

living with energy

IN IOWA



JANUARY 2018

It's time to bust the myths about smart meters! ▶ See page 4

Designer electricity

will give you more control



Save time and energy cooking with small appliances

We talk with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt

Our commitment to community includes supporting local businesses

Visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 9	Welcome back to legislators at the state Capitol
Jan. 10-11	Power Quality Workshop for key accounts at the cooperative's office
Feb. 6	Access Energy Cooperative visit to the state Capitol
Feb. 8-9	Momentum is Building Conference for area contractors
Feb. 26	Youth Tour application deadline
March 6	Youth Tour Interviews
March 14	REC Day on the Hill
March 15	Scholarship application deadline
March 30	Office closed for Good Friday
March 31	Photo Contest deadline

For details on programs listed here, visit www.accessenergycoop.com or call our office at 866-242-4232 from 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Monday-Thursday or 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Friday.



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

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Friday, 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays

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

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LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

It's time to bust the myths about smart meters!

BY KEVIN WHEELER

By now, most Americans have heard of the **smart grid** – the computerization of America's electric infrastructure to improve the reliability, efficiency, resiliency and security of the power grid.

A key component of the smart grid is an advanced metering infrastructure, also known as AMI. AMI systems utilize digital meters, as well as computer technology, to measure electric use at homes and businesses more precisely than was possible with analog meters. The digital meters communicate via radio or power lines, so most people call them **smart meters**.

AMI benefits electric co-op members due to greater accuracy in billing, faster outage restoration, operational savings versus manual meter reading and detailed data that you and your co-op can use to manage electric use much more accurately. Unfortunately, a number of myths have developed over the years concerning smart meters. These myths can be classified into three categories: privacy concerns, security and health effects.

Access Energy Cooperative takes great pains to keep your information private – including the details of your electric use. The only people who see that data are co-op employees and you. Your co-op will not release this information to anyone else without your specific permission.

The myths associated with privacy are that the data collected can tell when you're home or away and exactly what you're doing when you're home – and that this data is being given to the government. In truth, a smart meter cannot identify what activities are taking place, including specific appliance use.

What about the myth that smart meters actually make the electric

grid less secure by providing an avenue for hackers to break into systems and wreak havoc? While

hackers continually attempt to break into electric systems, their focus is at higher levels in the operation.

Hacking a meter is unlikely for a variety of reasons. Hackers prefer to work remotely via the Internet, and smart meters

don't offer that possibility. Radio-based smart meters require the hacker to be nearby to catch the weak communication signal, to break the proprietary communication protocol and to be there for extended periods of time to collect the short burst of data sent. As a result, smart meters are an unlikely and unprofitable target for hackers.

Finally, there are myths surrounding smart meters and their ill effects on health. These concerns state that having a radio-based smart meter attached to the side of your home is the equivalent to putting a cell tower there. This is unfounded. Smart meters communicate intermittently for as few as 5 minutes a day, and their output is well below the safe levels set by the Federal Communications Commission.

As one doctor observed, the radio waves emitted by smart meters are more like those of a cordless phone or wireless router – and are much weaker and less frequent than those emitted by other sources we use much more frequently on a daily basis.

We will all benefit from the continued development of America's smart grid, and you can rest easy with the knowledge that the rumors surrounding radio-based smart meters don't hold water. ⚡



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

MPC Enterprises, Inc., honored with Iowa Venture Award



Shown at the Iowa Venture Awards are (from left): Rand Fisher, president of IADG; Kevin Wheeler, general manager/CEO of Access Energy Cooperative; Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture; Beth Moehle, Jeff Moehle, Mike Moehle, Rachel Moehle, Seth Watson and Kali Watson from MPC Enterprises, Inc.; and Kim Davis, director of member services and public relations for Access Energy Cooperative.

The Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) presented its Iowa Venture Award to seven Iowa companies at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives 2017 Annual Meeting in West Des Moines on Nov. 30. During the past 30 years, the program has recognized 256 Iowa business leaders and companies for their contributions to Iowa's economy.

One of the honorees this year is a member of Access Energy Cooperative, **Midwest Precast Concrete (MPC Enterprises, Inc.)**. Located in Mount Pleasant, the company produces concrete products used in construction projects throughout the Midwest. Product lines include columns, beams, double-tee roof and wall panels, insulated architectural wall panels, spandrel

panels, stairs and stadium risers.

MPC Enterprises has continued to expand its business and now employs 130 people, generating the need for the purchase of a vacant 220,000-square-foot former bus facility in Mount Pleasant. The company was nominated for the Iowa Venture Award by Access Energy Cooperative, which provided support for this business expansion through its Revolving Loan Fund.

IADG is the economic development leader for Iowa's electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and independent telecommunication companies. Since 1985, IADG and its sponsors have generated more than \$10 billion in capital investment and created or retained more than 50,000 jobs for Iowa. ⚡

Hinterland Dairy awarded RLF loan

As part of Access Energy Cooperative's dedication to honor one of our core principles – commitment to community – your cooperative has established a Revolving Loan Fund program through grants received from USDA Rural Development. Once the initial loans were paid back to the cooperative from projects that earned the grant money, the funds became available for us to loan back to other community projects.

The Access Energy Cooperative Board of Directors was proud to approve a loan from this revolving loan fund program for Donnellson's Hinterland Dairy for an expansion project. We're excited to watch their progress as they grow their business. ⚡



Ralph and Colleen Krogmeier, owners of Hinterland Dairy, plan to add a unique line of retail cheeses to their business.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a programmable thermostat and reduce your heating bills this winter!

Here's proof that you don't have to spend a lot to have a big impact on your energy bill. This Honeywell Model RTH8500D 7-Day Programmable Thermostat is reasonably priced at \$100, but we've seen it sale-priced as low as \$50. It should pay for itself in just a few months – and continue saving you money during the cooling season too.

To enter this month's contest, go to the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website at www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com and complete the entry form no later than Jan. 31, 2018. ⚡



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Thank you, lawmakers, for attending our annual fall meeting!

The Access Energy Cooperative board and staff would like to thank legislators for attending our annual fall legislative meeting. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for us to discuss the upcoming session and issues of concern to the members of Access Energy Cooperative and the energy industry. ⚡



Attending the legislative meeting were (from left): Rep. Dave Heaton, Rep. Phil Miller, Rep. Jerry Kearns and Senator Rich Taylor.

LEGAL ISSUES

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. (Not all bases apply to all programs.)

Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY)

or USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office – or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. Fax: 202-690-7442; or
3. E-mail: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. ⚡



HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

2018 board election process opens up

Your Board of Directors is elected by and from the membership of Access Energy Cooperative. Three seats are up for election, one in each of the three districts. Each board member is elected to a term of 3 years. Director's terms that will expire with the 2018 annual meeting to be held Tuesday, Aug. 7, are shown below.



District 1 –
Joe Heckethorn



District 2 –
Larry White



District 3 –
Victor Pierrot

In order to serve on the Access Energy Cooperative Board of Directors, you must be a member of the cooperative and a bona fide resident of a premise served by the cooperative.

The board will be appointing a Nominating Committee that will select candidates to run for the expiring terms. Anyone interested in running for a seat on the board may contact a member of the Nominating Committee. The list will be posted in our office, on our website at www.accessenergycoop.com and in these pages – or you can call our office at 866-242-4232. ⚡

Annual Meeting Notice for Access Energy Cooperative

Pertaining to provisions set forth in RUS Bulletin 1790-1, we are providing you with a summary of the following prior to a meeting of the 2018 Nominating Committee.

ACCESS ENERGY COOPERATIVE BYLAWS. ARTICLE III.

Section 2(b). District Boundaries.

Directors shall be elected from districts beginning with the election held at the 1990 Annual Meeting and as scheduled in the Articles of Incorporation. The three (3) districts will be comprised of the following territories:

District I: DAVIS: Salt Creek Twsp; JEFFERSON COUNTY: Blackhawk, Buchanan, Cedar, Center, Des Moines, Liberty, Locust Grove, Penn, Polk and Walnut Twsp; KEOKUK COUNTY: Steady Run Twsp; VAN BUREN COUNTY: Bonaparte, Cedar, Farmington, Harrisburg, Henry, Lick Creek, Union, Village and Washington Twsp; WAPELLO COUNTY: Competine, Pleasant and Washington Twsp; WASHINGTON COUNTY: Brighton and Franklin Twsp.

District II: HENRY COUNTY: Center, Jackson, Jefferson, Marion, Salem, Scott, Tippecanoe, Trenton and Wayne Twsp; JEFFERSON COUNTY: Lockridge and Round Prairie Twsp; LEE COUNTY: Cedar, Marion and Pleasant Ridge Twsp; LOUISA COUNTY: Elm Grove Twsp; WASHINGTON COUNTY: Marion and Washington Twsp.

District III: DES MOINES COUNTY: Burlington, Concordia, Danville, Pleasant Grove, Union and Washington Twsp; HENRY COUNTY: Baltimore, Canaan and New London Twsp; LEE COUNTY: Charleston, Denmark, Franklin, Green Bay, Harrison, Jefferson, Van Buren, Washington and West Point Twsp.

Section 3. Qualifications.

No member shall be eligible to become or remain a Director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident of premises served by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members, or who within two (2) years preceding a director candidate nomination was an employee of the Cooperative, or who within seven (7) years preceding a director candidate nomination has received benefit from any collective bargaining agreement with the Cooperative, or is a close relative of a director or employee of the Cooperative, with close relative being defined as: spouse, cohabitant, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law,

brother-in-law, and natural, step, and adopted children, or within fifteen (15) years preceding a director candidate nomination been convicted of a felony whether by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, plea of guilt, or plea of nolo contendere, or who is or becomes the full-time employee or agent of another director or employee, or who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of another director, and no person shall take or hold office as a Director who is the incumbent of or candidate for an elective public office other than on a school board, board of supervisors, township trustee, township clerk, or member of the state legislature; provided, however, that nothing in this Section contained shall, or shall be construed to, affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors. When a membership is held jointly, either one, but not both, may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither shall be eligible to become or remain a director or hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications herein above set forth. Before the meeting of the committee on nominations for directors each year, the Board of Directors shall determine whether any director has ceased to be a bona fide resident of premises served by the Cooperative, and any director found by a two-thirds vote of all directors not to meet the residence requirement or any other qualifications of this Section, may continue to hold office only until the next annual meeting at which time the vacancy shall be filled by the members.

Section 4. Nominations.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than one hundred sixty (160) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which Directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of three members from each District from which a Director is to be elected. No member of the Board may serve on such committee. The committee shall prepare and post, at the principal office of the Cooperative, at least ninety (90) days before the meeting, a list of these candidates nominated for Director from each District from which a Director is to be elected, and the list shall include at least two candidates for each Director to be elected. Any fifteen or more members from a District from which a director is to be elected, acting together, may make other nominations for Director from their District by petition not less than sixty (60) days prior to the meeting, and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Secretary

shall mail with the notice of the meeting, or separately, but at least ten days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of Directors to be elected from each District, and the names and addresses of the candidates from each district, specifying separately the nominations made by the committee and the nominations made by petition, if any. The ballots to be used for the election of Directors shall list the names of the candidates from each District nominated by the committee and the names of the candidates from each District nominated by petition, if any. The names of nominees shall be posted and listed on the ballots by District in alphabetical order.

The statement mailed by the Secretary shall also inform the members of the manner in which they may vote by mail as provided in this Section. Any member may cast their vote by mail for directors by marking on the ballot an "X" opposite the names of the number of candidates equal to the number of directors to be elected from that member's district and enclosing the ballot in a sealed envelope bearing the member's name, addressed to the Secretary of this Cooperative. When such ballot so enclosed is received by mail from any member in advance of the meeting, it shall be accepted and counted as a vote for directors by ballot of such member at such meeting. The provisions of this Section shall not be mandatory in the case of a recall of one or more directors as provided in Section 6 of Article IX of the Articles of Incorporation. ⚡

ANNUAL MEETING



Save the Date!

Aug. 7, 2018 @ 5 p.m.

Access Energy Cooperative
Annual Meeting of
Members

Everything is FREE!