

# Norris Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# News

## Power On: October is National Co-op Month

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” This principle is the essential DNA of Norris Electric, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving a special community like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and Norris Electric has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to

Then. Now. Always.  
We’re proud to power your life.  
**October is National Co-op Month.**



# #PowerOn

ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees began working on staggered schedules to maintain separation. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation. We also adjusted our walk-in office availability and in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members.

For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times. For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their

electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements.

We tell you about all these efforts not to boast about Norris Electric but to explain how much we care about this community—because we live here too. We’ve seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges during this time, because that’s what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I’m heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

In 1938, Norris Electric was built by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do – Power On.

# Knowing what to do around a downed power line could save your life

**M**other Nature can be unpredictable. Whether it's a thunderstorm or blizzard, severe storms can interfere with power distribution or even bring down lines. What is the most important thing to remember about a downed power line? **DO NOT GO NEAR IT** for any reason.

After a storm has caused damage, be alert and slow down. Do not attempt to drive over downed lines or through water or over snow or debris that could be covering downed lines. Driving over a line can pull more lines or related equipment down. If you encounter a downed line, pull over and report the location to 9-1-1.

Here is some additional information about downed lines, which can occur after a severe storm or an accident involving a power pole.

## **Q: Can I tell if a downed line is energized by looking?**

A: No, there's no way to tell. Always assume a downed line is live even if it's not buzzing or sparking.

## **Q: What should I do if I am in an accident involving a power line or electrical equipment?**

A: **DO NOT** get out of your vehicle. It is always safer to remain inside, which acts as an insulator and keeps you out of the path of stray electricity. Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved. Co-op personnel will be dispatched to the scene to de-energize the power.



## **Q: Is there any reason I should get out of the vehicle?**

A: Yes, but only if your vehicle is on fire or you see smoke. If that's the case, make a clean jump from the vehicle without touching it (cross your arms closely to your chest), and hop with feet together as far as you can—preferably 50 or more feet away.

## **Q: What happens to the electrical current when a line is down?**

A: Once a power line is in contact with a vehicle, the ground or other objects, it energizes the area. The electrical current spreads to the vehicle and ground, and it ripples out. Each "ring" of the ripple represents a different voltage. Stepping from one voltage to the next can cause your body to become a path for electricity and electrocute you. That's why you should hop or shuffle once you make a clean jump from the vehicle. Always keep your feet together – think of hopping like a bunny or shuffling like a penguin.

## **Q: What else can I do?**

A: Put your window down and yell to others not to approach the scene. They could be shocked or electrocuted if they walk or run to the energized area or touch anything that's energized.

## **Q: What if I can't tell what type of line is down?**

A: It doesn't matter – still stay in your vehicle and wait for the utility personnel to arrive.

## **Q: Are there any other instances when these same safety tips apply?**

A: Yes, the same rules apply to any type of equipment in contact with overhead lines or electrical equipment.

## **Q: Why am I safe in my vehicle?**

A: Because you are not a path for electricity while in a vehicle.

## **Q: What should I do if the windshield is broken and the downed wire is in my vehicle?**

A: Stay in the vehicle and do not touch the wire or attempt to use other objects to move it.

## **Q: What if I hit a pad-mounted transformer in a yard?**

A: Pad-mounted transformers house electrical equipment connected to underground power lines. The same safety precautions apply to all of these cabinets as the voltage could stray if it's damaged.

For more information about staying safe around electricity, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Norris Electric Cooperative supports Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Norris Electric is committed to National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, held annually in October. This year's Cybersecurity Awareness Month theme is "Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart," aimed to empower individuals and organizations to own their role in protecting their part of cyberspace.

"By increasing awareness and enhancing understanding of basic cybersecurity practices, we can all work together to combat cyberthreats," said General Manager Tamara Phillips. "The human element is oftentimes the biggest cybersecurity risk. Each of us has a critical role to play to ensure the security of our personal and professional data."

National Cybersecurity Awareness Month is spearheaded by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The overarching message of this year's theme, "If you connect it, protect it," dives into the importance of keeping connected devices safe and secure from outside influence.

With more people spending time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever before, connected devices are an integral part of how we communicate and access services essential to our well-being. Data collected from these devices can include highly-specific information about a person or business, which can be exploited by bad actors for criminal gain.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to shed light on these security vulnerabilities, while offering guidance surrounding simple security measures to limit the susceptibility of threats for common devices.

This year, the Cybersecurity Awareness Month focuses on the following areas:

- **Understanding and following general security hygiene for connected devices and home networks**
- **The importance of maintaining the security of connected devices for remote workers**
- **How connected devices play a pivotal role in the future of healthcare**
- **The overall future of connected devices for consumers, professionals and the public domain**

If everyone does their part—implementing stronger security practices, raising community awareness, educating vulnerable audiences or training employees – our interconnected world will be safer and more resilient for everyone.

Now in its 17th year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safer and more secure online.

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month, visit [staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/](https://staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/). You can also follow and use the official hashtag #BeCyberSmart on social media channels.



### Onion Pie

This recipe is a family favorite for Becky Kocher's family. Becky is an employee of Norris Electric, and this recipe was handed down to her from her mother.

- 30 soda crackers, crushed**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 3 cups onions, thinly sliced**
- 1-2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded**
- 1 1/2 cups milk**
- 3 eggs**

Preheat oven to 350 F. Mix crackers and butter and make into a crust and put in a shallow baking dish. Sauté 3 cups thinly sliced onions until translucent. Place on top of cracker crust. Add 1-2 cups shredded cheddar cheese. Add in 1 1/2 cups milk mixed well with 3 eggs. Pour over crackers and onion mixture. Bake until it bubbles.

## Residential electric heat rate available

Norris Electric offers an electric heat rate? The rate is available to residential members of the cooperative for uses where electricity is the sole source of all space heating energy. The heat source must be for the whole house and permanently installed. Types of electric heat which qualify include geothermal heat pumps, air source heat pumps and electric furnaces.

The only obligation is the member must continue the electric heat rate for 12-month increments. The electric heat rate offers a lower rate in the winter months that more than offsets the slightly higher summer rate when compared to our standard rate.

Call our office today at 877-783-8765 for a rate comparison and see if you can start saving money on your electric bill!

# HOW SMART IS A Smart Thermostat?



## MYTH VS FACT

My thermostat automatically saves me money.



That depends on how it's programmed and your preferences. It still uses the same amount of energy to reach and maintain temps.

A smart thermostat is smart straight out of the box.



The thermostat needs a little time to learn your heating and cooling preferences.

My thermostat is only as smart as I am.



Sort of. Most models are independent thinkers and adjust the temperature if no one's home.

It's creepy, my smart thermostat seems to know when I'm home.



It's smart for a reason! Geotechnology syncs your thermostat with your arrival. Some models use geofencing technology that tracks your smart phone location and kicks on when you're nearby.

My smart thermostat makes me smarter.



We'll give you this one! It can help you save money and make your home more efficient.

LEARN MORE

 Safe Electricity.org®

## Retirements

### Scott Ghasht

began his employment with Norris Electric in August 1978 as a



groundman.

In 1979, he became a line clearance apprentice earning his line clearance journeyman status in 1980. In 1985, Scott began as an apprentice lineman and became a journeyman lineman in 1988. In 1996, he was promoted to line foreman, and this is the position he held until his retirement on July 6, 2020. Norris would like to thank Scott for 42 years of service to the co-op and its members. We wish him well in his retirement.

Norris Electric would like to congratulate **Rhonda Huddleston**



on her

retirement. Rhonda joined the co-op on June 12, 1978 as a typist clerk. In 1979, she became an assistant bookkeeper and then soon became a billing clerk the same year. In 1988, Rhonda became the billing supervisor and held this position until her retirement. Norris would like to wish Rhonda a happy retirement and thank her for 42 years of service.

Congratulations to **Nancy Beavers**

on her retirement.

Nancy started her employment with Norris Electric in June 1978 as a typist clerk. In 1979, she held two positions: secretary and billing clerk. In 1982, Nancy became an assistant bookkeeper, and in 1998, she became the accountant for Norris Electric. Norris would like to congratulate and thank Nancy for 42 years of service and wish her well in her retirement.

