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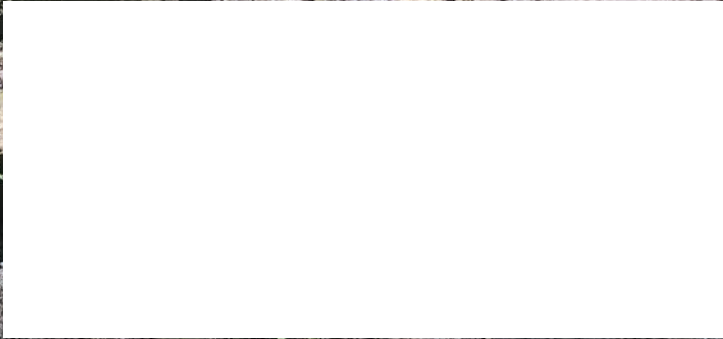
# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

May 2020

NEWS



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STATE OF MIND



TAYLOR ELECTRIC  
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# TEC BOARD CHAIRMAN NAMED CHIEF OF CFC BOARD

**T**aylor Electric Cooperative Board Chairman Dean Tesch, who was recently elected president of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Board of Directors, can remember his grandparents describing what it was like when power came to their farm decades ago, and he's seen firsthand the smiles a flipped switch can bring to rural Guatemalans.



These humbling experiences serve as a strong reminder of the importance his new role at CFC can play in changing lives and improving communities. "I've always viewed CFC as a valued partner rather than a financial vendor," explains Tesch. "CFC staff go beyond the call to provide valuable services, and in a very real way, are part of Taylor Electric and our extended family."

## Former Credit Union Director Promotes Teamwork

Tesch was elected to represent District 5 on the CFC board in 2015 after serving as a director for Taylor since 2006 and assuming the chairmanship in 2014. "My first cooperative leadership role was as a board member of a local credit union," Tesch recalls. "I was drawn to the idea of people working together in their community to meet their needs and solve problems."

Taylor Electric serves around 4,500 members in four rural counties in central Wisconsin. "I relished the opportunity to become a director at my electric cooperative to empower our members and community," says Tesch, who is also a former director for the cooperative's wholesale power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative.

## Guatemala Trip Reinforces Power of Co-ops

Last year Tesch had the opportunity to empower others in a very big way. He participated in an NRECA International trip with line workers from Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois. The effort, Partners for a Brighter Tomorrow, brought power to 210 rural citizens in Tierra Blanca Chixoy, Guatemala.

"This experience, watching linemen from Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois help electrify Guatemalan villages, provided me the opportunity to witness the life-

changing event of receiving power for the first time," Tesch relates. "This experience reinforced the importance electric cooperatives play in our communities across the country and the world."

CFC and National Cooperative Services Corporation contributed a combined \$125,000 to the three statewide organizations that sponsored the trip. "I'm proud to be part of the leadership team of an organization that fosters international efforts the way CFC does."

## Former Teacher Moves from Teaching ABCs to 1-2-3s

Tesch's public service began as an elementary school teacher where he learned how to be ready to talk and work with anyone, anywhere in the community. He left teaching to start a financial planning practice where he helps his neighbors and community plan for a more secure financial future.

"My work as a certified financial planner has really helped me better understand CFC's complex financial instruments and positions," remarks Tesch, who has also served his profession as chairman of the Certified Financial Planner Board's Item Writing Group.

Tesch is also involved with his church as a trained and certified organist and directs a handbell choir. In his free time he tends his land, his home, and his wife's horses along with their two shelties. He's also known for sharing Wisconsin cheese curds during board meetings and special chocolate cheese during the holidays.

Tesch earned a bachelor's degree from Martin Luther College and master's degree in education from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. He is an NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director and has earned the NRECA Board Leadership certificate. —Article courtesy of CFC



Taylor Electric Board Chairman Dean Tesch (front row, second from right) was on hand in Guatemala last fall when a remote village was hooked up with electric power for the first time through Partners for a Better Tomorrow, an NRECA International project.



# ELECTRIC CO-OPS ARE CONTRIBUTING TO A SMARTER GRID

It's a familiar scene: poles and wires stretching into the distance alongside a rural highway. This image might appear no different now than it did many years ago. But look more closely.

Invisible to most of us is an overlay of new equipment—chips, sensors, and fiber—linking remote distribution infrastructure to the utility's operations center using advanced communications technology.

Those iconic poles and wires are now part of a “smart grid” that can be operated using software and automation. For electric cooperatives, “digitalization” of electric infrastructure kicked into high gear in 2013 when the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) funded new technology research at 23 electric co-ops across the country. That partnership has now evolved into a robust research program exploring everything from drones and smart solar inverters to cybersecurity training and carbon capture technology.

Here are some of the ways co-op consumer-members are already benefiting from a smarter grid:

**Fewer power outages.** In certain situations, smart feeder switching can re-route power around problems such as downed power lines, which reduces the number of people affected by an outage.

**Pre-pay programs.** Most co-op pre-pay billing programs no longer impose hefty reconnection fees because, thanks to advanced digital meters, the co-op doesn't need to send out a truck to physically reconnect the home.

**Cost savings from increased efficiency.** Many of the new technologies are improving the efficiency of co-op operations—from reducing the amount of electricity lost in transmission to reducing the need for sending out trucks. These cost savings are passed on to co-op members.

**Improved safety for co-op workers and the members.** The data from smart technologies provide utility operators



a more detailed view of what is happening on the electric system. Co-ops have found that the data can help them identify electrical hazards faster.

The research partnership between electric cooperatives and the U.S. DOE, including the national laboratories, has enabled co-ops nationwide to increase their total solar energy capacity, install cutting-edge batteries for energy storage and microgrids, develop data analytics tools, and find new ways to capture emissions from coal and natural gas power plants.

This partnership gives electric co-ops in some of the most remote regions of the country access to an amazing network of researchers, including researchers at Carnegie Mellon University, Purdue University, and the University of California at Berkeley, to name a few.

In exchange, the researchers can see how these new technologies operate in the real world.

So, the next time you are driving down a long highway and you see poles and wires stretching into the far distance, know there's more to that system than meets the eye. While the electricity in your home powers the toaster just as it always did, that electricity is more efficient, more reliable, and safer thanks to innovation made possible by cooperation.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During warmer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.





May is National Electrical Safety Month, which is the perfect time to evaluate the safety of your home's electrical system. Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.



## 4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.



**1. Electrical outlets:** Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



**2. Electrical wiring:** Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, leave this one to the pros and contact a qualified electrician.

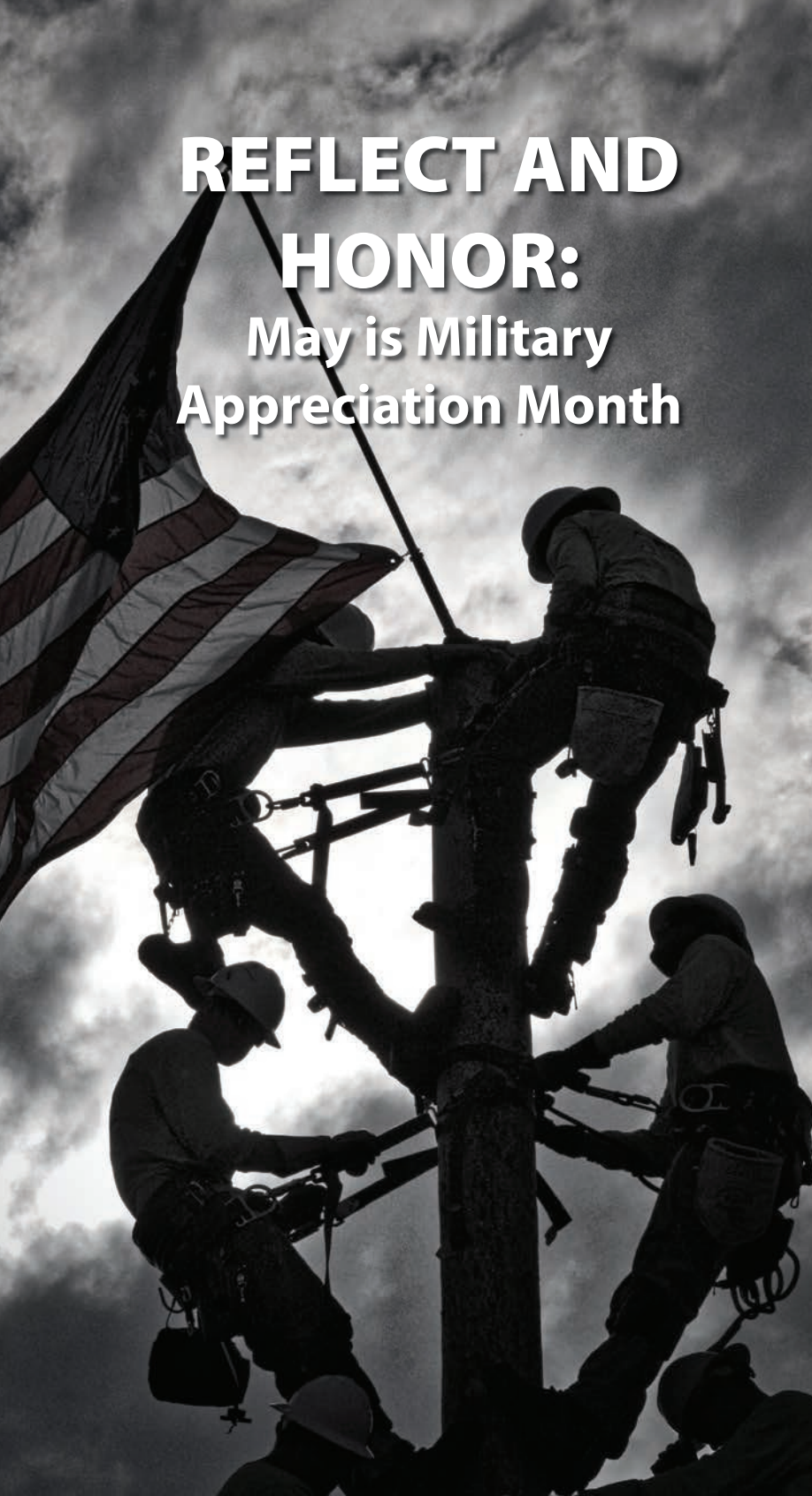


**3. Overloaded cords and outlets:** Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.



**4. Old appliances:** Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.

# REFLECT AND HONOR: May is Military Appreciation Month



While enjoying various Memorial Day festivities this month, I hope you will join me in pausing to reflect on the sacrifices of our country's veterans and their families. I am especially thankful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and in the words of John F. Kennedy, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

At Taylor Electric Cooperative, we are grateful to have veterans within our ranks, including Lineman Ron Mayer who served in the Army/National Guard from 1975–1987 and Lineman Tim Habermeyer who served in the U.S. Air Force from 2004–2008. We are proud to serve veterans and their families within our local community as well.

We are not alone in our efforts to honor and serve veterans. Taylor Electric is part of a network of more than 900 electric cooperatives across the country that support and honor our nation's veterans of all generations.

At the national level, we support the Vets Power Us program, which is aimed at employing and honoring veterans, active military and their spouses. This effort helps veterans understand potential career paths with electric co-ops and in turn, provides co-ops with best practices in attracting, onboarding, and retaining veterans.

The Department of Defense is one of the largest energy consumers worldwide and the single largest energy consumer in the United States.

Not only do we pause on Memorial Day to remember the sacrifice and service of those who gave all, but the month also holds several other military anniversaries and events, including Military Spouse Appreciation Day on May 8, and Armed Forces Day on May 16.

Taylor Electric is proud to be a part of the electric cooperative network that honors and supports veterans of all ages, ranks, and branches of the military. Please join us in taking a moment to show your appreciation to a veteran—not just this month, but every month.—*Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO*

## **Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO**

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