

## Happy Independence Day

*Co-op values unite us all*

This month, America marks 248 years since the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, concluding “That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States.”

It’s America’s birthday, and there’s no better time to celebrate the values that unite us, not only as Americans, but also as a cooperative family.

Fleming-Mason Energy is guided by seven internationally recognized principles. Just as our nation’s leaders swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, members and leaders of your cooperative have a duty to uphold these principles.

As I reflect upon our cooperative and American values, three of those principles seem especially relevant to me.

### **COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE 2: DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL**

Each of our members has an equal say in the guidance of Fleming-Mason Energy. When our board of directors is elected, each co-op member has a single vote. That is as American a principle as you can find.

The board of directors of a co-op makes important strategic decisions for the organization, while the day-to-day running of Fleming-Mason Energy is entrusted to the co-op manager and employees.

### **COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE 4: AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE**

As we mark Independence Day, don’t forget that Fleming-Mason Energy is also independent. Our responsibility is to serve our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

### **COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE 6: COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES**

We work with East Kentucky Power to provide power so that we can distribute it to the communities we serve. Our membership in both the national and Kentucky electric cooperative associations helps Fleming-Mason Energy leverage the collective strength and influence of co-ops to best serve you and keep your rates affordable.

We are proud of our co-op and of our country, and



we know that to truly serve both, we cannot take either of them for granted.

That means staying engaged with the issues that affect us and doing our patriotic duty to show up at election time. That’s why Fleming-Mason Energy is a strong supporter of the Co-ops Vote initiative to make sure our voices are heard in our representative government.

I hope you and your family have a safe and fulfilling Fourth of July, and that we can each take a moment to reflect on the values that unite us all.

### **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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**Follow us on:**



*Safety Matters*

# Is your child ready to mow the lawn?

For many Kentucky kids, mowing the lawn is as much a rite of passage as getting a driver's license. Lawn mowing is good exercise, teaches responsibility and lets kids earn some pocket money. But it can also be dangerous, cautions Dustin Skaggs, Fleming-Mason Energy's safety director.

The American Association of Pediatrics reports around 10,000 children are seen in emergency rooms with injuries related to lawn mowers each year. Most of those injuries are largely preventable.

"Children should be at least 12 to operate a push mower, and 16 to operate a riding mower," says Skaggs. "Regardless of age, a child needs to show maturity, strength, and coordination before being allowed to mow the lawn."

Fleming-Mason Energy urges members to teach children these mowing safety steps recommended by safety experts associated with Kentucky Children's Hospital.

- Dress for the job by wearing protective eyewear, hearing protection, long pants, and closed-toe shoes.
- Prepare the mowing area by clearing any debris, such as rocks, twigs and toys.



TOPSELLER/SHUTTERSTOCK

- Don't operate a mower in the rain or during a thunderstorm.
- Use a mower that has a control to stop the blade if the handle is let go.
- Don't pull the lawn mower backward unless necessary.
- Turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop spinning before crossing gravel paths or roads.
- Keep all pets and younger children away from the mowing area.
- Shut off and cool down the mower before refueling, handling bagger or making any other adjustments to the equipment.
- Don't let other children ride as passengers on riding mowers.

Closely supervise yard mowing until your child can operate power equipment independently.

# Employee spotlight



*Pictured are employees who comprise our accounting, billing and service orders departments. Pictured from left are Jennifer McRoberts, Lauren Fritz, Sierra Cooper, Sonja Smalley, Kristy Turner, Aubrie Montgomery and Heather Dowdy. Not pictured, Britney Smoot.*



*Pictured are employees in our member services department. From left are Tonya Hamilton, Alisha Arrasmith, Christy Watkins and Hannah Plank. Photos: Lori Ulrich*

## Congratulations

*to the 2024 Fleming-Mason Energy Annual Meeting Scholarship winners:*

- Clay Manley – Bath County High School
- Megan Jones – Fleming County High School
- Madison Prather – Fleming County High School
- Elizabeth Womack – Fleming County High School
- Aubrey Hicks – Lewis County High School
- Madelynn Johnson – Lewis County High School
- Katie Switzer – Nicholas County High School
- Isabella Thacker – Nicholas County High School
- Devin Craig – Robertson County High School
- Weston Maxey – Rowan County Senior High School

## GOING CAMPING?

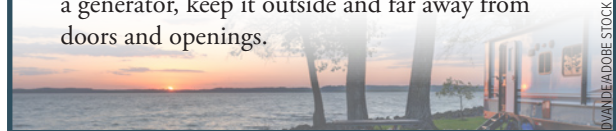
**Don't forget electrical safety**

Happy camping means keeping electrical safety in mind. Here are some tips to keep yourself and your family safe.

**Be prepared.** Pack a fire extinguisher. A general ABC fire extinguisher will cover ordinary combustibles, like wood and grass, and fires involving electrical current.

**Be aware and observant.** Inspect the electrical hookup at your campsite for any damage. Make sure the extension cord to your tent isn't a trip hazard and keep it away from any fires.

**Don't be a statistic.** Every year, people die in tents and campers from carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure your RV is equipped with fire and carbon monoxide detectors. If using a generator, keep it outside and far away from doors and openings.



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# THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Although cooperatives throughout the world serve a wide variety of purposes and use different organizational structures, they generally follow seven principles. These principles are based on the original Rochdale Principles developed in 1844 when the first cooperative was formed in Rochdale, England.

1

## Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

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2

## Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

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3

## Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. With all members having equal voting rights, democracy is the very lifeblood of the cooperative movement.

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4

## Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. They must be free of intervention from governments or other sources so ultimately the members are able to control their own destiny.

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5

## Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative.

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6

## Cooperation Among Cooperatives

This principle charges co-ops to coordinate efforts to achieve greater efficiency. Generation and transmission cooperatives such as East Kentucky Power Cooperative are ideal examples of cooperative unity.

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7

## Concern for Community

Grounded in the values of social responsibility and caring for others, cooperatives are interested in making contributions to a better society at large.