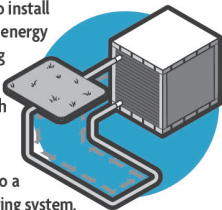
### AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMPS

- Most commonly used heat pumps
- Moves heat rather than converting it from a fuel like combustion heating systems do
- Can reduce heating costs by about 50 percent when compared to baseboard heaters or electric furnaces
- Newer, more efficient systems now offer legitimate space heating alternative in colder regions like the Northeast and Midwest. *Note: If temperatures in your area drop below 10 to 25 F, you will need an auxiliary heating system (depending on the size of the system).*



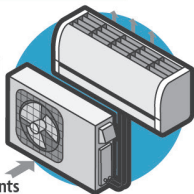
### GEOHERMAL HEAT PUMPS

- More expensive to install but provide more energy savings for heating and cooling
- Move heat through pipes buried underground
- When compared to a conventional heating system, can reduce energy use by 25 to 50 percent
- Effective in extreme climates
- Not ideal for smaller lots and certain soil conditions



### DUCTLESS MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMPS

- Easier to install, quiet, small in size
- Flexible for heating and cooling individual rooms and smaller spaces
- No energy loss through ductwork, which accounts for more than 30 percent of a home's energy use for space heating/cooling.
- Installation can be pricey, but federal incentives may be available



Heat pump systems should be installed by a licensed professional. Contact your local electric cooperative for more information about options and potential incentives.

*Sources: Dept. of Energy and Consumer Reports*

## Trustee Election Ballots Tallied

### 2019 Trustees Elected



Michelle Brokes



Mike Brzon



John George

The board election process for 2019 was completed on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019, at the Beloit headquarters. The tally committee consisted of Shirley Becker, Tanya Buser, Angie Behmyer, Linnea Beebe and John Sherman, attorney.

Those elected to the Rolling Hills Electric board for a three-year term effective Jan. 1, 2019, are **MICHELLE BROKES**, Wilson, representing the Ellsworth District; **JOHN GEORGE**, Lebanon, representing the Mankato District; and **MIKE BRZON**, Courtland, representing the Belleville District.

Rolling Hills Electric appreciates the time and energy that each of the board members devotes on behalf of all members.

## Co-ops Have a 'Different' Bottom Line

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communities we serve, and we are able to do this because of members like you.

Since our inception, we have sought feedback and engagement from you and that of the larger community to guide our long-term decisions. This is why we hold annual meetings and our annual Coopportunity Day—to engage with you and obtain your feedback.

We strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently. We're always looking to explore more options that will help you manage your energy use such as using our SmartHub app to monitor daily kilowatt-hour usage, budget or level payment, load control, load management, etc. In short, we are always seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment, evolving technology and shifting consumer expectations.

Rolling Hills Electric members help guide important co-op decisions that improve and enrich the community. We value the perspective of our board members, who are members of the co-op and community—just like you.

As a local business, we have a stake in the communities we serve. That's why we support local charitable organizations such as fire departments, libraries, school activities, community celebrations, and others. When you support these efforts, you are supporting the community and making it a better place for everyone.

While the times may have changed, our mission and outlook have not. We view our role as a catalyst for good. Working together, we can accomplish great things for our communities now and in the future.

# Electricity 101: The Flip of a Switch

Have you ever wondered why they call it electricity?

It's named after those little pieces of atoms called electrons, and that's the place to start in understanding how power plants make something that reliably lights your home with the flip of a switch.

Getting all those electrons to march together inside a wire has been described as one of civilization's greatest and most complex engineering feats.

Just about all of your electricity starts with the scientific phenomenon that spinning a magnet inside a coil of wires will generate electricity. So, deep inside most power plants are large turbines that are turned in different ways: falling water at a hydroelectric dam; burning coal or natural gas at a fossil fuel station; atomic energy at a nuclear power plant; or the rotating blades of a wind turbine. One exception is solar energy, which uses materials that produce electricity when they're activated by sunlight.

Every one of those power plants is unimaginably complicated—think about what you would do if

you were handed a lump of coal and were told to make it run your refrigerator.

Most large electric generating plants need large banks of transformers to boost the voltage for the cross-country trip through wires held up by tall transmission lines and towers. As it nears your neighborhood, the voltage is reduced at one of those fenced-in complexes of wires and transformers called a substation. Lower voltage makes the electricity safer for home energy use. As the electricity gets closer to your home or business, the voltage is reduced again with smaller transformers, which you can typically see mounted on a nearby utility pole or in a ground-level green box in your yard.

Beyond those basics, all that flowing electricity needs to be coordinated so it gets to the right house just as it's needed. Safety is always top priority. And line crews need to be kept organized for both routine power line maintenance as well as restoring after storm damage.

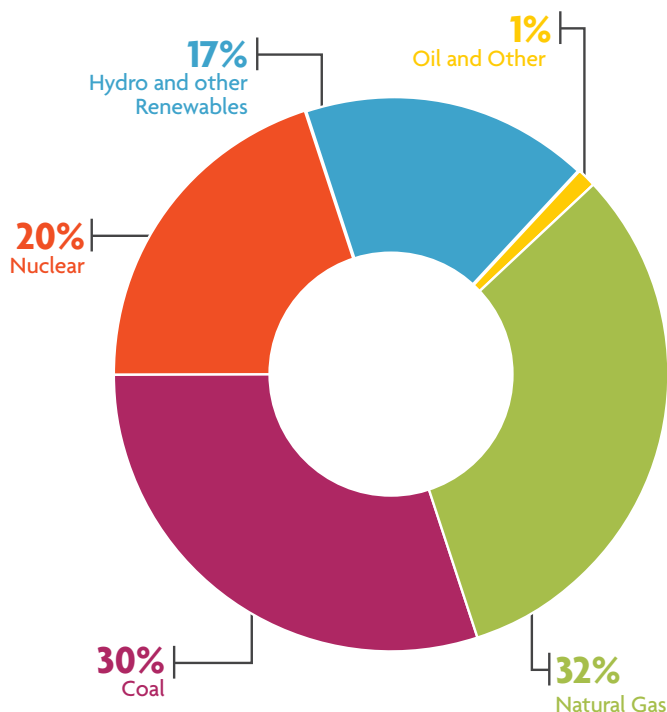
When you think about it, that's a lot of power in the simple flip of a switch!



## Powerful Sources

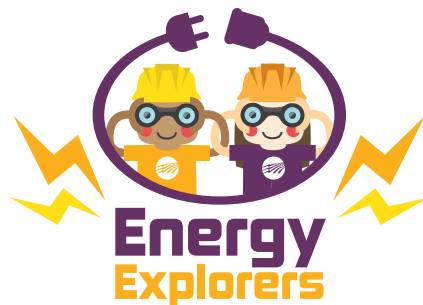
Nationally, electric cooperatives and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2017 data)



# ELECTRIFYING WORD SEARCH!

Can you find the words associated with electricity in the puzzle below? Use the word bank if you need a hint!



Y	R	X	B	P	O	S	T	X	K	C	G	W	A	E
E	T	E	U	L	X	B	I	K	W	B	A	P	G	W
X	B	I	W	N	P	L	U	K	L	T	B	A	L	Z
A	X	I	C	O	K	U	C	V	T	K	T	H	J	L
E	N	E	C	I	P	B	R	S	Q	L	A	T	P	O
B	P	I	Q	H	R	C	I	S	O	L	H	J	O	E
M	F	A	U	R	A	T	C	V	M	U	D	E	T	E
W	K	X	J	L	R	R	C	I	N	Y	G	R	Q	M
I	N	B	R	S	W	U	G	E	J	J	D	S	S	R
J	F	E	J	I	X	X	C	E	L	M	M	W	Z	L
C	U	R	R	E	N	T	T	T	F	E	X	I	L	B
R	X	O	P	P	P	G	S	E	R	I	W	T	I	K
O	M	O	B	R	A	I	Q	O	S	Q	E	C	A	R
D	Q	T	H	C	L	L	A	L	W	B	R	H	E	Z
H	T	Z	P	H	G	G	V	V	O	C	J	I	S	S

## Word Bank

ELECTRICITY

CIRCUIT

WATTS

CURRENT

WIRES

POWER

SWITCH

VOLTAGE

BULB

CHARGE

