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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING



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Access Energy Cooperative

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EV mobile future

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Lana Van Engen, an Osceola Electric Cooperative member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could win \$100!

BE AWARE OF UTILITY PHONE SCAMS THIS SUMMER

BY CHUCK SODERBERG



"Your electric bill is past due, and we will cut off power to your home in the next hour if you don't pay us over the phone immediately!"

Have you ever received a

threatening call like this from someone claiming to be from your local electric cooperative? Would you know what to do if you received a call like this?

This spring, several of Iowa's electric cooperatives noticed increased activity from utility scammers contacting member-consumers in their service areas. These phone scammers would often appear to be calling from local numbers and claim to be from the local electric cooperative. Sometimes, the calls included prerecorded messages.

In almost all the calls, the scammers threatened the innocent person on the other end of the line, demanding immediate payment to prevent disconnection of electric service.

We want to remind readers that your local electric co-op would never contact you out of the blue to demand immediate payment or threaten immediate disconnection. If you receive a suspicious call, text or email from someone claiming to be from the co-op, please contact your electric co-op office directly by using the phone number on a recent bill or on the co-op's website to verify the communication.

The best defense against a utility scammer is an educated consumer; follow these tips from Utilities United Against Scams to protect yourself from a potential scam.

Protect personal information

Never provide or confirm personal information (Social Security number, date of birth, etc.) or financial information (banking account

information, debit or credit card information) to anyone initiating contact with you and claiming to be from your local electric co-op. Never give out information or provide any payment to any callers or unexpected individual(s) appearing at your door claiming to represent your co-op. Your local co-op will already have your relevant personal and account information.

Take your time

Do not be rushed. If you receive a call, text, email or visitor saying you have to pay your bill immediately to avoid disconnection, tell them you would like to verify that they are a legitimate co-op representative by calling a verified number for the local co-op office.

Beware if a representative exhibits impatience, annoyance or anger when you question their authority. While a scammer will discourage you from hanging up and calling the number on your utility bill, a real co-op representative will encourage you to do so for your own peace of mind.

Always ask questions

Ask the person contacting you to provide your account number, your last payment amount, date of payment and their employee identification number. If they are a legitimate utility representative, this information will be readily accessible. If not, hang up or shut the door, and call your utility directly to report the suspicious activity.

Contact your utility directly

If you receive a suspicious call or visit, please contact the local police and your electric co-op immediately. Share details that the scammer told you, which might aid in a possible criminal investigation.

For more tips, download a free copy of the *Consumer's Guide to Imposter Utility Scams* at www.utilitiesunited.org. Remember, contact your local electric co-op directly if you receive a suspicious call, text, email or visit from someone claiming to represent the utility.

Chuck Soderberg is the executive vice president and general manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win an electric ice cream maker!

When it comes to homemade ice cream, "the more, the better" is the motto of this family-friendly machine. Ideal for entertaining, it makes two quarts of your favorite frozen dessert in a single batch (in just 25 minutes). The clear plastic lid has an opening for adding mix-ins like chocolate chips and nuts.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than June 30. 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 electric string trimmer from the April issue was William Kelly, Prairie Energy Cooperative.



ENTER ONLINE BY JUNE 30!

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 19	Father's Day
JULY 2	Access Energy Cooperative's 84th Birthday
JULY 4	Office closed in observance of Independence Day
JULY 7	Online voting available and packets mailed
AUG. 1	Online voting closes - you can still vote at the annual meeting
AUG. 2	Annual Meeting of Members, 5 p.m. at McMillan Park, Mt. Pleasant

CYBERSECURITY VIGILANCE CONTINUES

BY KEVIN WHEELER



Access Energy Cooperative, Northeast Missouri Electric Cooperative (Northeast) and their wholesale power provider Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(Associated) will continue to maintain a protective stance and closely monitor cybersecurity activity.

Access Energy Cooperative's cybersecurity staff and those at Northeast and Associated remain committed to keeping members' power on and safe from cyberthreats. We provide these safeguards by adhering to all security guidelines and regulations set by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the federal governing body responsible for the reliability and security of the overall electric grid. In addition, all three entities in our three-tiered system go beyond these regulations to further strengthen security with multiple layers designed to detect and eliminate threats.

To ensure reliable electricity for our members, Access Energy Cooperative's collaborative approach to cybersecurity offers 24/7, year-round threat monitoring and protection.

Security steps you can take online

In addition, members can take their own steps to protect their personal systems and data. Here are three key steps you can take when it comes to protecting personal information:

- Make sure your devices and software programs get regular security updates and enable automatic update features when you can.
- Do not reuse passwords on multiple accounts. You can check to see if your login names and passwords were previously compromised at the website www.haveibeenpwned.com. Some browsers have a compromised account check built in. You can use a password manager to keep track of multiple passwords. There are free programs to assist you, such as www.KeePass.info and www.bitwarden.com.
- Remain diligent and use caution when clicking links in unexpected or unfamiliar emails, even those appearing to come from companies and people you work with on a regular basis. Cybercriminals work to make emails look official but design them to trick you into giving up your credentials, personal information or downloading a program that could impact your device.

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



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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HELP STOP COPPER THEFT

BY DANIEL PHILIPS



As the price of copper has increased, so have copper thefts. Copper theft is especially harmful because of the safety risks it creates. Thefts from electric utility

property, such as substations and power poles, can cause fires, explosions, power outages and electric shock.

Copper theft is not a victimless crime. It is expensive to fix the damage done by copper thieves. Their actions have forced airport runways to temporarily shut down, required hospitals to run on generator power, created traffic problems when traffic lights did not have power and caused deaths from fires and explosions.

Copper theft is also dangerous for thieves themselves. Substations and power poles contain and support high

levels of fatal electricity. Copper thieves have been injured, seriously burned or killed while trying to steal from electric utilities.

Tips to help stop copper theft

Access Energy Cooperative offers the following tips to empower you to help stop copper theft.

- Common targets for copper theft are construction sites, farming equipment and electric utility property. If you notice suspicious activity around any of these copper theft targets, notify authorities. Do not try to intervene yourself.
- If you are responsible for a construction site or farm, properly secure your property. If you have large quantities of copper, you may consider a tracking device that can help locate your copper if it is stolen.
- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while away.

- Help spread the word about the dangers of copper theft.
- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire, etc., contact your electric utility immediately.
- If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than utility personnel or contractors, call the police.

There is a Copper Rewards Program available through our power supplier. If you see suspicious activity near power lines, substations, vehicles or offices owned by electric cooperatives, call the toll-free hotline 855-267-7379. If your tip leads to arrest and conviction, you may earn a reward of up to \$1,000. The money is yours to keep, but the savings belong to all.

Daniel Philips is the director of operations at Access Energy Cooperative.

PRIVACY POLICY

INFORMATION WE COLLECT

Access Energy Cooperative will receive and retain information about member consumers/customers through applications or other forms; transactions with us, our affiliates, or others; from a consumer-reporting agency; and advanced metering infrastructure.

Access Energy Cooperative will limit the use and collection of nonpublic personal information to that which is necessary to maintain and administer financial services, beneficial in designing, operating and maintaining the Cooperative's electric system to offer affordable and reliable electric service.

This information will not be shared with third parties unless: the information is provided to help complete a member-consumer/customer initiated transaction; the member-consumer/customer has requested it; the disclosure is required by law, warrant, or court order; or the disclosure is required by banking regulation.

"Third Party" is defined as any person or entity other than: employees of the Cooperative; the Cooperative's designated legal counsel; or any entity contractually bound to the Cooperative to provide billing

or collection services for electric cooperative accounts. When member-consumer/customer information is provided to any third parties, that third party must be bound by appropriate confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations.

Access Energy Cooperative limits employee access to member consumer/customer information to those with a business reason for knowing such information. All employees are educated on the importance of confidentiality and member-consumer/customer privacy. Any employee that violates the privacy of our member-consumers/customers will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures and possible termination.

Appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure information are put in place to prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and to ensure the correct use of information.

RIGHT TO BE INFORMED

Information regarding operational aspects of the Cooperative's advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and related programs will be made available to members as requested.

Member-consumers will be better informed about their electricity consumption.

Member-consumers will have access to information that helps explain available billing rate structures and options, outage information, peak demand, and the impact of energy consumption habits with the AMI.

The purpose of the collection, use, retention, and sharing of energy consumption data shall be made known to the member-consumers in a clear and transparent manner.

Member-consumers will be informed of the available choices and consent options regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of energy consumption data.

Requests to correct inaccurate information will be responded to in a timely manner.

Member-consumers who wish to file a privacy violation complaint have the right to submit the same to the Cooperative for resolution. If not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Cooperative staff, the same may be submitted to the Cooperative's Board of Directors for a resolution. If the issue is still not resolved to the member-consumer's satisfaction, the member-consumer may pursue alternative remedies.

2022 ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS AUG. 2 AT 5 P.M., MCMILLAN PARK IN MT. PLEASANT

All Access Energy Cooperative members are encouraged to come to the meeting. There will be many chances to win a prize!

An annual meeting gift and a free meal ticket will be given to every member at registration. Prize drawings include:

- Several \$25, \$50 and \$100 bill credit drawings – must be present to win
- \$250 grand prize bill credit – must be present to win
- \$100 bill credit drawing from ballots mailed in – don't have to be present to win
- \$100 bill credit drawing from members who voted online – don't have to be present to win



\$100 bill credit drawing awarded to one member who voted online. Sign up for SmartHub for the easiest way to vote online!

2022 CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1



Fred Hickenbottom



Frank Redeker

District 2



Mark Hotchkiss



Robert P. Smith

District 3



Loren Holtkamp



Marvin Newton

DIVIDEND ALLOCATION NOTICES

Receiving a dividend payment is one of the primary benefits of being a member of Access Energy Cooperative. Organized as a cooperative, we are owned and operated by our members, and do not exist to earn profits. Instead, any revenues above the cost of doing business are returned to the members as dividends.

On your May or June bill, there is a statement showing the amount of patronage dividends being allocated to your dividend account for 2021. The image to the right shows where you can find it on your bill.

Members have the option to receive their dividend



payments in the form of a bill credit, rather than a check. If you wish to set your dividend account up to receive a bill credit instead of a check, please contact our office at 866-242-4232 or send an email to finance@accessenergycoop.com.

WIN A \$25 BILL CREDIT!

Each member who signs up by June 30 to receive their dividend payments as bill credits, in lieu of checks, will be entered in a drawing to receive a \$25 bill credit. The drawing will be held on July 1.

2022 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners of the 2022 Access Energy Cooperative photo contest!

The winning photos will be incorporated into the 2023 Access Energy Cooperative calendar. The artists will receive a \$75 award, plus if they are a member of the cooperative, they will receive an additional \$25 bill credit.

Calendars will be available at the Annual Meeting of Members on Aug. 2 at McMillan Park in Mt. Pleasant. After the annual meeting, we will also showcase the winning photos on social media.

Thank you to everyone who submitted photos. Please keep sending in those amazing images, we are accepting photos now for the 2023 photo contest.

Winner name	Photo title	County photo was taken in
Mary Adkins	Crystal Clear	Lee
Bill Graeser	Cloud Harvest	Jefferson
Kim Kingery	Moon Over Old Memories	Des Moines
Bill Graeser	Golden Reflection	Jefferson
Katie Mertens	Beautiful Sky Arch	Henry
Hollie Nelson	A Moment of Rest	Jefferson
Belinda Allen	Grain Bin Glow	Henry
Beatrice McDowell	Hanging Out	Henry
Diane Kruse	Farm Scene	Lee
Mary Adkins	Prairie Fire	Lee
Sherry Taglauer	Colorful Reflections	Jefferson
Belinda Allen	Beautiful Evening	Henry
Lindi Harryman	Beauty in the Snow	Jefferson

SOLAR SPOT

ESTIMATE SOLAR POTENTIAL WITH ONLINE TOOL

Curious how solar could work in your home or business? Check out the PV Watts calculator at pwwatts.nrel.gov. Created by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, it is an unbiased tool that helps users make smart solar decisions. It can estimate performance potential of photovoltaic (solar) installations.

HELPING FUND ENERGY RESEARCH



Each year, Access Energy Cooperative contributes a portion of its gross revenues to the Iowa Energy Center at Iowa State University and the Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research at the University of Iowa.

The Iowa Energy Center helps promote, develop and advance energy efficiency programs and renewable energy research. In addition, the center's team is available to answer questions on a variety of energy issues for the citizens of Iowa.

Access Energy Cooperative paid \$36,498 in 2022. We are proud to help fund these two centers.

ICE CREAM RECIPES

OLD FASHIONED CRANK ICE CREAM

- 6 large egg yolks, whisked
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- dash salt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups whole milk
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ice
- 2 cups rock salt

Blend egg yolks, sugar and salt until smooth. In large sauce pan, mix milk and cream, simmer until small bubbles form and mixture is hot but not boiling. Add egg mixture. Reduce heat, stir about 5 minutes or until 175 degrees F – DO NOT BOIL. Remove from heat and place in a bowl. Add vanilla extract. Chill the mixture before filling ice cream canister about half full. Place ice and rock salt around the maker. Keep adding ice and rock salt as it melts. Crank the ice cream maker and when it cannot be turned, the ice cream is done. Add any toppings as desired.

Reta Janssen • Doon • Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

CARAMEL DELIGHT

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
- 1 cup quick rolled oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups pecans, chopped
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 6-ounce jar caramel topping
- $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon vanilla ice cream, softened

Combine flour, oats, brown sugar and nuts, then stir in melted butter. Spread in a thin layer on the bottom of a baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20 minutes until lightly browned. Cool and crumble. Place half the oat mixture in the bottom of a 9x13-inch pan. Warm caramel slightly in the microwave then smooth over oat mixture. Slice ice cream and place slices in an even layer over the oats and caramel. Top with remaining half of the oat mixture. Freeze until firm, at least 24 hours. Serves 15

Jill Miller • Nevada • Consumers Energy

CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM ROLL

- 4 eggs, separated
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar plus 1 tablespoon, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour, unsifted
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cocoa
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 quart ice cream, softened

Line a 10½x15½x1-inch jellyroll pan with aluminum foil and generously grease the foil. Beat egg yolks 3 minutes on medium speed. Gradually add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar; continue beating for 2 minutes. In a separate bowl, combine flour, cocoa, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, baking soda and salt. Add alternately with water on low speed, just until the batter is smooth. Add vanilla and set aside chocolate mixture. Beat egg whites until foamy. Add 1 tablespoon sugar and beat until stiff peaks form. Carefully fold into the chocolate mixture. Spread batter evenly into the prepared pan. Bake at 375 degrees F for 14-16 minutes, or until the top springs back when touched lightly. Invert onto a slightly dampened towel and carefully remove foil. Immediately roll the cake and towel together from the narrow end of the cake. Let stand 1 minute and unroll, then re-roll, omitting the towel. Cool completely on wire rack. Unroll the cake and spread with softened ice cream and reroll. Freeze the cake immediately. Cut into slices to serve. Serves approximately 15

Joan Androy • Logan
Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative

LEMONY ICE CREAM PIE

- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
 - 1 6-ounce can frozen lemonade concentrate, partially thawed
 - 1 9-inch graham cracker crust
- Optional garnish:** fresh raspberries, lemon slices, fresh mint springs

Stir together ice cream and lemonade concentrate until blended. Spoon into graham cracker crust and freeze 2 hours or until firm. Garnish if desired.

**Debra Peterson • Albia
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative**

FRIED ICE CREAM PIE

- ¼ cup butter
 - 1½ cups crushed cornflakes (measure after crushing)
 - ¼ cup sugar
 - ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1 quart vanilla ice cream
- Toppings:** honey, chocolate syrup, caramel, whipped topping, cherries

In a large skillet, melt butter on medium heat. When butter is completely melted stir in cornflakes, sugar and cinnamon. Stir continuously on medium heat for 4-5 minutes or until cornflakes turn color. Cool and let ice cream soften. Press two-thirds of the cooled cereal mix into a pie pan. Spoon softened ice cream over cereal crust and smooth. Sprinkle remaining one-third of cereal mixture on top. Cover with foil and freeze 6 hours. Before serving, top with honey, chocolate syrup, caramel, whipped topping and cherries. *Serves 10-15*

**Nan Jurgens • Thornton
Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative**

SHOWER DESSERT (LIME SHERBET FREEZE)

- 3 cups Ritz Crackers, crushed, divided
- 1 cup plus 8 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 8 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1 quart lime sherbet, softened
- 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 2 eggs, well-beaten

Mix 2½ cups crackers with 8 tablespoons sugar and 8 tablespoons melted butter. Pat the mixture firmly in a 9x13-inch cake pan. Mix ice cream and sherbet, then add on top of the crust. Freeze. Cook lemon juice, 1 cup sugar, 6 tablespoons butter and eggs over low heat until thick, stirring constantly. Let cool, then spread over frozen ice cream mixture. Sprinkle remaining ½ cup crackers over top. Freeze. Remove 10-15 minutes before serving. *Serves 12-15*

**Rhonda Poppe • Ionia
Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative**

BUTTER PECAN ICE CREAM

- 2 cups pecans, chopped
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 12-ounce cans evaporated milk
- 2 3.75-ounce packages instant vanilla pudding
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ quarts 2% milk

Sauté pecans in butter on low heat, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes or until toasted. Set aside to cool. Combine remaining ingredients, mixing well. Pour into 1½ to 2-gallon freezer can with dasher. Freeze about 10 minutes or until ice cream starts to thicken. Remove dasher and add pecans. Stir into the bottom. Return dasher and freeze until firm. Let soften about an hour. *Serves 12-15*

LuAnn Lauters • Garner • Prairie Energy Cooperative

PUMPKIN ICE CREAM

- 21-22 gingersnaps
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ cup pecans, chopped
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream

Arrange 19-20 whole gingersnaps over bottom and sides of 9-inch pie plate. Crush remaining gingersnaps. Combine pumpkin, sugar, salt and spices. Mix well. Stir in pecans. Chill in refrigerator 2 hours. Fold chilled mixture into softened ice cream. Spoon into the gingersnap-lined pie plate. Sprinkle gingersnap crumbs over top and freeze.

**Marilyn O'Brien • Geneva
Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative**

WANTED:

GAME DAY RECIPES

THE REWARD:

\$25 FOR EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!

Deadline is June 30

Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions. **Also provide the number of servings per recipe.**

EMAIL: recipes@ieclmagazine.com

(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

MAIL: Recipes

Iowa Electric Cooperative Living • 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992



ELECTRIC CO-OPS ARE BUILDING TOWARD AN EV MOBILE FUTURE

BY DERRILL HOLLY



With dozens of electric SUVs, pickup trucks and vans scheduled to debut over the next few years, public charging availability will become a priority for consumers, especially in rural areas where stations are scarce.

Utilities, including locally owned electric cooperatives, will be serving new EV loads and extending the reach of public charging networks now under development or proposed for major

transportation corridors.

“Electric vehicles are evolving rapidly and, as they do, use and charging patterns are shifting and consumers are getting a better understanding of how they can use the vehicles,” says Brett Smith, director of technology for the Center for Automotive Research. The non-profit organization conducts independent research on behalf of the global mobility industry.

Understanding charging infrastructure needs

Still, one of the major challenges facing market acceptance remains a lack of charging infrastructure in many parts of the country. As of December 2021, there were about 113,000 charging ports available at 46,090 public charging stations nationwide.

“You’re going to see the need to really invest in infrastructure over the next

HOW IS IOWA CHARGING UP?

According to Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Iowa Economic Development Authority, nearly 6,000 EVs and hybrids are registered in Iowa.

Polk, Dallas, Linn, Johnson and Scott are the top five counties for EV registration.

Anyone with an EV in Iowa must pay a special registration fee in addition to the annual vehicle registration fee to

the Iowa DOT. Beginning Jan. 1, 2022, the battery electric (BEV) fee is \$130 and the plug-in hybrid electric (PHEV) is \$65.



Plugshare is one of the most accurate EV charging station maps. Drivers can download a free app or visit www.plugshare.com to find charging stations, leave reviews and connect with other plug-in owners.

5 to 10 years,” says Smith. He adds that some buyers who have the option of home charging have not reached the comfort level essential to use EVs for longer trips.

“They don’t see the infrastructure out there. You’re probably at some point going to need to make it seem like overinvestment, because you have to make the consumer comfortable,” Smith explains.

The federal government estimates that 500,000 public chargers will be needed by 2030, and it is currently investing \$7.5 billion to help build a network of public chargers along major highways and in rural areas. The funding comes from the bipartisan infrastructure bill passed by Congress and signed into law last November.

According to the Department of Energy (DOE), the majority of ports now being deployed for public use are DC fast chargers that provide 60 to 80 miles of range for 20 minutes of charging time, compared to four minutes at the pump for most gasoline-powered vehicles. Smith says it may be feasible to charge EVs up to 80% of capacity in about 15 minutes.

“Whether that’s perfect for everybody or not, if it becomes a standard or an accepted practice, I think people could become comfortable with that,” he says.

Collaborating to build a charging network

The Joint Office for Electric Vehicle Charging and Infrastructure operated by the DOE and the Department of Transportation (DOT) is developing a grant program to help states and local

partners, including electric co-ops, develop public charging facilities.

“The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and electric cooperatives formed the Community Approach to Vehicle Electrification funding interest group. This group of co-ops is focused on using their detailed knowledge of local needs to address vehicle electrification and charging infrastructure,” says Brian Sloboda, NRECA’s director of consumer solutions.

Across the U.S., many electric cooperatives are already in regular contact with their state DOTs to discuss current and proposed Alternative Fuel Corridors. These corridors will be the areas eligible for federal funding. State DOTs must submit an EV infrastructure plan to the federal government by Aug. 1.

“Electric co-ops can help their state DOTs by identifying areas of the service territory where EV charging infrastructure could be placed in an economic manner that overlaps with current or proposed Alternative Fuel Corridors,” says Sloboda.

Under the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, public EV charging infrastructure should be located every 50 miles along major travel corridors, and no more than 1 mile from the highway.

“The focus on local needs will ensure that the college tailgate parties, national parks, highway interchanges, local businesses and county fairs are adequately represented,” says Sloboda. “They will place the

infrastructure where the people and local businesses are.”

Among the greatest concerns are charger availability during peak travel periods, which include holidays, the beginning and end of academic terms, and major sports and entertainment events that attract highway travelers. If wait times at available charging ports average 15 minutes per vehicle, the cumulative effects of several EVs in a waiting line could cause substantial delays.

Bringing ideas into reality

The DOE’s Alternate Fuels Data Center has developed a Station Locator Tool (SLT) mobile app. During the government’s 2021 fiscal year, the SLT site attracted 6 million page views and topped 3,900 downloads. According to the DOE, the site provided more than 1.3 million searches for EV charging stations for the fiscal year.

Energy officials contend that placement of fast chargers at restaurants, shopping malls and other locations where consumers shop, work and play could offer multitasking opportunities. Organizations like the National Association of Convenience Stores are now providing technical assistance and resources to convenience store operators to help promote installation and availability of fast charging equipment to meet growing demand.

While DC fast charging units now range in price from \$10,000 to \$35,000 per unit, federal and state funding initiatives could drive down the costs, increasing incentives to add them.

Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING WHEN PLANNING A REMODEL

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

If you're considering remodeling your home, it's a great opportunity to take care of energy efficiency improvements. Considering energy-efficient materials and projects in your scope of work is a worthy investment because there may be cost savings and convenience in tackling multiple updates at once.

Planning for efficiency is the first step to making it a reality. No matter if you're updating the kitchen, bathroom, basement or exterior of your home, there are opportunities to make thoughtful moves that will benefit your home's energy efficiency now and in the future.

Kitchen remodel considerations

If your kitchen remodel includes new appliances, buy ENERGY STAR®-rated models. ENERGY STAR refrigerators are about 9% more efficient than standard models, and ENERGY STAR dishwashers save both energy and water.

Kitchen faucets have options for multiple flow-rate settings. You can save water by using a lower flow rate on your faucet when washing dishes, vegetables or your hands, but you can change the setting to quickly fill a pot for cooking.

Bathroom remodel tips

If you plan to remodel your bathroom, include a high-performance showerhead. Look for the WaterSense logo for showerheads, faucets and toilets, which ensures the product meets performance and water use standards.

Check the fine print on your existing equipment to see how much you can save. The gallons per minute (GPM) is usually printed on showerheads and faucet aerators, and the gallons per flush (GPF) is usually printed on toilets.

Basement remodel efficiencies

Basements can be air sealed and insulated around the sill plate and rim joist – the framing between the



Photos: Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources

concrete foundation and the main level floor. Adding insulated walls around the basement's perimeter ensures a cozy living space and a more comfortable home.

It also may be worth upgrading your electric storage water heater to a hybrid – or heat pump – water heater, which is 70% more efficient than a standard electric model.

If an electric vehicle might be in your future, consider running a power supply while the walls are open. It is much less expensive while you have access.

New siding or exterior paint

The best time to make sure your wall insulation is adequate – or to see if you have wall insulation at all – is when you replace your siding or paint the exterior of your home. Wall insulation saves on energy costs, makes your home more comfortable and reduces outside noise.

Batt insulation, spray foam or foam board are good options if you are removing siding. If you are painting, you can have a contractor blow

insulation into the wall cavities through holes cut into the siding or from inside the house. The holes are then plugged and prepped for paint.

Attic insulation

During any project that takes you into the attic, check insulation levels. Work in the attic can negatively impact attic insulation by crushing it or removing it to access work areas.

If more insulation is needed, air seal and check ventilation. Also, make sure all bath and kitchen fans vent to the exterior of the house. Insulation may not be as pretty as new countertops, but it can help reduce your energy costs and make your home more comfortable.

A little planning during a remodel can go a long way toward improving your home's energy efficiency! It's much more cost effective to tackle energy efficiency projects before your space is finished.

Miranda Boutelle writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LINE CREWS DURING POWER RESTORATION

BY PAUL WESSLUND

Whether the lights go out because of weather or squirrels, safety comes first for lineworkers. You can learn a lot about power outages and restoration by watching a utility crew at work – from a safe distance, of course.

The first thing you'll notice is the deliberate, careful pace. They deploy signs to alert motorists and mark the work area with orange cones. Always in hardhats and fire-protective clothing, anyone working on a power line pulls on heavy, machine-tested rubber gloves and spreads insulating blankets over the wires.

And there's more you won't see. That morning, they likely huddled at the back of a truck to discuss tasks for the day, with an emphasis on safety protocols. It's a best practice in the industry – so common it's often called a "tailgate meeting" or "toolbox talk."

Making safety a habit

There are a lot of reasons your electricity might go off, with weather by far the leading cause. But to a lineworker, all power outage repairs have one thing in common – safety.

Safety may be common sense, but it's not taken for granted and line crews never compromise on safety. Cooperative leaders make it clear that skipping any safety measure or procedure is a firing offense. Line crews receive constant training to stay up to date with safety protocols.

Replacing and upgrading equipment

The next thing you can learn from a line crew is watching what task they're doing. There's a good chance they're replacing old equipment. Poles and transformers wear out, and failing equipment is one significant cause of power outages. The crew you watch could be restoring an equipment outage, or they might be switching out an old device to prevent a future outage.



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You might also see them replacing a downed utility pole, a painstaking process of removing the old and hauling in and raising the new, using trucks specifically designed for the job.

The pole might be down because a motorist ran into it, or it could be weather related. Wind, ice and fires cause about 80% of power outages. One characteristic of those natural disasters is that the damage can be widespread. If one pole is down, many others could be as well. That means crews will be repeating the pole-replacement process, one job at a time.

That's why bringing the lights back on after a major storm with widespread outages can take days or even weeks.

Nature versus power lines

It's also likely the crew you're watching will be trimming trees. Trees are beautiful but a common cause of outages as wind and nearby branches can lead to wires getting knocked to the ground. Electric cooperatives devote a lot of time and resources to urging and

enforcing limits on planting anything too close to power lines.

One fairly common cause of outages that requires crews to make repairs is wildlife. Squirrels and other critters routinely crawl around utility equipment, occasionally making a connection between high-voltage wires. Snakes that slither into an electric substation bring consequences – for lineworkers and the utility. Sometimes crews need to investigate and correct the cause. Often the system will reset itself after only a brief power interruption.

So, what lessons can you learn from lineworkers? Outages can be caused by a variety of factors. Restoring power is an intricate process in a complex utility system. And safety – for crews and the community – will always be the top priority.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

NOMINATE A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER BY JUNE 30

Your nominee could win \$2,000 for their local charity

Iowa's electric cooperatives are excited to announce the return of a statewide contest, which celebrates our cooperative commitment to community. Called **Shine the Light**, the contest will accept nominations in June and award three winners with a \$2,000 check to their local charity or community organization.

"We're excited to once again provide this cooperative effort to shine the light on local volunteers," says Erin Campbell, director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. "So many people throughout the areas served by Iowa's electric cooperatives deserve to be recognized for making a positive impact."

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, the Shine the Light contest will accept contest entries online during the month of June. In addition to receiving a \$2,000 donation for their charity or nonprofit of choice, the winners will also be featured in the September issue of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine.

How to nominate

Member-consumers, employees and retirees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity from an electric cooperative in Iowa, you're a co-op member-consumer and invited to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.



Step 1: Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com from June 1-30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules.

Step 2: As a nominator, provide your contact information and answer the following question in 500 words or less.

How has your nominee made a positive difference in the community, and why do they deserve to be recognized?



BEAN WALKING ETIQUETTE

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

When I was growing up, one of the only ways for a 13-year-old to make money on the farm was to walk beans. This was before the days of weed-resistant soybean hybrids, and my crew's job was to clear those fields of buttonweeds, stray corn stalks, cockleburrs and what we called "waterweeds."

In Pella, most of the kids willing to do this work signed on with a local farmer who owned many acres. From the first of July until the end of the month, we labored six mornings a week from 7 a.m. to noon.

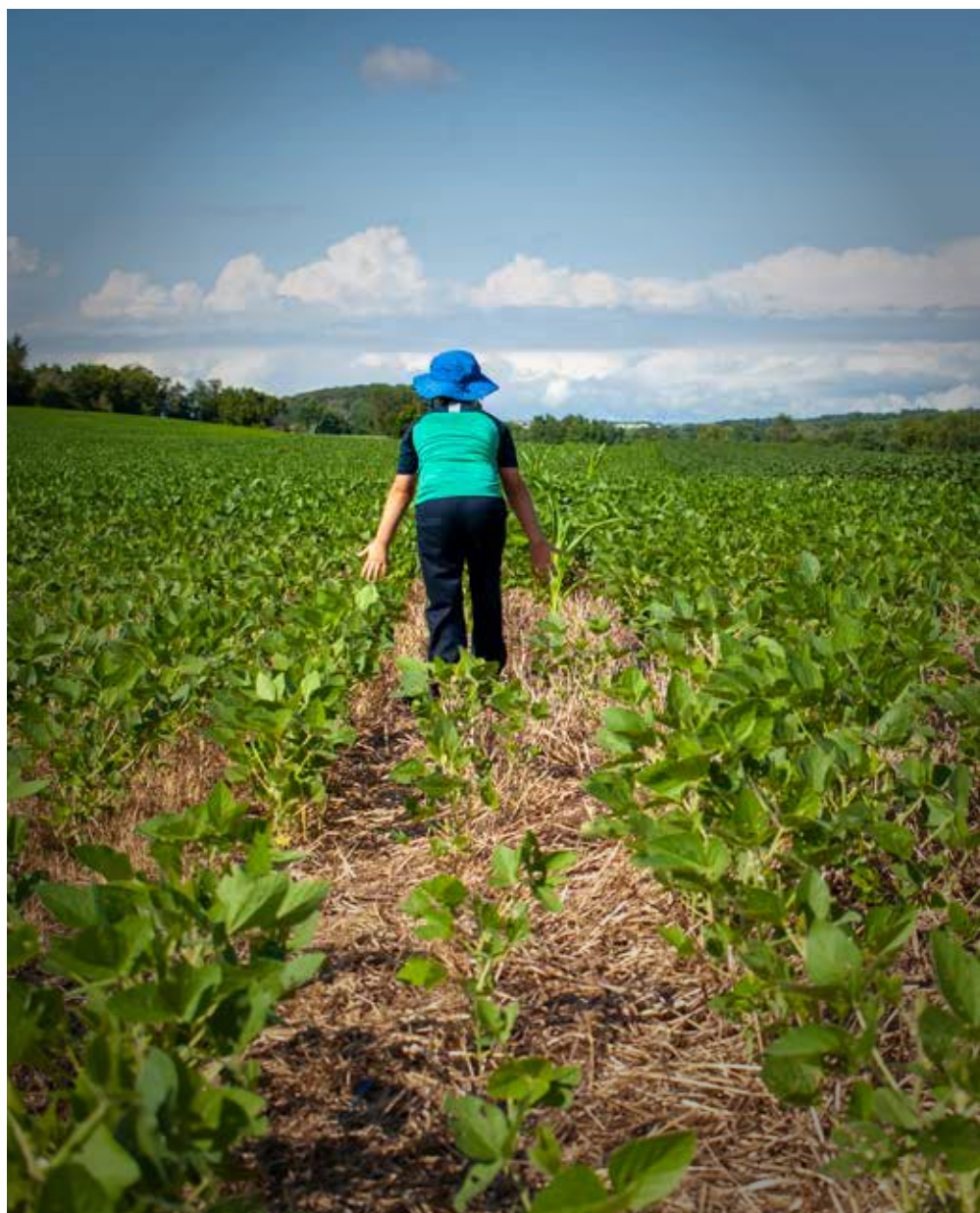
A strategic approach

Lest you think that this seems very straightforward, there is very much a technique to walking beans. A person was placed in every other row; your job was to keep an eye on the inside of the rows you were walking between and then the outside of each row beside you. In all, you were patrolling four rows of beans.

We carried hoes, but our crew leaders warned us against using them very often. It was easy to hack out the weeds, but in the process, we usually took out more beans than the weeds warranted. A few city-slicker kids brought what were called "bean hooks," which someone told them would be helpful, but ended up being pretty worthless. The best method was your gloved hands and your back, as you pulled from the roots. If it was really root-bound, you called someone over from an adjoining row to help.

Some fields were a dream; you could walk for yards without running into the enemy. Other acres were riddled with horseweed, corn or the vine-like waterweeds. Often, we were reduced to crawling through the rows, especially when cockleburrs were prevalent.

If you were finished with your rows before everyone else, bean etiquette required that you "dig out" someone who was still a way back by working up



their rows until the two of you met. At the end of each row, we'd grab a drink, take a little rest and gird our proverbial loins for the next round.

Fields of teenage entertainment

Occasionally a farmer in the area would informally hire a few kids to walk a smaller plot of fields. We'd show up with 4 to 6 girls, all in tube tops to get a great tan, and parade through the aisles. Without overseers, hijinks commenced – clod fights, pulling down

someone's tube top, dripping ice water onto an unsuspecting walker while she was resting for a few moments.

In this era of beans that are largely weed-free, there's not much call for bean walkers. That's probably a good thing. I haven't worn a tube top for 40 years.

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, two incredibly adorable grandsons and a lovely granddaughter.



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