



**FREESTATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

The Outlet

FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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District Offices

McLouth Office
P.O. Box 70
McLouth, KS 66054-0070

Topeka Office
1100 SW Auburn Rd
Topeka, KS 66615

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Tip of the Month

COOKWARE TIP: Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees and your meal will cook just as quickly. **Source:** energy.gov

FROM THE CEO

Considering Solar? Let us Help

We continue to see a rise in the number of members who are interested in solar energy, and we don't think that number will decrease, either.

FreeState supports solar energy, and we want our members to have options. We installed demonstration units at both cooperative offices. Members can stop by and take a look at an operational array and get data to assist in making these decisions.

There are currently 153 members with alternative energy on their property (14 wind turbines and 139 solar arrays), and the average size of solar arrays on our line is 7 kW. To put that into perspective, the two demo units FreeState installed are each 4 kW.

Most members are looking for ways to save money by producing their power, and others are interested in going green. Whatever the reason is for considering solar energy, be aware there is an overwhelming amount of information available. So, what do you do as a homeowner? Call us. We can help make sense of what is out there.

We want to protect our member's investments and provide assistance where we can by making sure you thoroughly understand the real cost of solar power. You might save money, but you will still have a monthly power bill.

FreeState is your trusted energy adviser and we want to help you sort through the available options and what

may work best for you.

FreeState doesn't sell solar or the service, but we want our members to know that we're here to help. So, if you get information at your local county or state fair about solar, take a look at it. If you do choose to install solar, remember that FreeState requires members to complete an application with an application fee of \$325 before the installation process can start. The information you provide will ensure safe and efficient connection to our transmission equipment and the safety of our lineworkers.

Due diligence is not only important when deciding if solar is right for you, but it's also important when selecting a contractor to install the array. Consider recommendations from friends or family or give us a call and we can provide information about local companies.

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



Steve Foss

“Due diligence is not only important when deciding if solar is right for you, it's also important when selecting a contractor.”

COMMUNITY | LEADERSHIP | MEMORIES

COOPERATIVE

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

McLouth Students Attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

ELIZABETH FUNK and **KATIE KUGLIN**, students at McLouth High School, attended the 43rd annual Cooperative Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, from July 12-18, joining students from across Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

Campers experienced indoor skydiving and a STEM educational lab at iFLY. When the group arrived at Glen Eden Resort, nestled in the Rocky Mountains, the campers organized their own cooperatives, starting daily membership meetings and selecting a general manager, board of directors and committees. The weeklong experience also gave participants an authentic camp feel with a hike to Fish Creek Falls, river rafting, a volleyball tournament, swimming, a dance and a talent show.

Several demonstrations and presentations enhanced students' knowledge of the cooperative business model and operations at their electric cooperative. Campers competed to build a model transmission line out of craft supplies, toured Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant and watched a high-voltage safety demonstration.

Elizabeth Funk, McLouth High School

Camp changed my life. Every experience and person affected me, teaching me valuable life skills. Higher elevation gave me altitude sickness, and it taught me independence from my family even when my body was sick and all I wanted was to be home. I learned how to build new connections and be a leader among them. I could go on about how the trip affected me, but I think focusing on one aspect could better explain just how inspired I was. The highlight of this trip was getting the chance to hear from people who were passionate about their careers.

Since I've been in high school, I discovered I had an interest for STEM careers—careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Due to my father's influence, I grew to love engineering, mostly because of my interest in math. On this trip, I met multiple engineers. The first was at a Tri-State power plant. He spoke to us about how a turbine operated to create electricity. At first, he was extremely quiet and seemed very nervous. The longer he talked about his career, and how the machinery worked, I saw his eyes light up and his voice got louder. He was so passionate about what he did for a living; I knew I was similar to him and wanted to do what he did. Next, I met a few engineers at Trapper Mines. I met an engineer whose job was exclusively to "blow up stuff." I even met some environmental engineers at the strip mine, which surprised me greatly. Because of them, I began to realize how many options there were for engineers.

I am sincerely thankful to the board of directors and members of FreeState. I made so many lifelong memories that I will never forget. I grew as a leader and individual. Each and every camper was forced to go outside of our comfort zones, and it was inspiring to see everyone flourish. I will never forget the connections I made or skills I learned from CYLC.

Katie Kuglin, McLouth High School

Participating in camp was one of the greatest opportunities I have ever had. I've been to a lot of leadership-focused camps before CYLC, and it is by far the most informative, inspiring, well-organized and fun camp I've ever had the privilege to be a part of. The whole camp was filled to the brim with interactive and fun activities, which makes it hard to pick out one favorite.

If I had to choose though, I'd say I most enjoyed visiting

Information and application materials are available now at www.freestate.coop/youth. Applications are due Monday, Feb. 10, 2020.

Trapper Mine and Craig Power Plant. It was very cool to see how coal is stripped from the surface and transported to the power plant. I am passionate about conservation, and learning about the reclamation process for land that is mined and knowing there are many regulations in place to protect the environment was a great thing to learn and experience first-hand.

The barbecue and volleyball tournament was also a ton of fun. It was right at the beginning of the trip when we were still getting to know the people in our groups, and it was a fantastic opportunity to bond with our teammates and other campers while having a good time.

Another one of my favorite experiences was white water rafting. The water was freezing! It was fun to have splash wars. I think we ended up getting splashed a lot more than we splashed others!

I also had the honor of being a member of the youth cooperative board we have for the camp. It was a new experience to make decisions and get to know the other board members throughout the week. Being a board member was a great experience and taught me a lot about how cooperatives function. I thought it was interesting that we got to select our general manager. We took resumes and reviewed them, and even interviewed all the candidates. I've been in interviews before, but I've never been the one asking the questions. It was a new perspective and I was excited to experience that activity.

I want to thank all the FreeState members, board and staff for their support of not only the camp in Colorado, but sending kids like me. I hope someone reads this summary and takes the time to find out more information because CYLC just can't be beat.

I know that the experiences I had and leadership skills I learned will stick with me for the rest of my life. I'm so thankful that I was able to go to camp. It really was the trip of a lifetime!



Katie Kuglin (left) and Elizabeth Funk (right), both McLouth High School students, were all smiles in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp experience. They took part in various activities that promoted the cooperative business model, leadership and STEM careers.



Funk, who wants to be an engineer, takes her turn at skydiving at iFly. The campers also visited a STEM educational lab.



Kuglin, an avid conservationist and animal lover, poses with an eagle following a birds of prey demonstration.



Campers build relationships that last a lifetime. One of the goals of the trip is to build leadership skills and form connections that will strengthen their networks.



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,

DOES MY WATER HEATER USE A LOT OF ENERGY?

Water heating is something we sometimes forget about when it comes to energy conservation, but saving energy here is easier than you think. Water heaters are large users of energy behind heating and cooling your home. Most estimates I have seen say between 12-14% of your home's energy usage is from the water heater.

I have seen water heaters in uninsulated garages and in other areas in the home that are not protected from the elements. If you have a situation like this I would make it a priority to insulate the space it is in. Units can overflow, have elements go bad, or other malfunctions that can also impact the amount of energy it uses. So, check on the water heater from time to time. It's something we tend to overlook even though we use it daily (much like electricity).

Most members have a tanked water heater that runs on propane, natural gas or electric. No matter how you heat water,

you can save by doing a few simple things.

Set the water temperature to 120 degrees or less. If you are a home of only one or two, try setting that temperature at 115 degrees and see if that doesn't make even a slight difference. If that doesn't work, you can return the temperature where it was.

Insulating your water heater with a wrap will help insulate older models. Most newer water heaters have good insulation built in, but adding a wrap around the unit does not hurt. The hot water lines coming out of the water heater are another place to insulate. Make sure you don't have any dripping connections or faucets that are also wasting water.

Another great tip is to drain a couple of gallons of water from the bottom of the unit annually to reduce sediment buildup.

The fastest way to reduce the amount of hot water you need is to find alternatives. For example, wash laundry in cold water, and rinse dishes in cold water before loading a dishwasher. These are the easiest ways to start saving a little when it comes to your home's water heater.

Community Health Fair & Member Appreciation Day

Join Us Oct. 1 in McLouth

FreeState Electric Cooperative is hosting their annual health fair and member appreciation day on **TUESDAY, OCT. 1, FROM 4 TO 6 P.M.** It is the 11th year for the event that also includes a community soap drive to assist multiple food pantries across the area.

This event is open to the public. Local businesses will be on hand to distribute

information regarding physical, mental and financial health. Flu shots will also be available from the Jefferson County Health Department. There will be a cost for the flu shots, and the health department does accept insurance.

A meal will be provided and there is no charge to attend the event, but members are encouraged to bring new soap items to donate or make a cash donation.

The FreeState offices in McLouth and Topeka will be accepting soap items or cash donations until Oct. 31. Donations can be dropped off from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at either office.

Items to collect:

- ▶ Liquid soap (hand and body)
- ▶ Bar soap
- ▶ Shampoo
- ▶ Laundry detergent
- ▶ Dish soap
- ▶ Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- ▶ Other personal care items

Community involvement is the cooperative difference at work. Your co-op needs your help. No donation is too small. The event will be held at the McLouth office at 507 N. Union. For more information about the event **CALL TOLL FREE AT 800-796-1989 OR VISIT WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/HEALTHFAIR.**

