

living with energy

MARCH 2016

IN IOWA



Design a landscape

that's interesting all year long

It's easy being green:
St. Patrick's Day recipes

Electricity is the best choice for cost-savings and the environment

Win a water-saving showerhead radio



Check these pages every month for the latest news from



Operations Update

Congratulations to our new journeymen linemen!



Two members of the Access Energy Cooperative line crew recently obtained their official Journeyman Lineman classification. Congratulations to Cole Hetzler (left) and Colton Stephens!



Access Energy Cooperative is dedicated to exceeding members' expectations for safe, reliable and efficient service, while being a good citizen in our communities.

Office: Access Energy Cooperative
1800 W. Washington St., P.O. Box 440
Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641
Phone: 319-385-1577 or 866-242-4232
Fax: 319-385-6873
Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call): 800-292-8989
Website: www.accessenergycoop.com
Facebook: facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop
Twitter: twitter.com/AccessEnergyC
E-mail: contactus@accessenergycoop.com
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays

After Hours and Report Outages: 319-385-1580 or 800-452-7819

Payments can be placed in dropbox under flag pole. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

General Manager/CEO: Kevin Wheeler
Editor: Kimberly Davis
Assistant Editor: Cherity Wibben
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Larry White	District 2	Director
Ronald Campbell	District 2	Director
Marvin Holtkamp	District 3	Director
Victor Pierrot	District 3	Director

Money Matters

Take control of your electric account with SmartHub

You may have heard about SmartHub, Access Energy Cooperative's innovative new tool for account management, but do you know what it can do for you? SmartHub will help you take control of your energy use and your Access Energy Cooperative account like never before.

This new program has several features that make managing your account as easy as possible. Through the web or your smartphone or tablet, you can pay your bill, view your electricity use, contact customer service and much more.

You also can view your billing history and make a payment with the new app. You can see your current and previous bills to help you compare costs, and you can see how your use is trending over time – which can help you take steps to reduce your consumption and lower your bill.

The first time you make a payment you can securely store your payment information, making



future transactions fast and easy. Stay connected with us through the news feed, and you'll get the latest news, updates and more from Access Energy Cooperative – all without leaving the app or the web page.

Access your account in a whole new and easy way by visiting www.accessenergycoop.com or by downloading the SmartHub app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iPhone or iPad) or Google Play Marketplace (Android phone or tablet) – then choosing Access Energy Cooperative. ⚡

In the News

National Lineman Appreciation Day is April 11

In 2015, America's electric cooperatives designated the second Monday of April every year as National Lineman Appreciation Day, to honor the hard-working men and women who often operate in challenging conditions to keep your lights on.

Electric cooperative linemen don't often receive the recognition they



Photo: Eric Keck

deserve. They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities.

If you see a line worker in the Access Energy Cooperative office or around your area, please take a moment to say thanks. You also can leave a Twitter message at #ThankALineman. ⚡

New rates will go into effect April 1

BY KEVIN WHEELER

On April 1, 2016, Access Energy Cooperative will implement our first **rate** adjustment since 2009. We place a strong emphasis on providing you, our member-owner, with exceptional service to meet your energy **needs**. As a not-for-profit electric utility, the price of electricity is based on the cost of operating your cooperative and delivering to you safe, reliable, and efficient electric service, while remaining a good citizen in our communities.



While virtually all aspects of today's cost of living continue to **rise**, we only consider an adjustment when we really need to. To maintain the quality, reliability and integrity of the services we provide, it's necessary for us to adjust our pricing structure.

Several factors, many of which we have limited or no control over, are driving this rate increase. The main driver stems from the increase in the cost of the power we purchase from

Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative, which is generated by Associated Electric Cooperative Inc. Purchased power is 60 percent of our total expenses. Costs continue to increase for our power supplier, due to things such as environmental compliance, contracted wind and hydro purchase prices, increased plant operations and fixed costs, and high-voltage transmission costs.

In addition to the increased cost of power, there are internal factors driving increases in our costs that include, but definitely are not limited to, capital expenses we **invest** in order to maintain system reliability and internal operating costs. We, the board, management and employees of Access Energy Cooperative, pride ourselves on being responsible stewards of your resources, and we do everything within our power to control costs. While there are factors over which we have

limited or no control, such as Mother **Nature** and regulatory compliance, we constantly look for ways to do what we can to limit cost increases.

It's important to note we have many cost-effective energy efficiency programs, rebates and services available to help you control your costs and energy use as well. This helps you exercise control over the amount of your electric bill.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the implementation of this rate increase – or regarding the programs we have available to help you manage your energy usage – we encourage you to call our offices at 319-385-1577 or 866-242-4232. ⚡

Kevin Wheeler is the new general manager/CEO of Access Energy Cooperative.

Here's a list of rate changes by Customer Class				
Customer Class	Current Monthly Rate	+ Increase	= New Monthly Rate	Percentage Increase
Single Phase	\$128.53	\$13.46	\$141.99	10.47%
Small Commercial	\$270.78	\$27.26	\$298.04	10.07%
Large Commercial	\$2,446.94	\$212.90	\$2,659.84	8.70%
Large Power	\$18,030.63	\$1,317.38	\$19,348.01	7.31%

As a residential member, how much will my bill change?

The cost of service study completed in October 2015 ensures that all members pay their fair share. Based on the rate classification and consumption, the impact will vary. Using an **average** annual consumption, a **residential** member will see the following increase.

Monthly KWH	Present Rate	New Rate	Percentage
100	38.04	41.99	10.38
250	51.60	56.98	10.42
500	74.20	81.95	10.44
750	96.80	106.93	10.46
1000	119.40	131.90	10.47
1250	142.00	156.88	10.48
2000	209.80	231.80	10.49

Note: Area lighting will increase on average 7 percent.

Open House March 22, 2016 3-7 p.m.

Meet Kevin Wheeler, the new general manager/CEO of Access Energy Cooperative!

Access Energy Cooperative office
1800 West Washington Street
Mt. Pleasant

Editor's Choice Contest

Win a water-saving showerhead radio!

The Moxie showerhead from Kohler lets you stream your favorite music, news or talk radio into the shower with you. A portable speaker securely docks into the full-coverage showerhead and pops out for recharging. Prices start around \$200; get more details at www.us.kohler.com/us.



Go to the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website at www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com by March 31, 2016, to enter. ⚡

Check these pages every month for the latest news from



MARCH ENERGY SAVER

Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their **leaves** during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your **room** cooler and give your air-conditioning a much-needed break.



Home School Safety Demo
Access Energy Cooperative
1800 West Washington St., Mt. Pleasant
April 5 @ 9 a.m.
RSVP by calling 866.242.4232

Annual Photo Contest deadline to win \$50: March 31, 2016



Legislative Action

Access Energy Co-op discusses important issues at Iowa Capitol

Access Energy Cooperative thanks each of our legislators at the Capitol for meeting with our board, manager and staff last month and visiting with us about legislative **issues** that concern the members of the cooperative. Shown here were visits with Rep. Dave Heaton (*top*) and Sen. Kevin Kinney. We also appreciated having discussions with Reps. Curt Hanson, Jarad Klein, Jerry Kearns, Mary Gaskill and Tom Sands; and Sens. Rich Taylor, Mark Chelgren and Thomas Courtney. ⚡



Just for Kids

New general manager talks with students about energy

General manager/CEO Kevin Wheeler – along with Kim Davis, Alan Raymer and Gary Stevens from the Access Energy Cooperative member services department – spent the day with Mt. Pleasant middle school students talking about generation of electricity, renewable energy and ways the kids can help our environment by saving energy. The presentations were accompanied by an exhibit of a blower door test and thermal imaging, as well as a jeopardy game where students summed up the information they learned. ⚡



Crossword Puzzle: Win a \$25 Bill Credit!

Win a \$25 bill credit by completing our crossword puzzle and sending your answers by March 31, 2016, to: Access Energy Cooperative, Attn: Crossword Puzzle, P.O. Box 440, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641. Most of the answers are bold and highlighted somewhere on pages 4, 5, 12 and 13 of this issue. If more than one person answers all of the questions correctly, we'll hold a drawing to determine the winner. The January winner was Paul Beliel, 1217 Benton Ave. Wayland, IA 52654.

ACROSS

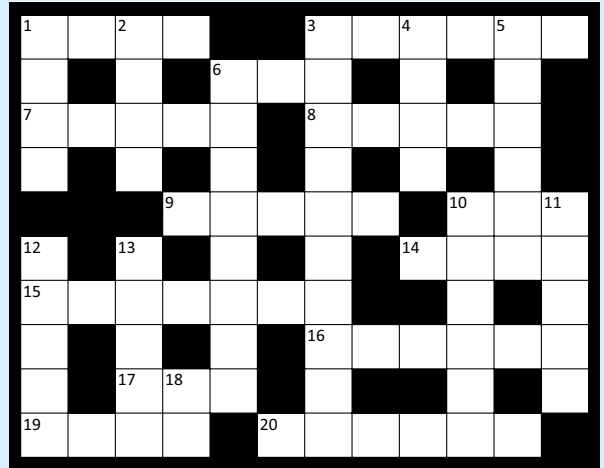
1. There are many factors contributing to this increase
3. We do this in ongoing research of technology
6. Instead of a walk, you might go for this
7. You can do this for your payment information to make paying your bill easy on Smarthub
8. Long-term planning is crucial for meeting these for you
9. Check and sort carefully; "sift the information"
10. Tool used when fishing
14. Not common
15. We helped middle school students learn about saving energy with this on thermal imaging
16. Your co-op met with legislators at the Capitol to discuss these that are important to you
17. Men sometimes wear one of these

19. Shade trees can help keep this cool in the summer

20. Tress lose these in the fall making it easier for the sun to warm your home

DOWN

1. The cost of living continues to do this
2. We have a new one of these, so you can manage your electric account easier
3. This kind of program is now available to help you manage your bill and usage
4. You can do this to your bill and usage online
5. Sibling
6. We strive every day to provide you with this kind of power
10. We cannot control costs incurred due to this
11. In a state of mental or nervous strain
12. You can control your bill and usage like this before



13. Deadline for this contest of March 31

18. I am

Name

Account #

Phone #

From the Board

Do you want to serve on the co-op's board of directors?

If you're interested in serving on the Access Energy Cooperative board, please contact one of these members of the 2016 Nominating Committee.



District One

- Brandon Ledger – Stockport
- Kenneth Whitham – Fairfield
- Susie Greiner – Douds

District Two

- Cliff Hunsaker – Mt. Pleasant
- Bob Scarff – Mt. Pleasant
- Charles Sutter – Mt. Pleasant

District Three

- Bill Schurk – Burlington
- Myrna Folker – Donnellson
- Dean Mabeus – Wever

Summer Help Wanted!



Operations Department Access Energy Cooperative

Applicant must have graduated high school by summer 2016 and must enroll in post-secondary education in the fall. For more details, contact Don Roach at droach@accessenergycoop.com.

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER
New life flows through our community!

Blood Drive

Thursday, March 24TH
2:00-5:00PM
Access Energy Cooperative
Meeting Room

SIGN UP TODAY
by calling 319.385.1577

We are an equal opportunity provider.

*Office Closed
March 25*

For after hours emergencies
call 800.452.7819 or 319.385.1580

SAVE THE DATE

Access Energy Cooperative
Annual Meeting of Members

August 2, 2016

McMillan Park, Mt. Pleasant
5:00 p.m.

GRAND PRIZE
\$750 Bill Credit