FALL RIVER
FLASHES

September 2023

Committed to safely and economically provide reliable energy and other services which bring value to its membership.

TAKE SAFETY HOME: HOME HEATING SYSTEM

Cold weather comes quickly in Fall River Electric's service territory—so now is the time to inspect your heating system. Here's a handy checklist:

- Check and replace filters;
- Test thermostats, inspect belts and pulleys, and check electrical connections; and
- If you have a gas or propane system, check for leaks.

Doing an HVAC inspection can extend the life of your system and reduce repair costs.

OFFICES TO BE CLOSED ON COLUMBUS DAY

Fall River Electric offices will be closed Monday, October 9, 2023, in recognition of Columbus Day. A United States national holiday since 1937, Columbus Day commemorates the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the New World on October 12, 1492. The Italian-born explorer intended to chart a Western sea route to China, India, and the fabled gold and spice islands of Asia; instead, he landed in the Bahamas. As with all holidays, Fall River crews are on stand-by in case of a power outage. Should you lose power during the Columbus Day weekend, please call 800.632.5726 and a crew will be dispatched immediately.

Fall River Partners With Idaho National Lab

Fall River Electric and the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) held a ribbon cutting in July to celebrate the launch of the Microgrid in a Box system located at Fall River's Felt hydro facility. The new system was developed by INL and sponsored by the Department of Energy's Water Power Technologies Office.

The Microgrid in a Box is designed to enable the integration of energy sources such as hydropower, solar panels, wind turbines, or even a small nuclear reactor to provide a reliable power supply in a remote or off-the-power-grid location during an emergency situation, such as a wildfire, earthquake, or other disaster that would interrupt electrical service through the normal grid.

Fall River crews delivered power directly from the Felt hydro plant on the Teton River to the Microgrid in a Box that then simulated how that hydropower could be used to restore power after a simulated electrical grid blackout. "Restarting the power grid is not as simple as flipping a switch," says Kurt Myers, leader of INL's Energy and Grid Systems Integration group. "It requires a steady power supply, such as the Felt hydro, that many utilities cannot provide. We are showing how a small community can recover from a power grid loss and continue to provide power to a limited number of facilities during an emergency."

"Fall River Electric Cooperative is focused on investing in technology that can improve the lives of our owner-members and this partnership with INL is a prime example," says Fall River CEO Bryan Case. "The Microgrid in a Box test has accelerated our ability to deploy a hydropower and battery system to provide our members with electricity in the event of natural disasters or other local emergencies."

Alejandro Moreno, the acting assistant United States Secretary for Energy Efficiency, and John Wagner, the INL director, were both on hand for the ribbon cutting and demonstration.

Counter clockwise from top: The ribbon cutting ceremony at the Fall River Felt hydro facility, (left to right) Fall River Electric IT Manager Shannon Hill, Alejandro Moreno, the Assistant U.S. Secretary of Energy Efficiency, and INL Director John Wagner; Moreno and Wagner learn more about Felt's hydro turbines; and Moreno addresses the demonstration crowd.

Lower Snake River Dams Update

The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association recently released a study conducted by consultant FCS Group that evaluated the impacts to public services, air quality, and more in twelve counties in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon that would be impacted by breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River.

The report stated, in part, that "…breaching the dams would impact some of the Northwest's most vulnerable people, causing job loss and demonstrates that existing economic and social justice concerns will grow exponentially should dam breaching occur." Communities in the study area are nearly ten times more dependent on agriculture compared to the national average, and the loss of barge transportation would likely bankrupt many of the 7,700 farms that employ about 15 percent of the region's workforce. Agricultural stakeholders support salmon recovery but say dam removal is not a silver bullet to automatically restore fish populations.

"The Lower Snake River dams are an easy target, but they are not the problem," says U.S. Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington State. The problems are multifaceted, she explained, ranging from predators like sea lions and birds to poor ocean conditions, habitat loss, and climate change.

Courtney Flatt of Northwest News Network & News Data's Clearing Up contributed to this report.

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Where Service Matters

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All Our Offices Are Open
Monday - Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm

Fall River's FLASHES newsletter is printed on recycled paper and is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Products certified by FSC directly support responsible forest management.

Want your Fall River *FLASHES* faster? Click *www.fallriverelectric.com* and then select the tab "My Cooperative" followed by the drop-down menu "Fall River Electric Newsletter."

Keep up to date, including on power outage information, by "liking" Fall River Electric on Facebook at *www.facebook.com/fallriverrec*.

Harvest Workers Urged To Reap A Safe Harvest

It can be an exciting and exhausting time; the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers nationally are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

"Things people see every day can fade from view and in the busyness of harvest time, it's easy for farm workers to forget about the power lines overhead," says Richard McCracken of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. "But failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight."

Review farm activities that take place around power lines, and needed safety protocols, with all workers. Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines—above, below, and to the side—a 360-degree rule. Always lower grain augers before moving them, even if it's only a few feet. Variables like wind, uneven ground, shifting weight, or other conditions can combine to create an unexpected result. Also, use extreme caution when raising the bed of a grain truck.

Farm workers should take these steps to ensure a safer harvest season:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.

- As with any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles, or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust, and dirt contamination.

Operators of farm equipment or vehicles must also know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away, and call 911. Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. It is very important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

For more information on farm electrical safety, visit *www.SafeElectricity.org*.

DIY Prep For Fall & Winter

Plugging up energy-wasting gaps, holes, and cracks can not only make your home warmer this coming winter, but may also save on your energy bills.

Here are some tips to seal out the cold:

1. For windows that you won't open until spring, seal them shut with temporary caulking, which you can press into place and easily peel off when winter is over.

2. To block cold air from blowing in around an electrical outlet, remove the cover plate and press a soft-rubber gasket over the outlet. Replace the cover plate.

3. Use minimal-expanding foam to fill holes and gaps around all wall penetrations, including holes for cables, vents, and pipes.

What steps can you take around doors?
Install a door sweep along the bottom of exterior doors to block out cold air and seal gaps between the door and side jams with long pieces of weather stripping. These easy-to-do, inexpensive steps can mean a warmer home this fall and winter.

Your New Billing Form Coming In September

Watch your mail in September for Fall River Electric's new billing forms, which were introduced at our annual Energy Expo in June. Forms are printed on both sides for easier viewing of your kilowatt hour daily use, your monthly charges and credits, and your energy usage during the past twelve months.


FALL RIVER
Your Trusted Energy Partner
PREVIOUS BILL
CURRENT BILL
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE
82.19
Due Date 02/27/23
HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR FIRE EXTINGUISHER LATELY?