

We're prepared for fall storms

After a battering from spring storms, including one of our sister co-ops being directly hit by a tornado and dozens of deaths in southern Kentucky, memories of Hurricane Helene's havoc might have dimmed. It's been nearly a year, but I haven't forgotten the widespread damage that began early on that last Friday in September.

Homes and businesses in Fleming-Mason Energy's service area were left in the dark when winds in excess of 60 miles per hour uprooted trees, causing extensive power line damage. Heavy rainfall washed away roads and bridges, slowing lineworkers efforts to restore power.

Fall is here, and it's the peak of hurricane and tropical storm season. Scientists are predicting an above-normal number of major hurricanes. It's unknown whether these storms will affect our part of the world. Rest assured, though, your co-op is prepared to respond to any severe weather impact.

That preparation begins long before a storm is forecast. To achieve the goal of restoring power quickly and safely after a storm, our employees monitor the grid 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and keep our

infrastructure in good repair. We also take preventive steps such as managing vegetation along our power lines to minimize damage from falling trees and limbs.

Preparation is also the key to our storm plan. Dispatchers closely monitor for threatening weather. If a damaging storm is spotted, co-op employees are mobilized and properly equipped to respond as soon as safely possible. Each employee plays an important role in the restoration plan and has been trained to be ready as needed.

We'll keep you informed about restoration efforts by posting frequently on Facebook, www.facebook.com/FMECooperative. You can also track our progress online at our Outage Center at outage.fme.coop.

September is National Preparedness Month. It serves as a reminder that all of us can be proactive in dealing with the threat of a power outage at any time of the year. Before a severe storm is in the local forecast, I urge you to visit our Outage Center for information you need to stay safe



TIM WEBB

and comfortable should a prolonged outage occur. One recommendation I'll make is to be sure you have an emergency kit ready at all times. It's critical to ensure safety for you and your family. Here's hoping for a fall full of blue-sky days. But if the storms come, know you're your co-op is prepared. And we hope you are, too.

At your service, 24/7

Should you experience an electric outage, cooperative employees are standing by to respond 24/7. To report an outage, call 1-800-464-3144.

Brandon Hunt
PRESIDENT & CEO



Contact us:
In Fleming County:
(606) 845-2661

Other Counties:
(800) 464-3144

Hours:
7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

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Time for a tune-up

Schedule a heating system inspection for energy savings, peace of mind

With late summer hot spells still dominating the daily forecast, it's hard to think about the health of your heating system. But now, before you need it, is exactly when you should be scheduling maintenance for it.

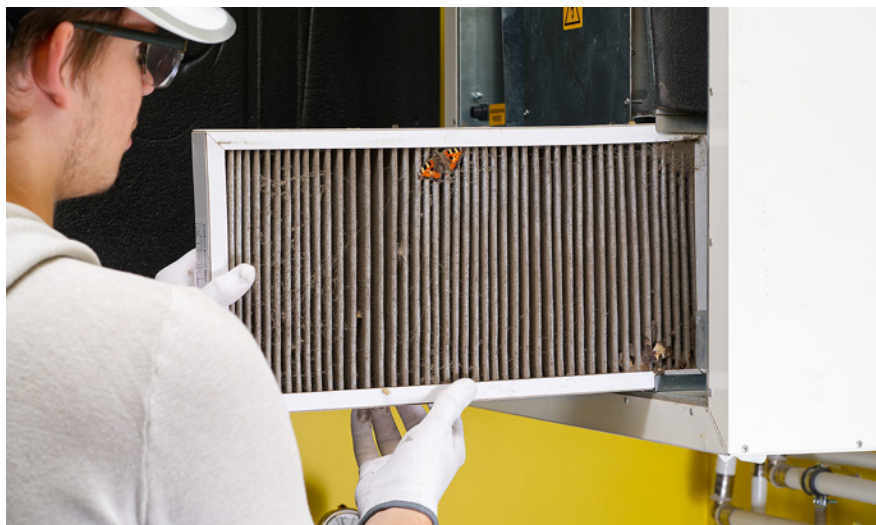
"Don't put it off until you wake up in a cold house one morning," advises Michael Parker, Fleming-Mason Energy's residential energy advisor. "It never fails that your heating system will need repairs when you need it most, and there's a long waiting list for the repairman."

A simple tune-up can help ensure your electric furnace or heat pump is working properly before the cold sets in. Heating systems should be inspected every year, in advance of seasonal changes.

Parker lists these benefits of having a fall checkup:

- Improved performance. Regular maintenance provides an opportunity to identify issues the system may be experiencing and make applicable adjustments, repairs or replacements to ensure better heating performance.
- Increased energy efficiency. A well-maintained system operates more efficiently, potentially reducing energy consumption and lowering your utility bill.
- Prevent costly repairs. Addressing minor issues early can prevent the need for expensive emergency repairs and replacements later on.
- Prolong equipment life. Regular maintenance and inspections can significantly extend the life of your HVAC system, saving you money on replacement costs in the long run.

Take a moment on National Tune-Up Day, Thursday, Sept. 25, to schedule a professional servicing of your furnace or heat pump. Having a well-maintained heating system provides peace of mind that you won't be left in the cold this winter.



Electric buses deliver on cost savings, performance

Fleming County School District sees operational and financial benefits

At a recent meeting of school transportation professionals, Kerri Marshall was one of the most popular people in the room—for one specific reason.

“Everyone wanted to know about our electric buses,” says the transportation director for the Fleming County School District served by Fleming-Mason Energy.

The northeastern Kentucky school system is one of only a few in the state that has adopted electricity-powered buses. Fleming County has the state’s largest electric school bus fleet, too.

“I love them. The drivers love them. The kids love them. And the county really likes all the money we’re saving,” Marshall says about the electric fleet now rolling on county roads for the second school year.

A Clean School Bus Program grant from the Environmental Protection Agency helped Fleming Schools purchase 24 electric buses. Of the 28 buses now running school-day routes, 17 are electric and the rest are older diesel- and propane-powered models. The remaining electric buses are reserved as substitutes and for special transportation.

During the 2024-25 school year Marshall compared the operational and maintenance expenses of electric buses versus fossil fuel vehicles. “The gas savings are just great,” she reports.

Diesel fuel costs averaged about 50 cents per mile. Power to charge electric buses averaged 15 cents per

mile, a 70% per mile cost savings.

The transition to electric school buses has also produced a significant reduction in maintenance and repair expenses. Upkeep for Fleming’s aging diesel buses costs thousands of dollars annually. The electric buses average less than \$400 in replacement parts and service per year—savings stemming from having fewer parts and no engine or exhaust system requiring maintenance or repairs.

An added benefit has been drivers’ positive response to switching to electric buses. “I wasn’t expecting our drivers to love them as much as they do,” Marshall says. They like the numerous built-in safety features present on the electric models.

Drivers also appreciate the cleaner, quieter operation of the electric buses. Having no combustion engine, the buses don’t emit exhaust fumes that compromise air quality. The absence of an engine also means they run quietly.

The only hurdle with adopting the new vehicles has been acquiring the necessary battery charging equipment. Nationwide demand has slowed installations of all the infrastructure needed.

“We have more buses than chargers,” Marshall explains. This limits the number of electric buses the school system can keep on the road



TIM WEBB

simultaneously. When more chargers can be installed, more money-saving electric buses will be assigned to daily routes.

Marshall thanks Fleming-Mason Energy employees for helping the school system install dual charging stations at two schools. They also placed smaller individual charging units that allow drivers in remote areas of the county to charge their buses at home each night.

“Seeing this project move from concept to reality has been incredibly rewarding,” says Brandon Hunt, president and CEO of Fleming-Mason Energy. “Our partnership with Fleming County Schools continues to demonstrate how collaboration between education and the energy sector can spark meaningful innovation.”

Transitioning to electric buses will save thousands of dollars for Fleming County taxpayers. The savings will allow school officials to make room in the budget for a much-needed bus maintenance garage.

Harvest fall savings with Co-op Connections

If you look forward to pumpkin spiced everything, the serenity of bonfires and the aroma of chili, let Co-op Connections add some more flavor to your fall.

This free app is an exclusive benefit of Fleming-Mason Energy membership. Use it to find discounts on products and services ideal for this time of year.

Having a crowd over to watch the Cats or Cards? Fleming-Mason Energy members can host without spending the most with discounts at local retailers.

If you're making plans for a family

fall break outing, check out the discounts on travel and entertainment from national retailers. You can even save when shopping online. Cardholders receive healthy savings benefits, too, like dental, vision and prescription drugs.

Visit connections.coop to download the Co-op Connections app for on-the-go use on any smartphone. If you'd prefer to use a Co-op Connections card to receive discounts, pick one up at the Fleming-Mason Energy office at 1449 Elizaville Road in Flemingsburg.



This fall or anytime of year, show your Co-op Connections app or card at any participating business to receive their discount. Shop—and save—the co-op way.

DEBUNKING MYTHS about electricity

When it comes to electricity, what you don't know can kill you.

MYTH: When a power line falls on the ground, it automatically becomes dead.

TRUTH: Assume a downed line is a **live line**. You should always stay away, 40 feet or more, even if you don't see sparks. Call your electric cooperative or 911 immediately when you see a downed line so trained personnel can take care of the problem.

MYTH: Rubber gloves and rubber shoes protect you from electricity.

TRUTH: That's true only if they are **100% pure rubber with no holes or tears** (the kind that electrical lineworkers wear and are regularly inspected). The gloves lineworkers wear are laboratory tested to withstand 20,000 volts. Typical cleaning gloves and shoes, which are made with rubber mixed with cheaper materials, aren't going to protect you in an electrical encounter.

