

living with energy

IN IOWA

Grundy County REC
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

OCTOBER 2019

Grundy County REC celebrates a successful year ▶ See Page 5

Visit our website at www.grundycountyrecia.com

GCREC celebrates
National Co-op Month

Co-ops participate in
Electrify Iowa summit

Step inside Iowa's REA
Power Plant Museum

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ON THE COVER

The harvest season is a beautiful time in Iowa. Mother Nature uses her paintbrush to vividly transform the landscape. Harvest also brings more traffic on Iowa's county roads and highways. Whether it's farm equipment or electric cooperative trucks, always remember to move over and slow down to keep yourself and others safe! Photo courtesy of Corn Belt Power Cooperative. ⚡



Celebrating National Co-op Month

BY STEVE SEIDL

You have a unique story to tell because you are part of an electric cooperative community. But if you're like a lot of electric co-op members, you might not feel you know enough to tell that story well. So, here's some help.

About one in 10 Americans receives their power the way you do, from a locally owned electric cooperative. Electric co-ops belong to the people they serve – that would be you and your neighbors. Electric co-ops were first developed in the 1930s because city utilities, owned by investors wanting to make a profit, refused to serve rural America. So, people in rural communities banded together and formed their own local electric co-ops governed by locally elected directors.

October is National Co-op Month, the time of year when cooperatives across the country celebrate the many ways co-ops are unique and more importantly, celebrate the members they serve. This year, we're focusing on our ties to the local community. Your co-op was built *by* the community, *for* the community, so let's look at what that means for you, the members of the co-op.

Your co-op is here to stay.

Since your co-op belongs to the members it serves, it's not going to move out of the country or even across the state. It's staying right where it is.

Your co-op knows you.

Across the country, there are more than 900 electric co-ops, and no two are alike. Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives are committed to providing safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible power to 650,000 Iowans. Because each co-op belongs to the people who live there, the co-op listens to the community it serves. Whether it's working with the

latest energy efficiency technologies or keeping the electric grid safe and secure, your electric co-op can offer solutions that make the most sense *locally*.



Your co-op cares about your community.

The co-op's top priority is to power the community; it's not owned by investors looking only for a good return on their money.

Your co-op also partners with local organizations on community events, fundraisers, youth programs and more. We're your friends and neighbors. By investing in the local community, your electric co-op supports economic development and prosperity for all, right here at home.

Your cooperative is guided by seven key cooperative principles.

These principles are the foundation of everything Iowa's

electric cooperatives do to serve you. They include: Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Members' Economic Participation, Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training and Information; Cooperation Among Cooperatives; and Concern for Community. Each month, throughout the pages of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, you'll see how these principles come to life throughout all of Iowa's 99 counties.

These are just a few of the way cooperatives are unique. To learn more, I encourage you to visit with your local electric co-op employees and attend your co-op's next annual meeting of members. They will be happy to visit with you! ⚡

Steve Seidl is the board president for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and a director for Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win an 8-Quart Instant Pot® Ultra!



The 8-Quart Instant Pot® Ultra electric pressure cooker is the next generation in kitchen appliances. A central dial with a simple turn and press provides added precision in program selection and adjustment. New features include a cooking indicator and steam release reset button. Developed with the latest third-generation technology, an embedded microprocessor monitors the pressure and temperature, keeps time, and adjusts heating intensity and duration. ⚡

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyinowa.com no later than Oct. 31, 2019. You must be a member of one of Iowa's electric cooperatives to win. There's no obligation associated with entering, we don't share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified. The winner of the Nest® Learning Thermostat from the July issue was Jan Bier, Prairie Energy Cooperative.

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

Grundy County REC celebrates National Co-op Month

Every year in October, Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative (GCREC) joins 30,000 cooperatives nationwide to celebrate National Co-op Month, which recognizes the many ways cooperatives are committed to strengthening the local communities they serve. “By the Community, for the Community” is the theme for this year’s celebration, spotlighting the countless ways cooperatives meet the needs of their members and communities.

“Grundy County REC provides electricity to more than 1,800 member accounts in our six-county service area,” says General Manager Vicki Daily. “Delivering safe, reliable, affordable power is our top priority, but we are also invested in our communities because we are locally owned and operated. Revenue generated by the cooperative goes back to Main Street.”

Rural America is served by a network of approximately 1,000

electric cooperatives, most of which were formed in the 1930s and 1940s to bring electricity to the farms and rural communities that large, investor-owned power companies had no interest in serving because of the higher costs of serving low-population and low-density areas. In addition to providing the vital power cooperative members depend on, GCREC engages with local communities through electrical safety demonstrations, the Youth Tour, scholarships and much more.

To celebrate National Co-op Month visit GCREC’s Facebook page or stop in at our office – 303 N Park Avenue, Grundy Center – from now until the end of October for a chance to be entered in a drawing to win a \$100 energy certificate. One entry per member.

Also, search for #CoopMonth on social media to see how cooperatives across the country are celebrating National Co-op Month. ⚡



Grundy County REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
“Our mission is to provide our members safe, reliable, electric service”



Office: Grundy County REC
303 N Park Avenue
P.O. Box 39
Grundy Center, IA 50638

Phone: 319-824-5251 or 1-800-390-7605

Fax: 319-824-3118

Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):
800-292-8989

Website: www.grundycountyrecia.com

Facebook: facebook.com/GrundyCountyREC

E-mail: vdaily@grundycountyrecia.org

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Call our office 24/7: 319-824-5251

General Manager/CEO: Vicki Daily

Officers and Directors:
District 1: Kevin Pruisner
District 2: Norbert Boyle
District 3: Nick Strohhbehn
District 4: Larry Rohach
District 5: Matt Kopriva
District 6: David Schmidt
District 7: Jason Paper

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IN THE COMMUNITY

Grundy County REC presents picture to Mid-Iowa Cooperative

Grundy County REC (GCREC) recently presented a fly over picture of the new Mill Junction complex, located just north of Grundy Center, to Mid-Iowa Cooperative. Employees Mike

Kinley and Rick Eckerman received the picture at their headquarters in Conrad. The Mill Junction complex opened late last year and is a newer member of GCREC. ⚡



Pictured from left to right: Jeff Kolb, executive director, Butler Grundy Alliance; Mike Geerdes, member services manager, GCREC; Mike Kinley, CEO, and Rick Eckerman, assistant manager, Mid-Iowa Cooperative; and Vicki Daily, general manager, GCREC.

Grundy County REC celebrates a successful year!

The 83rd Annual Meeting of the Members was held Thursday, Sept. 5 at the Grundy Center Community Center. This year's meeting was well-attended by approximately 155 members and guests. Prior to the start of the meeting, cookies and farm-to-table ice cream were served from Hansen's Dairy, a member of Grundy County REC.

The meeting opened with the Grundy Center AmVets posting the colors and President Kevin Pruisner leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Elections were conducted and Director Kevin Pruisner (Dike – District 1) and Jason Paper (Conrad – District 7) were re-elected. Matt Kopriva, Traer, was newly elected to serve District 5. They all will serve three-year terms as directors of the cooperative. The Proposed Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation passed with a majority vote.

Board Secretary Larry Rohach read the Notice of the Annual Meeting, while Jason Paper gave the Treasurer's Report. President Pruisner and General Manager Vicki Daily reported on the cooperative's accomplishments, activities and services. We were excited to welcome Peyton Gingery, the 2019 Youth Tour winner, who presented on her incredible experience from her trip in June to Washington, D.C. She thanked the board and membership for the opportunity.

A board reorganizational meeting was held immediately following the meeting, and the following officers were elected: Norb Boyle, president; Larry Rohach, vice president; Jason Paper, secretary; David Schmidt, treasurer; and Nick Strohbehn, assistant secretary/treasurer.

Annual Meeting attendees each received a \$10 cash registration gift and 10 door prizes of \$100 were

awarded. Attendees also had the opportunity to sign up in a separate drawing for a smoker.

Thank you to our members who attended your co-op's Annual Meeting! 🌱



Winners (pictured from left to right): Larry Sevcik, Toledo; Bevely Caputo, Conrad; JoAnn Hippen, Parkersburg; Mrs. John Hayek, Toledo; Donald Adams, Dike; Curtis Bakker, Dike; Robert W. Yuska, Hudson; Jill May, Grundy Center; St. Wenceslaus Church, Traer, and Steven Rash, Clutier.



Nancy Buskohl of Grundy Center won the smoker, which was presented by Mike Geerdes, GCREC.



Peyton Gingery, GCREC's Youth Tour winner, spoke at the Annual Meeting.



Grundy County REC's line crew (pictured from left to right): Erik Freese, Tyler Thomas, Tony Sienknecht, Aaron Bird and Karl Nielsen were available to talk to members and remind them about the Move Over Slow Down safety law.



Grundy County REC directors (pictured from left to right): Norb Boyle, Nick Strohbehn, David Schmidt, Matt Kopriva, Kevin Pruisner, Jason Paper and Larry Rohach.

Step inside Iowa's REA Power Plant Museum

BY ANN THELEN

In September, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' (IAEC) board members toured one of Iowa's best-kept secrets – the REA Power Plant Museum in Hampton.

In celebration of National Co-op Month, it's fitting that we dig into our archives to re-tell the story of this iconic landmark.

First electric generating plant west of the Mississippi River

The REA Power Plant Museum preserves and documents a very important part of rural life in Iowa: a generating plant built by farmers to provide electricity to farmers.

Once known as the Reeve Electric Association Plant, it was the first electric generating station built west of the Mississippi River. When it went online in 1938, residents in the rural Iowa communities it served experienced the advantages of electric power for the first time.



Photographs in the Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

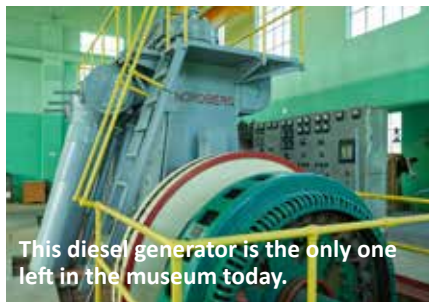


Pictured (from left to right): Chuck Soderberg, EVP/general manager for IAEC, board members Kenneth Vandenberg, Steve Seidl, Don Shonka, Roger Solomonson, Neal Heldt, Gordon Greimann and Darrell Jensen.

Progress arrived in the area's rural homes and barns through wires strung on wooden poles, and farm families used electric power just like their city cousins. Farm wives bought electric irons, families listened to

radios powered by electricity and light bulbs replaced lamps and lanterns to push back the dark edges of night.

The 80-year-old plant showcases the diesel generating units, as well as artifacts from the pre-electricity era. The plant once furnished power to rural electric cooperatives serving members in Butler, Franklin, Grundy, Hancock, Hardin and Wright counties. Not only was it the first electric generating plant west of the Mississippi River to begin operation, it was also the first plant to receive funds from the Rural Electrification



This diesel generator is the only one left in the museum today.

A historical timeline for Iowa's first generating plant

May 1935: President Franklin Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Act (REA) to provide money to build lines to distribute electricity.

March 1936: An ad in the Hampton newspaper sought possible interest in establishing electrical service for rural residents in the area.

February 1937: Five county cooperatives – Butler, Franklin, Grundy, Hardin and Wright – formed the Federated Cooperative Power Association

to build the generating plant near Hampton.

November 1937: Hancock County REC became a member of the Federated cooperative group. Federated

borrowed \$222,000 from REA – the first loan in the country from REA – to build the generating plant near Hampton, where the small town of Reeve once had flourished.

March 1938: The Reeve Federated Plant came online, just 11 days after another REA-financed rural generating plant in La Crosse, Wisconsin, began electric service to its members.

IAEC board members Roger Solomonson (left) and Neal Heldt study the Nordberg three-cylinder, 525-kilowatt generating unit.

Act (REA), the federal agency that paved the way for RECs to form.

At that time, at least 80% of rural citizens didn't have access to electricity. It's a story the community members wanted to tell and memories they wanted to preserve.

Building a museum

In the late 1980s, an enterprising group of area residents, under the guidance of the Franklin Historical Society decided to restore the power plant and turn it into a museum.

In July 1989, the REA Power Plant Museum Committee was formed under the leadership of Kenneth Showalter as chairman and Lois Hovey as secretary/treasurer. Under their leadership and with the help of countless volunteers – tallying up 1,800 hours of work – the building was renovated, and a museum was created. The project was vital in documenting the era that served as a foundation for the network of present-day rural co-ops now providing energy across Iowa.

The building had significantly deteriorated before the renovation. The group raised money and amassed a large force of volunteers to restore the building. Funding came from a government-funded Resource Enhancement and Protection grant,

the Winnebago Foundation, Corn Belt Power, community members and donations from the electric cooperatives who formed the original Federated Group.

Three of the plants' generators were removed after the plant closed, but the first Nordberg three-cylinder, 525-kilowatt generating unit remains in the building. When the individual who installed the generating unit arrived in Iowa's countryside, he said the first generator would provide all the electricity the community would ever need.

The need for electricity outgrew everyone's expectations. The energy the plant produced was vital to local electric cooperative members, and it also became a closely guarded commodity during World War II. A guard tower was built on top of the building to shelter armed guards as they protected the building in case the enemy tried to sabotage the plant.

Because of its unique origins, the Reeve Electric Association Plant qualified for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

The REA Power Plant Museum documents the role of electricity in rural Iowa. It also stands as a tribute to both the people who decided to build their own generating plant



REA Power Plant Museum

LOCATION

1450 110th St
Hampton

CONTACT

Phone: 641-456-5777

HOURS

By appointment only

more than 80 years ago and to the people who renovated the building into a museum that proudly stands today. ⚡

Ann Thelen, editor of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, compiled this article with excerpts from former magazine writers Le Spearman and Jody Garlock.

1948-1950:

The Reeve Federated Plant reached peak production. It became one of 14 cooperatives that created Corn Belt Power in Humboldt.

The Reeve

Federated Plant was then used as a standby station before closing in 1974. At full production, it employed 12 to 15 people.

1988:

Don Yadon of Hampton, who bought the building after it closed, donated the building to the Franklin County Historical Society.

1989:

A group of volunteers, operating under the umbrella of the Franklin County Historical Society, restored the building.

April 1991:

An open house was held to celebrate the opening of the REA Power Plant Museum.

2002:

The REA Power Plant Museum was selected as a Point of Interest in the Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area.

FALL FAVORITES



White Chicken Chili

- 32 ounces chicken stock**
- 3 cans (14.3 ounces each) Great Northern white beans, undrained**
- 5 cups cooked chicken**
- 16 ounces salsa, mild or spicy**
- 8 ounces pepper jack or jalapeno cheese, grated**
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- white pepper to taste**
- ½ cup finely crushed corn chips**
- sour cream and/or shredded cheese for garnish**

Place all ingredients except the corn chips in a slow cooker and cook on high until cheese is all melted. Chicken can be rotisserie or boiled. Chili may also be cooked on stove top on medium-high heat until cheese melts completely. When chili is hot, add finely crushed corn chips and let simmer for 10 minutes to thicken. Garnish with more corn chips, shredded cheese and/or sour cream.

Jayne Kirse • Marshalltown • Consumers Energy

Meatloaf Balls

- 2 pounds ground beef**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 1 cup instant rice**
- 1 egg**
- ½ cup low-sodium soy sauce**
- 1 cup barbeque sauce**
- ½ cup brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard**
- ½ cup white wine vinegar**

Combine ground beef, onion, rice, egg and soy sauce well. Make meatloaf mixture into balls the size of a baseball. Place in 9x13-inch pan that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Mix remaining ingredients and pour over meatloaf balls. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes. Can be baked ahead of time and place in a crock pot on warm.

**Diane Spellman • Woodward
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative**

Buttercup Biscuits

- 2 sticks butter, softened**
- 8 ounces sour cream**
- 2 cups self-rising flour, pre-sifted**

Blend butter and sour cream until creamy. Add flour and mix. Drop by teaspoonfuls into mini muffin pans. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30-35 minutes until golden brown. Makes about four dozen.

**Karen Caldwell • Albia
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

Autumn Fruit Salad

- 2 3-ounce packages lemon Jell-O**
- 3½ cups water, divided**
- 8 ounces crushed pineapple**
- 1 pound whole cranberry sauce, chilled**
- 2 apples, diced**
- 1 cup celery, diced**
- chopped walnuts, optional**

Dissolve Jell-O in 2 cups hot water. Then add 1½ cups cold water and pineapple. Chill until mixture starts to set. Add chilled cranberry sauce, apples, celery and walnuts. Pour into a 12x7½-inch pan to set.

**Norma Brasfield • Wever
Access Energy Cooperative**

COMFORT FOOD IS REAL

Comfort food was added to the dictionary in 1977. Informally defined as any food eaten not only for its pleasing taste but also for a sense of contentment or nostalgia it provides.

Pumpkin Bars

- 1 cup oil
- 2 cups sugar
- 15 ounces canned pumpkin
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 6 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1½ stick butter, softened
- 3½-4 cups powdered sugar

Mix together the first nine ingredients. Pour into a greased 10x15-inch pan and bake at 350 degrees F for 20-25 minutes. Once bars are cooled, mix the remaining ingredients together into a frosting and spread on bars.

Jamie Zomermaand • Maurice
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

Texas Caviar

- 1 package frozen shoepeg corn
- 1 can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 colored pepper (green, red, orange or yellow), chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 10-12 pieces cilantro, chopped
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup white sugar
- tortilla chips

Combine corn, beans, chickpeas, peppers, onion and cilantro in a large bowl. Boil oil, vinegar and sugar until dissolved. Allow mixture to cool to room temperature. Pour over the other ingredients listed. Serve with tortilla chips.

Heather Lair • Danville
Access Energy Cooperative

Apple Betty

- 1 cup oatmeal
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup flour
- ⅔ cup margarine
- 4 apples, peeled and sliced
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Put apples in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Mix remaining ingredients until crumbly and cover apples. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes until golden.

Marci Domnick • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

Hot Cranberry Drink

- 1 pound cranberries
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 12 cups water
- 1½ cups orange juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Boil the first three ingredients for 10 minutes. Steep at least 15 minutes, up to a full day. Strain and press. Add orange juice, sugar and lemon juice. Serve warm.

Anna Domnick • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

FLAVOR OF FALL

If fall had a flavor, it would be pumpkin spice! However, among colonial American settlers, pumpkin "was a food of last resort." When there was no wheat for bread or yeast for beers, they'd turn to the pumpkin.

FALL FOOD FACTS

Wanted: Heart Healthy Recipes The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!



February is American Heart Month! We're looking for your favorite healthy recipes that help to keep your heart pumping strong. If we run your recipe in the magazine, we'll send a \$25 credit for your electric co-op to apply to your power bill. Recipes submitted also may be archived on our website at www.livingwithenergyiowa.com.

The deadline is Oct. 31, 2019. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

EMAIL:
recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your e-mail message.)

MAIL:
Recipes
Living with Energy in Iowa
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48
Des Moines, IA 50322-2992

SLICE OF COMFORT

Pizza is the most popular comfort food in the U.S., according to numerous studies. Pizza even has its own holiday – National Pizza Day is Feb. 9.

FALL FOOD FACTS

Can the electric grid take us to a clean energy economy?

BY ERIN CAMPBELL



The electric grid has been called the most important engineering achievement of the 20th Century. What if the grid can also transition us to a clean energy economy in the 21st Century?

This concept was at the center of discussions at the Electrify Iowa! summit, held on Sept. 5 in West Des Moines and hosted by the Iowa Rural Power Education Foundation and the Iowa Environmental Council. Special thanks to the Beneficial Electrification League, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Iowa Association for Energy Efficiency, the Iowa Geothermal Association and others for their involvement and support of the summit.

What is beneficial electrification?

Sessions at the summit centered on *environmentally beneficial electrification*, which means that electrical appliances and devices like water heaters, ovens, clothes dryers and vehicles have the potential to become greener over time without any

additional action from the consumer.

“As electric generation becomes more renewable and environmentally responsible, the devices that use electricity automatically become greener compared to those that use fossil fuels, such as gasoline, propane and natural gas,” says Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Through proactive beneficial electrification (also referred to as efficient electrification or strategic electrification), policies and practices are put into place that encourage the transition of fossil fuel applications to electric power. The electric vehicle (EV) movement is just one example of beneficial electrification. And as more and more vehicles transition from gasoline to electricity, they will use fewer fossil fuels as more renewable generation is added to the electric grid.

Iowa has momentum

Beneficial electrification isn't a new concept; electric water heating was really the first technology that introduced the concept back in the

1980s, along with the introduction of geothermal heating and cooling technology. But the movement is picking up steam in recent years as renewable electric generation and electric transportation gain momentum.

In fact, Iowa is already surpassing expectations and estimates regarding EVs. According to data provided by the Iowa Legislature, there are 3,241 EVs registered in the state as of August 2019, representing a 170% increase since 2016.

With beneficial electrification, every person, every family, every farm and every business can participate in our transition to an abundant clean energy future. “By using sustainable electricity to meet our water heating, climate control and transportation needs, we are collectively reducing our environmental impact,” Soderberg says.

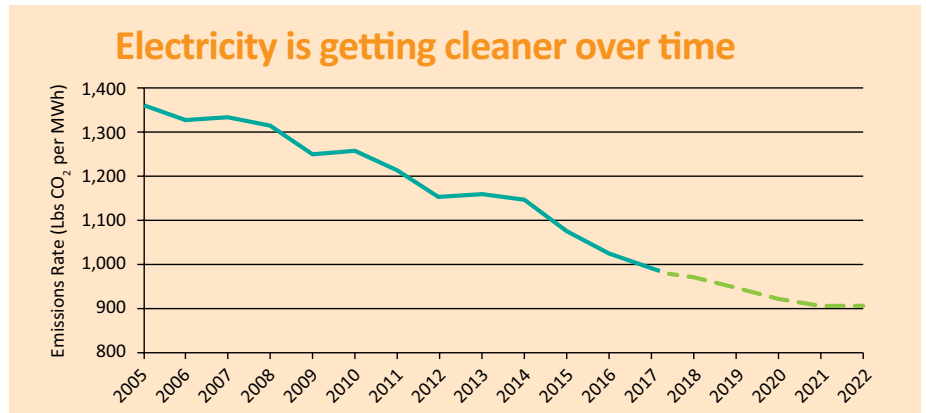
For consumers looking for environmentally responsible energy options, choosing electric appliances and devices over those powered by fossil fuels is a great way to participate. Consider electric rechargeable power



tools, electric water heaters, electric appliances like ovens and clothes dryers and electric vehicles as ways to reduce greenhouse gases. In the years ahead, there will be even more opportunities to transition to electric vehicles and electric lawn and farm equipment with the added benefits of reducing noise, emissions and maintenance costs.

Electric cooperative involvement

Iowa's electric cooperatives are actively engaged in the beneficial electrification movement. We work with our statewide and national associations and partners to promote this sustainable concept with policymakers and thought leaders. In 2018, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) partnered with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to form the Beneficial Electrification League, whose purpose is to meet our nation's and the world's economic and environmental goals through electrification of products and services. "We believe that beneficial electrification is the single most



Source: Based on EPA data estimates.

— Historic (2005-2017) — Projected (2018-2022)

effective and inclusive carbon reduction strategy available moving forward," says Steve Koep, advisory board member of the Beneficial Electrification League and presenter at the Electrify Iowa! summit.

Your local electric cooperative also remains committed to helping you use energy wisely through energy efficiency efforts. After all, the greenest kilowatt-hour is the one you never use in the first place. Check with your local electric co-op for details on programs, incentives and rebates for electric vehicles, electric water heaters,

geothermal heating and cooling and LED lighting.

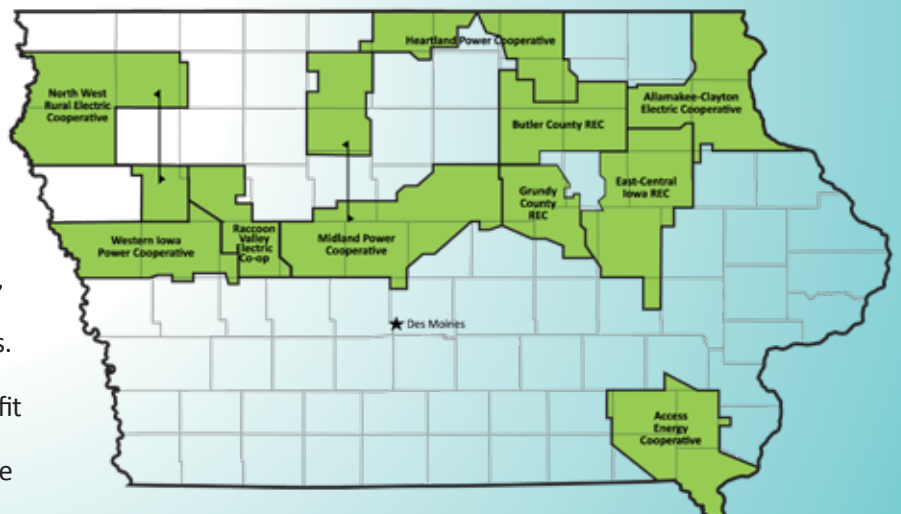
"We want to help our co-op member-owners keep electric use and costs as low as possible which makes it even more attractive to transition to electric devices and appliances," Soderberg says.

Find more resources and information at www.BeneficialElectrification.com.

Erin Campbell is the director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

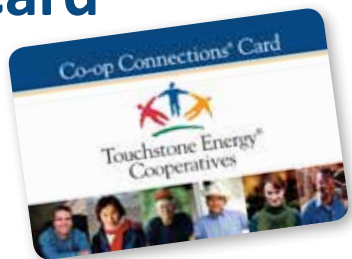


Iowa Choice Renewables is one way some electric cooperatives are investing in renewable energy. The initiative was established in 2016 by a group of rural electric cooperatives in Iowa with deep roots in delivering safe, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy to their cooperative members and consumers. Iowa Choice Renewables works to provide renewable energy resources that will benefit cooperative members as well as those in their surrounding communities. Learn more at www.iowachoice Renewables.com.



BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP

Co-op Connections Card



Use your Co-op Connections® Card at Retro Rooster in Traer. At Retro Rooster, you can get information about any antiques that you desire. If they don't have what you want, they will look for it. They are happy to help you remodel your man cave or farmhouse and help with interior design projects. Be sure to stop by today and receive your discount by showing your Co-op Connection® Card.

Other area businesses providing discounts include:

- **Natural Grind** – Grundy Center
- **The Landmark Bistro** – Grundy Center
- **319 Décor & Design** – Grundy Center
- **Crazy Daisies** – Grundy Center
- **Tasty House** – Grundy Center
- **Stylish Living** – Grundy Center
- **Sweets on Main** – Traer
- **Traer Theater** – Traer
- **A Wild Hair Salon & Boutique** – Traer ⚡

ENERGY MATTERS



Iowa Choice Renewables can provide you with local and trusted solar energy options. For more information about installing a new system, contact Mike Geerdes, member service manager at 319-824-5251 or 800-390-7605. ⚡

SAFETY MATTERS

Plan now for grain bin safety



The busy harvest season is approaching, and anything that can be done now to avoid problems later is important. Keeping Grundy County REC informed about any changes to your grain drying and grain storage operations is one way to eliminate last-minute trouble.

By planning ahead, Grundy County REC can make sure materials are available and service upgrades completed before the grain drying season begins.

If you are planning to build a new grain bin, move a bin or add to your present grain drying operation, keep us informed so that plans can be made to accommodate any changes needed in electric service.

We want to make sure your electric service will be able to meet the demands of harvest. Also, plans for new grain bins must meet all National

Electric Safety Code requirements.

Before selecting your bin site, contact Grundy County REC Member Service Specialist Mike Geerdes to ensure compliance with the electric safety code. If the cooperative must alter our facilities to accommodate the grain bin according to the requirements, you could incur additional charges.

If you plan to move an existing bin, contact us so that electric facilities (e.g., poles, guy wires and overhead lines) can be safely moved. It isn't worth the risk of serious injury or even death to attempt a move without assistance.

Geerdes can also advise you about potential electric service changes needed to meet increased demands, code requirements and crop drying plans. He can be reached at 800-390-7605. ⚡



Three ways your co-op manages physical threats to the grid

BY ANN THELEN

While the threat of cybersecurity attacks on the electric grid get a lot of attention these days, physical damage from storms or critters is much more likely to disrupt power. There are many physical threats to our power delivery system that your electric cooperative works hard to manage on a daily basis. From weather events – such as ice storms, tornadoes and flooding – to criminal activity, including copper theft and shooting at a substation, it takes a proactive commitment to consistently deliver reliable service. Even something as small as a squirrel can damage infrastructure and cause power outages.

If the lights do go out, your Iowa-based co-op is ready to restore power as quickly and as safely as possible. Here are three key ways your co-op works to keep your power as reliable as possible:

1 Being part of the community

One of the most valuable things about being served by an electric co-op is that you also have an ownership stake in the way the cooperative operates. Iowa's electric co-ops know our communities. We live and work in the neighborhoods and towns we serve. You know many of your co-op's board members and employees. And, in turn, board members and employees are personally acquainted with or are a part of fire departments, county supervisors, EMTs, etc.

We know that emergencies can happen at any time, and these relationships are important in urgently responding to unplanned events or in preparing for more predictable events, including winter storms or summer flooding. For example, when the Missouri River flooding happened or tornadoes hit the Marshalltown and Pella areas, Iowa's electric



The nation's electric grid is incredibly resilient and can withstand many physical impacts, but it's also a dynamic infrastructure that requires constant attention. That's why your electric cooperative is vigilant in ensuring grid protection from physical and cyber threats in order to power your lives.

cooperatives responded. That's because we're part of one large cooperative community, and cooperation among cooperatives is an essential principle of providing reliable electric service.

2 Planning, preparing and practicing

There is a well-known saying that *it's not if a crisis will occur, but when it will occur*. What constitutes a crisis can mean different things to members, depending on the role electricity plays in their daily lives or businesses. Your electric co-op tests disaster and business continuity plans regularly and takes pride in being prepared at all times. Plans not only focus on how to prevent threats, but also how to respond and recover in the event of an incident. Business activities, such as vegetation management or pole inspections, may seem routine; however, they are strategically performed to proactively reduce power disruptions. Trees that are too close to power lines can cause major damage during a storm and may result in a lengthy outage.

3 Coordinating with stakeholders

Your electric co-op places a high importance on partnerships with fellow cooperatives, industry partners and government agencies to mitigate the potential impacts of all types of threats to our system. Electric cooperatives work closely with the rest of the electric industry, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Energy, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Iowa resources on matters of critical infrastructure protection – that includes sharing necessary information about potential threats and working together to avoid disruptions to the extent possible.

Although the electric grid is incredibly resilient and can withstand many physical impacts, it's also a dynamic infrastructure that requires constant attention. Your electric co-op is vigilant in ensuring grid protection from physical and cyber threats in order to power your lives. ⚡

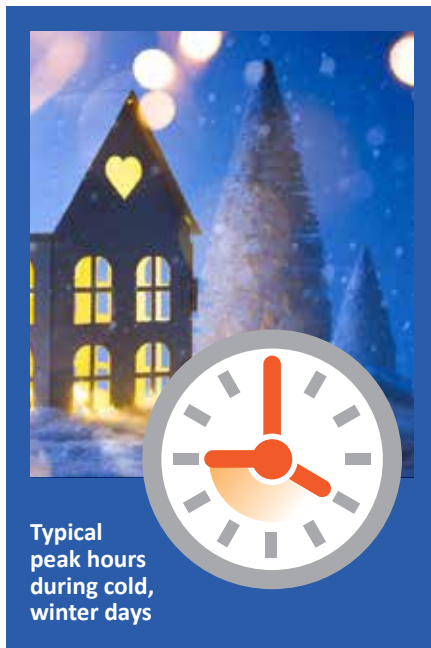
Ann Thelen is the editor of *Living with Energy in Iowa*.

Consider peak hours for electricity during upcoming winter months

Peak hours are the busiest times for your local electric cooperative, since many people are using electricity at the same time. In addition, it costs your co-op more to generate electricity when demand soars during peak periods – and the cost of your electricity also may rise.

Using less electricity during peak periods can save your co-op – and you – money. Here’s how you can help during peak hours:

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. For instance, wait to run your dishwasher until you go to bed.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave oven and countertop cooking appliances use considerably less energy than your stove or cooktop.
- If you’re buying a new appliance, make sure you get a highly efficient one. Look for Energy Star® labels when you’re



Typical peak hours during cold, winter days

- evaluating different models.
- Be aware of your energy consumption. Get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round. ⚡

SAFETY MATTERS

Harvest Safety Tips

Harvest is a busy time for farmers, and it’s easy to become distracted. Always maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions. If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, call your electric cooperative immediately and stay inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In the case of smoke or fire, exit by making a solid jump out of the cab without



touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety by keeping your legs and feet together for one point of contact on the ground. We wish Iowa’s farmers a safe and bountiful harvest! ⚡

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Living in a shared economy

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

It doesn't take articles in popular culture magazines to tell you that we are living in a shared economy. Why pay for the maintenance and upkeep of something when you can rent it – or better yet, share it with someone else?

From clothing rental subscriptions to opening an extra bedroom in your house for travelers, vendors are fueling a new economy with their services, and customers are able to try something commitment-free.

This has seemingly dealt a blow to the American Dream, to a generation for whom purchasing a car or a boat or a camper was a rite of passage and a declaration of keeping up with the Joneses.

Today's consumers are trading the prestige – and headache – of the upkeep in those items for the footloose, fancy-free life of a non-owner.

Our middle son just moved back to Iowa from New York City. The thought of owning a car there was just crazy, he says, where there is no parking and insurance rates are sky high. You can just grab a cab or an Uber or hop on the subway. Similarly, you can rent furniture for your apartment and even lease house plants for a set period of time. You can even “borrow” pets from the local animal rescue league for a while.

My husband Kent and I have dipped our toes into this phenomenon as well, all from the consumer end. We've stayed in strangers' apartments in Hawaii and caught a ride with someone in his



personal car in San Antonio. I've leased clothing through a mail-order service. We've rented vehicles for longer road trips. And by and large, they've been good experiences even when I figure in the apartment in Brooklyn where I was positive we'd be murdered in the hallway. We survived.

There's something uniquely intimate about letting strangers into your home, strangers who are sleeping on your sheets and eating off your dishes. There's something a bit unnerving about renting out your car to haul people around. Our driver in San Antonio said his biggest fares come every morning when he's hired to drive kids as young as 5 years old to school. "There's no way I'd let my kid get in a car with a driver I didn't

know," he says, with a shrug. "But lots of people do it here."

Many naysayers will point out this is indicative of a lack of commitment on this generation's part ... that we don't want to invest our time, energy or money in anything. I see it more as a push to live more simply and not be mired down in payments, time pressures and maintenance.

Whichever way you look at it, I still don't think I could put my 5-year-old in a car with a stranger. But I'm intrigued with the possibility of renting a ficus plant. ⚡

Valerie Van Kooten is a writer from Pella who loves living in the country and telling its stories. She and her husband Kent have three married sons and two incredibly adorable grandsons.

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