



**FREESTATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

The Outlet

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Tip of the Month

COOKING TIP: When it is warm out, avoid using the oven. Try cooking on the stove, using a microwave or grilling outside instead. Source: energy.gov

FROM THE CEO

Staying Safe Following the Storm

It was an active spring in northeast Kansas, as it was in several areas of the Midwest. While following weather coverage, I noticed the amount of people taking an interest in some of these massive storms.

I couldn't help but think of the danger some of these folks were in, but more importantly how dangerous the conditions may become for not only first responders, but lineworkers like our FreeState crews.

Did you know that line work is among the most dangerous jobs in the United States? This is why FreeState makes safety a priority. It is part of our culture from the line crews to the office staff. We all want to be safe and go home at the end of the day.

After storm damage, we've seen neighbors helping neighbors and communities coming together, but we want you to stay safe, because distractions can be deadly.

Downed poles and wires are the most common risk to people following a storm. If you see wires on the ground or broken poles do not approach them. Do not try to work around them, and do not move them yourself. We understand the desire to help, and the adrenaline rush, but do not make yourself part of the emergency. If you encounter infrastructure damage, stay back and immediately call 911.

During these types of situations, FreeState is prepared and ready for a quick response.

If you come upon a crew working, stay back and allow them to focus on doing their job. If they ask you to relocate, they are doing so for your safety and theirs. Even the most routine job can be dangerous and a risk to the crew's safety and yours.

Give crews room to work. Slow down if you approach them on the roadside. In a storm recovery situation there are poles, wire and other debris in the area. If you must be out, take your time and pay attention to your surroundings.

It's easy to get caught looking or snapping photos, but please remember that distractions while driving are not only a hazard for you, but also those working to help our neighbors.

**AS ALWAYS, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS
CONTACT US AT 800-794-1989 OR
CUSTOMERSERVICE@FREESTATE.COOP.**



Steve Foss

The desire to help is great, and adrenaline starts to rush, but don't make yourself part of the emergency.

Operation Round-Up®

Right on Target

BY SARAH FARLEE



Lexie Welsh, Valley Victors 4-H Club member, practices her archery skills north of Oskaloosa. The 9-year-old is in her second year of shooting with the Jefferson County Archery Club.



The Jefferson County Archery project provides young archers with skills beyond the bow and arrow. The Operation Round-Up® funding from FreeState assisted the group in finishing their travel trailer.

A \$500 grant from Operation Round-Up® hit the mark for outfitting the group's travel trailer.

LEXIE WELSH got her first archery bow for her fifth birthday. At just shy of knee-high to a grasshopper, she took a challenge to hit a balloon hanging from a tree. With the snap of the bow and the pop of that balloon, a love of archery was born. Now, the 9-year-old Valley Victors 4-H'er is in her second year of the archery project where her love for shooting her bow is being molded into a passion.

"I love doing archery," says Lexie. "It's hard though."

Lexie's mom, **DIANNA WELSH**, says she hopes Lexie learns discipline from participation in the sport.

"I just want her to have to work hard at something," says Dianna. "I want her to gain that work ethic by having to work to get better and have fun while doing it."

Lexie does have fun while out on the shooting range, and so do the other 28 children from 10 local clubs who participate under the direction of **C.J. BUNCE**. Bunce shot archery as a young 4-H'er under the direction of his parents because the county didn't have a formal team.

"There were myself and one or two other kids who competed, but we did all of our own practicing and learning on our own at home," Bunce said. "My last year in 4-H three guys came in and started an archery program with formal practices every week."

Bunce added that the leaders were familiar with archery, but not the 4-H meet protocols. As a senior shooter Bunce helped the group get started and learn the technicalities of 4-H tournament shooting. Bunce enjoyed helping younger kids and even though he was one year from being aged out of the program he was determined to give others an opportunity.

"I decided that I wanted to give 4-H'ers the opportunity I (we) never had when I was in 4-H," said Bunce. "I want to give new kids an opportunity to try archery and those who are serious about it an opportunity to practice more if they can't shoot at home or if they don't have a family member with experience. An extra set of eyes helps a lot even if they do have family members that shoot."

4-H archery, which runs from April to September, not only teaches safety and techniques, it teaches discipline. A couple benefits of 4-H are developing leadership skills and meeting and learning from others. **GEORGE MEYER**, a Lucky 4 4-H'er from Oskaloosa, says the best part of archery isn't just hitting targets.

"I think I've learned just as much about life skills as I have archery," says Meyer, who has been shooting for six years. "I've learned how to interact with people, and I've learned valuable skills about how to compete."

Other 4-H'ers in the program echoed Meyer, including **JAYDEN HERRMAN**, a first-year shooter from the Valley Falls Prosperity 4-H Club. Herrman is a first-year shooter who wanted to explore shooting sports. "My friends were doing it, and I thought, why not at least give it a try," Herrman said.

Senior shooters **WYATT BARNETT** and **ZOEY REINKE** hope that shooting will stay with them beyond their 4-H years, not only as a skill, but in the lessons they've learned.

"I think shooting has really taught me how to maintain my cool in pressure situations," said Barnett, who has been shooting for 10 years. "I have come a long way since I started."

Reinke wants to continue shooting long term.

"This has become a hobby for me," said Reinke, from the Valley Falls Prosperity club. "I've loved getting to know people and making new friends and just learning new things along the way."

Learning is the focus of these 4-H'ers. Each time they string the bow is an opportunity to not only get better, but be better.

The team, under the direction of Bunce, has been successful. The program sent 14 to the state match in Lindsborg and brought home 10 top-three individual medals and three top-three team medals.

FreeState's Operation Round-Up® assisted the project in constructing their travel trailer pulled by Bunce to meets and practice for the kids. The trailer makes it easy and safer to transport the equipment, helps keep the equipment in good condition and has colorful decals on the side that instill a sense of pride in the participants.

"We were just boxing everything up each time, and it really started to wear on the equipment," said Bunce. "This trailer helps us keep everything together, and hung and secured inside the trailer so we can keep the equipment nice and usable for many years to come."

For more information on the Jefferson County Archery program, contact the **MEADOWLARK DISTRICT OR JEFFERSON COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE**. For more information on Operation Round-Up®, visit WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/OPERATIONROUNDUP.



C.J. Bunce (right), archery leader, demonstrates bow stringing to Lexie Welsh and her mother, Dianna. Bunce is a certified archery instructor and helped start the program in the 2008-2009 4-H year as a shooter and has been the county leader for five years.



The archery trailer was purchased for the team, and Operation Round-Up® funding assisted with building functional storage for the project-owned equipment. Proper storing and transporting helps maintain the equipment.



ASK Matt

Energy Use Coordinator **MATT LAMBERT** will answer questions about energy efficiency, renewables, co-op programs, and everything in between. Email Matt your question at askmatt@freestate.coop.

Dear Matt,
April and May are usually some of my lowest electric bills. My bill is lower, but I still think it seems a little high, considering I have not had electric heat and still have not turned on my air conditioner.

I think many of us look forward to the summer and spring because we consider them “shoulder months” providing us some of our lowest energy bills. About half a home’s energy usage is heating and cooling, and if Mother Nature allows us to cut that out of our month’s usage, we often see a slight decline in our bill.

Having had some combination of this question several times, I have noted a few common themes that may help you understand why your bill may not have dropped as much as you would have liked.

With our wet spring, some sump pumps are having to run around the clock. Depending on the horsepower these units run anywhere from 300 to 800-watt units. At ¼ HP at 600 watts

running all the time would add 430 kilowatt-hours (kWh) to your electric bill.

All the rain also meant running our dehumidifiers all day. These consume 450 to 650 watts. At 500 watts, a dehumidifier could add 360 kWh if running constantly.

Of course, these useful devices are often necessary this time of year.

Another sneaky springtime load is heat lamps for chickens or other animals. A couple of 250-watt heat lamps are comparable to a continually running sump pump or dehumidifier regarding your electric bill.

Finally, here’s a spring cleaning tip that may help with your electric bills. I am often surprised how many refrigerators and freezers folks have plugged in, and some with nothing in them. If you have an older, less efficient model not in use anymore, consider cleaning it out and unplugging it all together. Don’t forget about units in garages and sheds which take more energy to function, especially in the warmer months. Mini fridges may also be a culprit, especially after a teenager moved out of the house and left the fridge powered on.



GETTY IMAGES/PPA RT

Capital Credit Retirements

Take a look at your July bill! You will see a bill credit for your portion of retired capital credits.

After reviewing the financial health of the cooperative, the board decided to retire capital credits, at which time all or part of each member’s allocated amount is refunded. FreeState uses

a hybrid LIFO/FIFO system to retire. This mean all members will see the benefit of capital credits!

FreeState has both short-term and long-term financial goals that aim to keep rates stable for the next three to five years. The ability to retire capital credits means the cooperative is on

track with these goals and is financially viable.

For more in-depth information on capital credits and how they work, **VISIT WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/CAPITALCREDITS OR CALL OUR OFFICE AT 800-794-1989 WHERE OUR STAFF WILL BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU.**