

● JULY 2023

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

SPECIAL INSERT:

**Access Energy
Cooperative 2022
Annual Report**

Power supply co-op among most trustworthy ► See Page 4

CONTENTS



VOLUME 76 • ISSUE 7

3

STATEWIDE PERSPECTIVE

Growing reliability
threats

3

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a grilling
package

14

SAFETY MATTERS

Protect yourself against
utility scams

15

STUDENT LEADERS

Scholarships
awarded

EDITOR
Ann Foster Thelen

DESIGNERS
Bree Glenn
Megan Thompson

**IAEC EXECUTIVE
VICE PRESIDENT**
Chuck Soderberg

**IAEC DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS**
Erin Campbell

IAEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Roger Solomonson, District 3 – President
Gordon Greimann, District 6 – Vice President
Kenny VandenBerg, District 1 – Secretary/Treasurer
Deena Moore, District 4 – Asst. Secretary/Treasurer
Tony Lem, District 2
Jim Miller, District 5
Bruce Amundson, District 7
Marion Denger, Prairie Energy Cooperative – NRECA Representative
Kevin Wheeler, Access Energy Cooperative – Managers' Representative

Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine (ISSN: 2770-8683) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase ***Iowa Electric Cooperative Living*** is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

Editorial Office
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350.

Email Address
editor@ieclmagazine.com. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

Website
www.ieclmagazine.com

Postmaster
Send address changes to *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

Change of Address
Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

© Copyright 2023, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. No portion of the editorial, photographic or other content of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine or its website may be reproduced without written permission of the editor.



ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Kent Schlawin, a Prairie Energy Cooperative member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

GROWING RELIABILITY THREATS

BY JIM MATHESON



American families and businesses expect the lights to stay on at a cost they can afford. But that's no longer a guarantee. Nine states saw

rolling blackouts last December as the demand for electricity exceeded the available supply.

This is no longer a theoretical conversation. And unless policymakers change course, it's going to get worse.

Warnings and challenges mount

In May, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a rule to regulate power plant emissions. This proposal will further strain America's electric grid and undermine decades of work to reliably keep the lights on across the nation. It's just the latest instance of EPA failing to prioritize reliable electricity as a fundamental expectation of American consumers.

It shouldn't have to be this way. When you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging. But instead of putting down the shovel, EPA wants to bring in an excavator.

But don't just take my word for it. Warnings about the threat of reliability challenges have snowballed in recent months. The 2023 North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) summer reliability assessment recently highlighted that more of the country is at risk of blackouts than last year. NERC says that the EPA proposal will accelerate the reliability challenges.

In May, several Federal Energy Regulatory Commission leaders warned the U.S. Senate about threats to reliable electricity. In March, Manu Asthana, who is the CEO of PJM Interconnection – a regional transmission organization that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity in 13 states –

said that the regional transmission organization needed to slow the pace of generation retirements to avoid reliability problems by the end of the decade.

Voicing reliability concerns

America has a reliability problem. With the help of co-op leaders across the nation, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has been a leading voice in sounding the alarm on reliability. Today's energy decisions will determine if there are sufficient resources to keep the lights on tomorrow. Five issues are impacting the reliable delivery of electricity across the nation.

- ① Increasing demand for electricity as other sectors of the economy are electrified.
- ② Decreasing electricity supply due to the disorderly retirement and insufficient replacement of existing generation.
- ③ Permitting delays that prevent new electric infrastructure from being built and connected to the grid.

④ Supply chain challenges.

⑤ Problems with natural gas availability.

Commitment to member-consumers

None of these challenges will be easy to address, but we can start by asking ourselves these questions:

- Is this what America is supposed to be?
- Should the threat of rolling blackouts be a permanent facet of U.S. energy policy?

The answer to both of those questions is a resounding no for electric co-ops and the communities we serve.

The long-term solution requires policymakers and regulators to recognize the need for time, technology development and new transmission infrastructure. These are the essential ingredients for an energy future that prioritizes reliable electricity for all consumers, including the 42 million Americans served by electric cooperatives.

Jim Matheson is the CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a grilling package!

July is National Grilling Month! To celebrate, we're giving away a beef bundle, including \$50 in beef certificates, a cast iron skillet and additional summer grilling essentials, courtesy of the Iowa Beef Industry Council.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than July 31. 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 \$100 local nursery gift card from the May issue was Phillip Boehnke, Prairie Energy Cooperative.



ENTER ONLINE BY JULY 31!

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 6	Annual Meeting voting materials mailed
JULY 6	Director election online voting begins at 8 a.m.
JULY 20	Board meeting
AUG. 1	Annual Meeting of Members, 5 p.m.
AUG. 17	Board meeting
SEPT. 4	Office closed for Labor Day

You can access your account information 24/7, year-round on our website at www.accessenergycoop.com or by using our SmartHub app for mobile devices. You can also call our office to report service interruptions and request account information at 866-242-4232.



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): 8-1-1
Website: www.accessenergycoop.com
Facebook: facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop
Twitter: twitter.com/AccessEnergyC
Email: contactus@accessenergycoop.com
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Friday, 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Call our office 24/7: 319-385-1577

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

General Manager/CEO: Kevin Wheeler
Editor: Kimberly Davis

Assistant Editor: Cherity Wibben

Officers and Directors:
Marvin Newton, District 3, President
mnewton@accessenergycoop.com

Marvin Larson, District 1, Vice President
mlarson@accessenergycoop.com

Robert Chesnut III, District 3, Secretary
rchesnut@accessenergycoop.com

David Hollingsworth, District 1, Treasurer
dhollingsworth@accessenergycoop.com

Fred Hickenbottom, District 1, Director
fhickenbottom@accessenergycoop.com

Jerry Barker, District 2, Director
jbarker@accessenergycoop.com

Robert P. Smith, District 2, Director
rsmith@accessenergycoop.com

Larry White, District 2, Director
lwhite@accessenergycoop.com

Michael Holtkamp, District 3, Director
maholtkamp@accessenergycoop.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

ACCESS ENERGY COOPERATIVE
POWER SUPPLIER NAMED
MOST TRUSTWORTHY

BY KEVIN WHEELER



Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Associated) is the power generation cooperative for Access Energy Cooperative members. It was recently

recognized as one of America's most trustworthy companies, according to a recent survey ranking from *Newsweek* and market research partner Statista. I believe this is an outstanding testament to the values held across our entire co-op power system.

Associated was ranked No. 5 in *Newsweek's* Most Trustworthy Companies in America in 2023 in the Energy & Utilities category. The second annual survey reviewed a pool of 3,100 U.S.-based companies, with just 700 voted for top honors across 23 industries.

Notably, Associated was the highest-rated electric cooperative in the survey, followed by Arkansas Electric Cooperative (No. 17), Basin Electric Power Cooperative (No. 26) and Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (No. 38). It's no wonder there were multiple electric cooperatives on the list because the seven cooperative principles are shared among all co-ops and guide the way we treat the members and communities we serve.

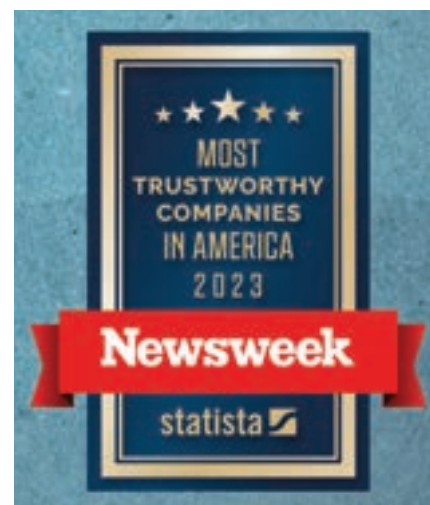
The Energy & Utilities category had the second-most ranked companies of any industry in the survey, with 47 public and private utility companies making the list. *Newsweek's* rankings were determined by an independent survey sample of about 25,000 people comprising customers, employees and investors across the U.S. Surveys were targeted to a pool of 1,800 public

and 1,300 private companies with revenues of more than \$500 million.

Associated is part of a three-tiered electric cooperative system united by the common purpose of serving electric cooperative members with safe, reliable, efficient electricity. Associated is owned by six generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts), such as Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative, which formed Associated in 1961 to provide them with a wholesale power supply. These six G&Ts are owned by 51 distribution cooperatives (including Access Energy Cooperative) in southeast Iowa, Missouri and northeast Oklahoma. These local electric cooperatives are made up of more than 935,000 meters, representing more than 2 million members.

On behalf of Access Energy Cooperative, I'd like to congratulate Associated on this recognition. I look forward to our continued relationship working together to serve our members and the entire industry with the utmost integrity and transparency.

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



DIVIDENDS ARE COMING

Each member of Access Energy Cooperative has a dividend account where dividend allocations accumulate.

When the co-op board allocates margins, your portion is stored in your dividend account. Notices are then printed on your bill to let you know how much was allocated to your account.

Once the financial statements for the year are reviewed, it is determined by the board of directors if it is in the best interest of the cooperative to approve a dividend payment to members from these accounts.

In 2023, the board approved a dividend payment to the members in the amount of \$1,181,879.39. This refund is 100% of the remaining dividends for 2002 and 2003, 23% for 2004, 43% for 2007, 21% for 2008, and 15% for 2022.

Dividend checks for those who have not signed up for bill credits will be available for pick up at the annual meeting on Aug. 1. Any checks not picked up will be mailed after the meeting. Checks will be sent to the most current address we have on file. The cooperative will not be printing checks for amounts under \$5. These amounts will be added to next year's refund.

Members have the option to receive their dividend payments as a bill credit. To take advantage of this option, please call our finance department or email finance@accessenergycoop.com.



Pictured from left to right, front row: Access Energy Cooperative Directors Jerry Barker, Marvin Larson, Marvin Newton, Robert Chesnut and David Hollingsworth.

Pictured from left to right, back row: Access Energy Cooperative Directors Robert Smith, Fred Hickenbottom, Michael Holtkamp and Larry White.

ACCESS ENERGY COOPERATIVE NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS



The Annual Meeting of the Members of Access Energy Cooperative will be held at the McMillan Park in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, at 5:00 p.m., on August 1, 2023, to take action upon the following matters:

1. The reports of officers, directors, and committees;
2. The election of three (3) directors of the Cooperative for a term of three years each;
3. All other business which may legally come before the meeting or any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

In connection with the election of directors scheduled for this meeting, the following members have been nominated for Director by the Committee on Nominations appointed by the Board of Directors of the Cooperative pursuant to the Bylaws.

2023 Director Nominees

Three-year Term (three to be elected)
One from each Board District

Board District One	Board District Two	Board District Three
David Hollingsworth Thomas E Kientz	Jerry Barker Allan Woline	Loren Holtkamp Michael Holtkamp

You are urged to attend the meeting, hear the reports of the officers, vote for directors, and transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

DATED this 7th day of July, 2023

Robert L. Chesnut III, Secretary

ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING

BY KIMBERLY DAVIS



Not every company invites its customers to an annual meeting to elect the board of directors and help set policy. But Access Energy Cooperative does

just that, except you are our members – not customers.

Cooperatives use a business model that is different from other companies. We don't sell stock on Wall Street, so there are no out-of-town investors. Control of your cooperative is local. This means:

- You may run for a seat on the board of directors.
- You may vote for board of director candidates – every candidate is also a member of Access Energy Cooperative.
- Your cooperative pays dividends back to you – our members – on an annual basis.

It's important to attend Access Energy Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members on Tuesday, Aug. 1.

It is an opportunity to meet other members, co-op employees and directors while catching up on cooperative updates and policy matters. You can vote for the board of directors and learn what business issues are impacting your cooperative.

Members can pick up your dividend check if you haven't signed up for receiving it as a bill credit and your dividend account has accumulated more than \$5.

Mark your calendar today! Plan to vote for directors in July, and then attend the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members on Tuesday, Aug. 1. We look forward to seeing you there!

Kimberly Davis is the director of member services and public relations for Access Energy Cooperative.



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

JOIN US

at the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members
Aug. 1 @ 5pm
McMillan Park, Mt Pleasant

5-7p.m.

- Music by Jake McVey
- Free Meal Tickets Available at Registration
- Ice Cream by Hinterland Dairy
- Register for Door Prizes
- Pick Up Registration Gift
- Pick Up Dividend Check
- Pony Rides
- Drive-A-Tractor
- Inflatable Activities
- Giant Lawn Games
- Information Booths

Business Meeting 7 p.m.

- Call to Order, Invocation
- Reading of the 2023 Notice of Meeting
- Reading of the 2022 Minutes
- Nominating Committee Report
- Call For Ballots From the Floor
- Treasurer's Report
- President's Report
- Power Supplier's Report
- General Manager/CEO's Report
- Youth Tour Report
- Election Results
- Door Prizes (must be present to win)

GRAND PRIZE \$500 BILL CREDIT

NAVIGATING CHANGE






PHOTO CONTEST: WIN UP TO \$100!



We are now accepting photos for the 2025 Access Energy Cooperative calendar! Horizontal, color photos work best for calendar entries, and we are looking for all seasons of the year. Submissions can be sent to mktg@accessenergycoop.com before March 31, 2024.

Thirteen photos will be chosen as featured photos and winners will be awarded \$75, plus an additional \$25 bill credit if they are a member of the cooperative.

Visit www.accessenergycoop.com for complete rules.

DIRECTOR ELECTIONS OPEN JULY 6

Annual meeting packets will be mailed July 6 and will include your ballot for the election of Access Energy Cooperative directors. Members can only vote for directors in their respective district. **You can vote online, mail in your ballot or bring it to the annual meeting on Aug. 1.**

District 1



David Hollingsworth
Packwood

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

My knowledge of members' needs

and leadership skills can help Access Energy Cooperative make informed decisions that benefit members. My continued service can help the cooperative navigate challenges and identify opportunities for growth and innovation.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

Government regulations can create uncertainty for electric cooperatives and increase costs for certain energy sources. The adoption of electric vehicles and charging stations can create issues in infrastructure needs and grid reliability.



Thomas E Kientz
Brighton

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

I would be open to member input and

try to be responsive to their needs. I would also like to explore more options in ways to generate reliable energy for our members.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

Ensuring access to affordable and reliable electricity for rural areas. Modernizing the electric grid. Training employees to be able to do their jobs well and making sure they have the equipment they need.

District 2



Jerry Barker
Mount Pleasant

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

I think I can have a positive impact on

the cooperative because I have 15 years of experience on the board and participate in continual training.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

The issues facing rural electric cooperatives are rising costs, solar issues and electric vehicles.



Allan Woline
Mount Pleasant

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

I am a good listener, and I like to analyze all

aspects of a situation for the pros and cons. I am open to new ideas.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

Securing economical and dependable sources of power. Continuing to provide economical and dependable power to our patrons.

District 3



Loren Holtkamp
West Point

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

I feel that my experience and

influence on previous boards makes me a good candidate. I am a good decision-maker but am also open to all ideas and thoughts. Not only would I serve the cooperative, but I am also always willing to pitch in and volunteer for the community to get things done. I also feel that a fresh perspective is needed on the board. As a truck driver, farmer and business owner, I am very concerned and interested in the impact of all kinds of energy and fuel issues.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

With the increasing popularity of electric cars, I am concerned about the increased consumption of electricity, especially during peak periods and seasons and how to accommodate these needs. I am also concerned about the impact of solar and wind energy on the cooperative system.



Michael Holtkamp
West Point

How could you make a positive impact on the cooperative?

I will be actively involved, learning

as much as possible to be a good board member. I believe representing members of the cooperative is an honor.

What are the prominent issues facing rural electric cooperatives?

Government issues. Expansion of electric vehicles and infrastructure.

WIN A \$100 BILL CREDIT!

All members are encouraged to vote! Ballots submitted online will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 bill credit, which will be drawn during the annual meeting. Ballots that are mailed will be entered into a separate drawing at the annual meeting for a \$100 bill credit.

Vegetable

RECIPES

for summer

SWEET AND SOUR GREEN BEANS

- 4 slices of bacon
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- flour, optional
- 3 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 pint green beans

Fry bacon, drain and crumble. Put brown sugar in pan, stir in flour thickener if desired. Add bacon, vinegar and beans and heat through. *Serves 2*

Allyson Bailey • Hamilton
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

MICROWAVE SUCCOTASH

- 1 16-ounce bag frozen corn
- 1 16-ounce bag frozen lima beans
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon smoked paprika
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon thyme, dried
- 1 teaspoon parsley, dried
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup sweet onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter

In a 2.5-quart microwave-safe bowl with lid, mix corn, lima beans and water. Microwave on high for 10 minutes. Let bowl sit in microwave covered. In a separate bowl, combine tomatoes, garlic powder, paprika, thyme, parsley and salt. Mix well and set aside. Sauté onions in butter until clear. Add to bowl of tomatoes and spices, mix well. Combine tomato mixture with corn and lima beans. Thoroughly stir together. Microwave on high for 2 minutes or until hot. *Serves 6*

Jacque Minikus • Pisgah
Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative

EASY SCALLOPED POTATOES

- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk, heated
- 3 tablespoons flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
- 6 medium potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons butter, plus enough to coat casserole dish
- pepper, optional

Stir the milk, flour and salt together. Layer in a buttered casserole dish alternating potatoes and milk mixture. Top with 3 tablespoons butter and season with pepper, if desired. Bake at 350 degrees F for 60-75 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. *Serves 8-10*

Elinor Moeller • Tripoli
Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative

LOTTA (LOW-TAH) FINNISH VEGGIE CASSEROLE

- 5 potatoes, sliced
- 4 carrots, sliced
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 beet, sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound salt pork, preferably frozen
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup water

In a medium-sized roaster or Dutch oven, place a layer of potatoes followed by a layer of carrots. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add a layer of onions followed by a layer of beets, salt and pepper. Repeat the vegetable layers one more time. Slice salt pork $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick and approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide, frozen pork is easier to cut. Place salt pork on top of vegetables and add water. Place under the broiler to cook salt pork until crispy brown. Cover roaster and cook at 400 degrees F for 50 minutes. *Serves 6*

Michele Dirks • George • Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

INFINITY CABBAGE SALAD

- ¼ cabbage, shredded
- 1 cucumber, thinly sliced, optional
- ½ carrot, thinly sliced, optional
- salt, to taste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame dressing, optional
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds

Put the shredded cabbage in a colander. If desired, add cucumber and carrots. Sprinkle with salt, mix well. Set aside for 5-10 minutes. Meanwhile, create a dressing by mixing soy sauce, sugar, apple cider vinegar and sesame oil. Add sesame dressing, if desired. Squeeze vegetables to drain excess water. Pour dressing over vegetables and sprinkle with sesame seeds. *Serves 3*

**Erina Westphal • Guthrie Center
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association**

EGGPLANT CASSEROLE

- 1 small eggplant
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced medium thickness
- ¼ cup American cheese, grated

Peel eggplant and slice about ¾- to ½-inch thick. Cut slices in half. In a large frying pan, heat oil until starting to smoke. Place eggplant in hot oil and brown each side. Season with salt and pepper to taste. In a 2-quart baking dish, alternate layers of eggplant, onion, green pepper and tomatoes. Cover and bake at 375 degrees F for 50 minutes. Remove cover and sprinkle grated cheese on top. Return to oven and bake uncovered until cheese is melted and browned. *Serves 4*

**Greg Flugum • Forest City
Prairie Energy Cooperative**

GOOD CARROTS

- 8 cups carrots, peeled and sliced
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup plus 4 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 pound Velveeta
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 cups crackers, crushed

Steam and drain carrots and onions. Place in 9x13-inch pan. Melt 1 cup butter with Velveeta. Mix in brown sugar and pour over carrots. Mix crackers and 4 tablespoons melted butter, sprinkle over top. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20-25 minutes. *Serves 6*

**Lizzy Hartter • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative**

ONION PIE

- 1 cup soda crackers, crushed
- ¼ cup margarine, melted
- 2 cups onion, sliced
- 2 tablespoons margarine
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- parsley, to taste, chopped

Mix crackers and ¼ cup melted margarine. Press into an 8-inch pie pan on bottom and up the sides. Cook onions in 2 tablespoons margarine until tender, not brown. Place onions in pie pan. Combine milk, eggs, salt and pepper, then pour over onions. Sprinkle with cheese and a little chopped parsley. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes, until custard is set. Serve hot. *Serves 8*

Truman Nester • Rock Rapids • Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

BAKED ZUCCHINI CASSEROLE

- 1 pound ground beef
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup green pepper, chopped
- 1 cup cracker crumbs
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 large zucchini, cubed (or 2 small)
- bread crumbs for topping

Brown beef and onion. In large bowl, mix beef and onion with green pepper, cracker crumbs, salt, pepper, soup, eggs and zucchini. Place mixture in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Top with bread crumbs and bake at 350 degrees F for 35-40 minutes.

**Mrs. Charles Hanes • Stuart
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association**

WANTED:

SLOW COOKER RECIPES

THE REWARD:
\$25 FOR EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!

Deadline is July 31

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



2022

Annual Report



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



40°58'05.81" N 91°34'29.59" W

Navigating Change

Access Energy Cooperative

is a not-for-profit electric distribution cooperative owned by the members we serve.



Marvin Newton
President, District 3



Marvin Larson
Vice President, District 1



Robert Chesnut III
Secretary, District 3



David Hollingsworth
Treasurer, District 1

Board of Directors

Directors are elected by the member-owners and serve a three-year term. They govern:

Meters	9,406
Employees	40
Operating revenue \$	36,894,403
Total assets	\$104,520,997
Miles of energized line	2,245

In 10 counties: Davis, Des Moines, Henry, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lee, Louisa, Van Buren, Wapello, and Washington counties



Jerry Barker
District 2



Fred Hickenbottom
District 1



Michael Holtkamp
District 3



Robert P. Smith
District 2



Larry White
District 2

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. Any revenue generated above the cost of doing business is allocated to members as dividends. The dividends are then paid to the members when the board determines it is in the best interest of the cooperative. In 2022, the board allocated dividends in the amount of \$2,216,942 to member accounts. They retired \$1,619,408 in dividends that were paid to the members. The 2022 retirement brought the total dividends paid to members since 1938 to \$29,059,549.

Navigating Changes in Communities

As a local business in southeast Iowa with deep roots built on 85 years in service, we listen closely to our members to better understand the needs of our communities. Our board members and employees live and work in the communities we serve. They seek opportunities that encourage growth and development. We work closely with local, regional and statewide partners to foster growth and encourage business retention. Your board, management and staff maintain close ties with our elected officials and monitor legislative issues that could have an impact on our cooperative members, as well as the electric utility industry.

Building Relationships

Rep. Joe Mitchell, 2022
REC Day on the Hill.

2022 Member Advisory
Committee Meeting.
(middle right)

Sun & Fun Motorsports,
Fairfield, honored
with 2022 Iowa Area
Development Group
Venture Award.
(lower right)



Total dividends paid since inception
\$29,059,549

\$1,189,208



2018

\$1,202,438



2019

\$1,479,154



2020

\$1,545,548



2021

\$1,619,408



2022

Navigating Change



Kevin Wheeler
General Manager/CEO



*Bovard Studios,
Fairfield, Revolving
Loan Fund recipient,
2022 open house.*

It seems every year a different challenge awaits. Changes in 2022 included difficulties with material supply, delivery and coordination, as well as a significant power cost increase. Your cooperative has navigated through these challenges to set our path for continued safe, reliable, efficient service to our members into the future.

Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AECI), power supply cooperative for Access Energy Cooperative, informed its members last fall of power cost increases predicted for 2023, 2024 and 2025. This generated the first rate increase for members of Access Energy Cooperative since 2016. We were able to keep rates stable in 2017 despite an increase in power costs from AECI. Three main drivers of the increase were 1) power cost; 2) material/supply increases; and 3) operational/overhead expenses. Power costs comprise 67% of our total costs.

As a continuance of issues drawn out during the 2020 pandemic, challenges continue with higher material costs and increasing lead times for materials. Material costs have increased by 30% since 2020, and lead times for delivery of materials continue to lengthen. Larger items, such as transformers, continue to be 52-65 weeks before delivery.

Your cooperative has been preemptive in keeping materials and supplies on hand by using historical data to project needs and increasing the quantity of materials in stock. During the past two years, your cooperative's inventory cost has almost doubled to ensure it has the necessary materials on hand to reliably serve the membership.

To accommodate the increase in material on hand, the cooperative will develop storage solutions on our existing lot in 2023. The fence will be extended to the south with a rock storage lot to allow for additional storage of materials.

Access Energy Cooperative's employees take pride in supplying safe, reliable, efficient service. The co-op employees take satisfaction in serving the membership to ensure your needs are met. They understand our members' expectations for excellent service and strive to meet these goals with the understanding that our members come first.

Even with the challenges facing your cooperative and the industry, it is financially secure and poised to serve your needs. We continue to evaluate all aspects of the cooperative to ensure we are efficient and effective.

Building Relationships

*Meeting with state
legislators, such as
Rep. Jeff Shipley,
at the Capitol.*

*Supporting community
projects like the expansion
Van Buren County
Community Schools with
our Revolving Loan Fund
program (lower left).*



Operations



Daniel Philips
Director of Operations



2022 Vegetation Management Plans Completed

430 miles of mechanical trimming	
Spring Grove Substation	90 miles
Skunk River Substation	90 miles
Franklin Substation	90 miles
Selma Substation	160 miles
290 miles of spraying	
Primrose Substation	160 miles
Coppock Substation	130 miles

Providing our members with safe, reliable, efficient service means we do everything we can to keep your electric service on. For those times when a service interruption occurs, we work until all members have power restored. We navigate the ever-changing landscape Mother Nature provides with preventative maintenance on our system. Clearing brush and trees underneath the lines on our system is a significant part of keeping your power reliable. Your cooperative maintains a 5-year vegetation and tree clearing cycle, including pruning, brush mowing and chemical treatments to slow future growth.

2022 Employee Promotions



(L) Korbin Johnson
Line Foreman



(R) Ben Smith
Journeyman
Lineman



2022 Apprentice Linemen Hired



(L) David
Honeycutt



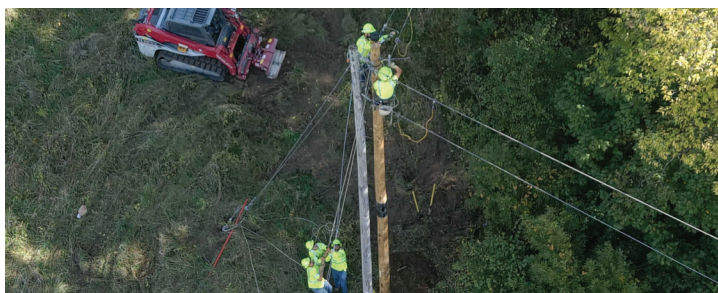
(R) Garrett
Maddy



(L) Trey Metz



(R) Gavin
Thompson



Engineering



Tyler Thein
Director of Engineering



The engineering team serves as the compass in navigating through change, as they design our system toward serving your needs and responding as your initial source of contact for new services, system upgrades, power quality concerns and co-generation installations. They employ many tools to ensure your electric service is as reliable as possible now and into the future. They rely on our Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system, mapping system and system modeling tools to design a sound system to navigate your cooperative for a strong future.

We completed the design and acquired a contractor for installation of approximately 25 miles of distribution line in 2022 to improve system reliability. In addition, a new system was implemented that monitors usage levels of transformers to evaluate the condition of equipment on our system and allow us to schedule preventative maintenance as a measure to reduce equipment loss and outages.

Our pole testing program runs on a 10-year cycle, meaning every pole is tested for remaining useful life at least every 10 years. In 2022, 4,063 poles were tested in Danville, Baltimore, Jackson and Salem Townships, which resulted in a 3.7% failure rate for a total of 178 poles rejected. Poles that failed are scheduled for replacement.

2022
53 new services designed
25 service upgrades
495 miscellaneous system improvements



2022
Thirteen new solar installations were added to our system. This increased solar production capacity on our system by 99 KW.

Total of 1,199 KW from wind and solar systems on our lines



2022 Employee Retirement

Scott Augsburg celebrated retirement in 2022 after 35 years of service. The cooperative appreciates his dedication to the members and wishes him well.



2022 New Employee

Kassie Bulen
Electrical Engineer



Employee Leadership

Tyler Thein, Director of Engineering, graduate of Henry County Leadership Program.



Communications and Member Services



Kimberly Davis

Director of Member Services
and Public Relations

Kathleen Brown, Fairfield, a 2022 Shine the Light Contest winner for her volunteer services to her community.



Communications and commitment to our communities are critical pivots for your cooperative in navigating challenges. We encourage to keep up on what is happening at your cooperative by taking advantage of the communication tools we have. Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine is provided to each member at the beginning of every month and contains updates, notifications, energy efficiency and safety information. In addition to local information, it brings you state, national and electric industry news and information. Your magazine is also available to you on our website at www.accessenergycoop.com. Our members have shown consistency in winning the magazine's monthly recipe contest. Last year, we were honored with the announcement that Kathleen Brown, Fairfield, was chosen as the winner of the statewide Shine the Light contest for her volunteer services to the community. A check for \$2,000 was donated to the Jefferson County Habitat for Humanity program in her honor.

Paperless billing was made available for members who choose to conduct business with the cooperative electronically. Members must have a SmartHub account in order to sign up for paperless billing. Information on this, as well as most cooperative programs, can also be found on our website or you can call us at 866-242-4232.

Employees and family members of the cooperative continue to serve our communities through blood donations. In 2022, they donated 54 gallons of blood with ImpactLife (formerly Southeast Iowa Blood Center). The cooperative hosts four blood drives per year and is very fortunate to have a supportive core group of donors within the cooperative.

Serving our communities is also shown through our annual donation of an electric water heater to the Henry County Habitat for Humanity program.

The cooperative is proud to support local community efforts through volunteerism and financial sponsorships for events like the Midwest Old Threshers Drive-A-Tractor event at the annual reunion, the Tri-State Rodeo and area county fairs.

In support of our youth, we grant up to two \$2,000 for line worker scholarships and six \$1,500 scholarships for high school seniors each year.

Commitment to Communities

Helping businesses like Family Dental with a Revolving Loan Fund Loan.



Sending our youth to Washington D.C., to visit with legislators and learn more about the cooperative way.



Supporting local events and programs such as lighted holiday parades.





2022 Customer Service Representatives Hired



Shelby Ruby

Aimee Sanderson

Kaley White

2022 Employee Promotion



Jennifer Helling
Customer
Service Manager

2022 Employee Retirements

The cooperative appreciates their dedication to the members and wishes them well in retirement.



Carol Baylor
celebrated
retirement in
2022, after 17
years of service.

Marva Crowl
celebrated
retirement in 2022,
after 25 years of
service.



Ricardo Ortiz
IT Administrator

Information Technology

At Access Energy Cooperative, changes in technology are a constant necessity. For example, we regularly collaborate with other cooperatives in Missouri and Iowa, sharing ideas and experiences on the latest technology and software. We also work hard with our partners within the three-tiered system to adapt to today's ever-evolving threats. The "CyberDome" program leverages the resources of 60+ distribution and transmission cooperatives to discover and alert on the latest techniques and malicious software deployed by threat actors. If something happens at one co-op, quick action throughout the community ensures we're all defending against them. Our cooperative even has a technology hardware rotation program to ensure we capitalize on the most reliable, efficient technology possible. Finally, keeping an open mind is one of the most important aspects of changing technology. There are always new ways of doing things, new insights to be acquired and emerging tech to account for in our industry. Change is inevitable; we choose to cooperate with it, adapt to it and learn how to benefit from it.

Safety

2022
23 safety demonstrations
774 individuals

Kurt Lowenberg

Safety Director/
Assistant Operations Manager



Access Energy Cooperative has grown a safety culture that is unparalleled by others and embraced by our employees. Our mission statement makes it clear that employee and member safety is our priority. We provide safety demonstrations to local schools, counties, law enforcement and first responders. Internally our employees are subject to random safety audits within their workspace, and our facilities are inspected quarterly to correct any deficiencies.

Our safety program is led by a team of employees on the safety committee. The committee reviews the safety program and provides suggestions for enhancements.

Lifelong learning is provided to all employees to ensure that they are proficient and current in their field. Your board is committed to a fully funded safety program with the wellness of both employees and members at the forefront of the cooperative.

At the cooperative we follow all local, state and federal safety protocols. Accident investigations are completed anytime there is damage to cooperative facilities or equipment.



Finance



Tammy Snavelly

Chief Finance Officer/
Assistant General Manager

Auditor opinion:

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Access Energy Cooperative as of December 31, 2022 and 2021, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

LWG CPAs & Advisors,
Indianapolis, Indiana,

March 16, 2023

Access Energy
Cooperative is an equal
opportunity provider,
employer, and lender.

Statements of Revenue Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

	2022	2021
REVENUES	\$ 36,894,403	\$ 36,552,141
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Purchased power/cost of sales	23,946,113	23,567,852
Operations	3,144,948	2,767,022
Maintenance	1,662,955	1,721,603
Consumer accounting expense	676,402	692,624
Consumer service and sales expense	523,002	495,376
Administrative expense	1,910,167	1,836,701
Depreciation	2,265,793	2,309,673
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	34,129,380	33,390,851
OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE OTHER ITEMS	2,765,023	3,161,290
OTHER OPERATING ITEMS, NET		
Patronage revenue	883,143	1,616,867
Interest expense	(1,484,068)	(1,456,271)
TOTAL OTHER OPERATING ITEMS, NET	(600,925)	160,596
OPERATING MARGINS	2,164,098	3,321,886
NON-OPERATING ITEMS, NET		
Interest and dividend revenue	237,580	171,523
Gain (loss) on disposition of assets	153,393	21,715
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(303,716)	(76,615)
All other, net	(22,926)	(12,083)
TOTAL NON-OPERATING ITEMS, NET	64,331	104,540
NET MARGINS	\$ 2,228,429	\$ 3,426,426

Balance Sheets December 31, 2022 and 2021

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
UTILITY PLANT IN SERVICE, NET	\$ 67,133,987	\$ 65,638,040
INVESTMENTS	\$ 22,962,938	\$ 23,018,192
RESTRICTED CASH	\$ 1,770,000	\$ 2,608,923
DEFERRED CHARGES, less current portion	\$ 364,889	\$ 452,598
NOTES RECEIVABLE	\$ 2,467,972	\$ 1,783,557
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,783,740	\$ 2,903,881
Accounts receivable, customer, net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$40,882 for 2022 and \$40,000 for 2021	\$ 4,104,586	\$ 3,987,749
Materials and supplies	\$ 1,759,224	\$ 979,240
Deferred charges - current portion	\$ 87,709	\$ 203,935
Prepaid expenses	\$ 85,952	\$ 92,062
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$ 9,821,211	\$ 8,166,867
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 104,520,997	\$ 101,668,177
EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES		
LONG-TERM DEBT, less current portion	\$ 39,665,767	\$ 37,672,040
POST RETIREMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS	\$ 667,015	\$ 771,382
DEFERRED CREDITS	\$ 5,989	\$ 9,534
MEMBERS' EQUITY AND RETAINED EARNINGS	\$ 56,755,317	\$ 55,901,133
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$ 2,213,523	\$ 2,180,716
Accrued expenses	\$ 1,361,888	\$ 1,251,997
Current portion of long-term debt	\$ 1,988,379	\$ 2,026,711
Consumer deposits	\$ 1,863,119	\$ 1,854,664
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 7,426,909	\$ 7,314,088
TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES	\$ 104,520,997	\$ 101,668,177

A TRIP OF A LIFETIME DELORES FAGLE THOM RECALLS EXPERIENCE ON 1958 YOUTH TOUR

BY JENNIFER ACHENBACH

Sixty-five years ago, Delores (Reed) Fagle Thom stepped on a bus headed to Washington, D.C., for the first-annual Rural Electric Co-op Youth Tour.

It was a trip that would leave a lasting impression on the recent high school graduate.

At the time, Delores was working at the Iowa State University Extension Office in Independence. As a member of the Buchanan County Rural Electric Cooperative, her boss suggested she complete the application for the tour, writing an essay about why she wanted to be chosen. She was one of the over 30 participants from Iowa selected to go to D.C. in 1958. As a recent Independence High School graduate, Delores was engaged to Dwaine Fagle. In her words, she thought that if she was going to go on a trip like this, she better go before she was married.

On June 14, Delores got on a bus headed to D.C., her first time visiting the nation's capital. The group spent the night in Toledo, Ohio, before arriving in D.C. the next evening. They stayed at the Arva Motor Hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

Impactful lineup of tours and conversations

The first day of the trip, the group had breakfast with members of the Iowa Congressional Delegation, followed by a tour of the U.S. Capitol, led by Sen. Thomas Martin. That was followed by a tour of the Library of Congress, visiting both the House of Representatives and Senate, as well as the Supreme Court Building. Delores recalls the time she spent visiting with her local delegates, as well as posing as a group on the Capitol steps.

On June 17, participants visited the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) building, followed

by a visit to the Bureau of Printing and Engraving and the Department of Justice.

Activities the next day included touring the Rural Electrification Administration headquarters at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), viewing the Washington Cathedral and touring the USDA Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland.

June 19 holds a special place in Delores' memory. That was the day participants got a special tour of the White House.

After the White House tour, the group visited the Washington Monument, including an elevator ride to the top. Next, they



went to the Smithsonian Institute and finished the night with a trip to Glen Echo Amusement Park. On the final full day of the trip, they toured Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Lee's Mansion, then concluded the visit with a tour of Washington's home at Mt. Vernon.

After five days of learning about government, the group got back on the bus to Iowa on Saturday, June 21. They spent the night in Chicago. Delores recalls feeling a little scared as their hotel room didn't have a lock on the door.

Despite the full schedule of activities, there was also a lot of fun and bonding with her fellow participants.

"We stayed in a motel room with four of us to a room. We filled the bathtub with ice cubes and put watermelon in it. We invited a few people to our room, and we had a watermelon treat," she remembers.

When she returned to Iowa following the tour, Delores presented what she'd learned to her co-op.

The next chapters of life

What started as a trip before settling down turned into an experience that shaped the rest of her life. Delores and Dwaine got married the following year. They lived in Independence, then Dewar and Sumner, before settling onto their farmstead three miles west of Fayette. There, the couple raised seven children while operating their dairy farm.

In 1986, Delores decided it was time to go to school and pursue her passion. She started taking accounting classes at Northeast Iowa Community

College (NICC) in Calmar. She finished her degree in 1987 and opened Delores Tax and Accounting. For over 30 years, Delores has built her business, at times with more than 200 tax clients a year, in addition to her accounting jobs.

"I just love it," she says, noting she now has cut back on her tax work but stays busy year-round with accounting. She was recognized by the governor for 25 years of work in 2013. She also was named a 2017 NICC Alumni Shining Star.

Dwaine passed away in 1996 from cancer. After a second marriage, Delores found love with her high school sweetheart, Bill Thom. Delores had reached out to Bill after the death of his wife. Six years later, Bill contacted Delores and they struck up a relationship. The two married. They later divorced but remain in touch today. Delores now resides in Fayette, just three miles from where she and Dwaine farmed.

Fond memories and advice for future participants

Although it's been well over half a century since Delores was on the Youth Tour, she still has fond memories of the trip.

Delores is excited for future Youth Tour participants to experience the thrills she had.

"Make it a learning experience because there's a lot to learn, but still enjoy the time that you're there," she says. "It was a good experience for me, a good learning experience."

Jennifer Achenbach is the manager of marketing and communications for Allamakee Clayton Electric Cooperative.



Delores (Reed) Fagle Thom is pictured with a photo from her Youth Tour experience in 1958.



Vintage photos from the 1958 Youth Tour.



RESIDENTIAL SOLAR CONSIDERATIONS

BY JENNAH DENNEY

Your local electric cooperative should top your list of project contacts if you're considering residential solar. Iowa's electric cooperatives are well-versed in both the pros and cons of solar installations. They can help you make an informed decision and navigate the process of connecting your system to the electric grid.

Do your homework

For many homeowners, solar installations are considered an investment. As with any investment, you need a clear understanding of your final investment costs, the expected annual energy production, its corresponding value, and the ability to determine how long it will take before you achieve a return on your investment.

Location matters

To successfully install solar, you must first overcome location obstacles. Choosing an unobstructed, sunny location to install solar panels on your property is essential. The choice between a roof or ground-mounted system is also important. The cost for roof installations can vary with different roof designs, just as the location of a ground-mounted array can vary based on soil types and the distance an array is from the interconnection site.

Correct sizing

Your home's average energy use will be reflected in your bills from the

previous year, and certain factors may change your use over time. For instance, a growing family will use more energy, but the departure of college-age children can reduce energy consumption.

Careful consideration and addressing your home's energy efficiency may reduce the size of the solar array you will need. Many electric co-ops offer energy audits to help identify opportunities for savings.

Installation and payment

Selecting a professional installer, the right system and best payment method are equally crucial considerations.

Solar installations may be purchased with cash, loans or leases. An upfront purchase will help you save the most money over the lifespan of the solar panels, but you need the cash upfront. A lease means someone else owns the solar panels and sells you power at a reduced cost each month, but you won't save as much over time. With a loan, the system is yours, but you make monthly payments plus interest.

Installing solar is a significant decision. You need a reputable energy partner to help you decide. Remember to contact your electric cooperative first. They're ready to answer your questions and help you make an informed decision.

Jennah Denney writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



THINKING ABOUT SOLAR?

If you're considering solar, use the following questions as a guide before entering a contract to install the system.

Initial questions

- Do you plan to stay in the home long-term?
- How much shade does your roof receive?
- How old is your roof? (If it's old/in poor condition, consider replacing it before installing solar.)
- What are your goals? (If you're looking to save on energy bills, consider an energy audit first.)
- Will you lease or purchase the solar system?

Utility questions

- How will you need to work with your electric co-op to connect the solar system to the electric grid?
- How long will the process take?

Contractor questions

- Can the contractor provide appropriate documentation of licensing, permitting, bonding and insurance requirements?
- Can the contractor show documentation of safety practices?
- Can the contractor provide current credentials?

Contract questions

- Do the ownership terms seem fair?
- Do the system performance calculations seem realistic?
- Do the terms change if you sell the property?
- Do the project start and end dates seem reasonable?
- How long is the system warranty?
- Who is responsible for system maintenance?



SEAL IN SAVINGS WITH EFFICIENT EXTERIOR DOORS

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

The front door of your home has a lot of meaning. It sets the stage for the home and is the first impression for your guests. Beyond curb appeal, the front door is a good place to look for energy savings.

Efficient exterior doors seal tightly and don't allow air to pass through. Limiting airflow from exterior doors can result in lower heating and cooling costs. Throughout the years, the construction of exterior doors has improved to increase their efficiency. If your door is older, it likely is not insulated.

Replacing your front door

If you want to replace your front door for aesthetic purposes, make it more functional or improve its efficiency, consider upgrading to an ENERGY STAR®-certified model. This certification ensures the door you buy meets efficiency criteria for your local area. It also means the National Fenestration Rating Council independently tested and verified the door.

Certification requires any windows in the door to be double or triple pane to reduce heat flow, which results in a more efficient home. While windows in doors offer aesthetics, more glass means less efficiency. The most efficient doors have no glass or windows in them.

U-factor is the primary rating for efficiency on doors and windows. U-factor is the inverse of R-value, which is the rating used for insulation. Unlike R-value where higher is better, the lower the U-factor, the more energy efficient the door. Check the U-factor on doors at your local hardware store or online to help choose the most efficient door in your preferred style.

ENERGY STAR-certified doors are made of the most efficient materials, such as fiberglass, wood cladding and steel with polyurethane foam core.

They are built to fit snugly into their frames, reducing drafts and airflow.

When it comes to doors, you don't have to sacrifice style for efficiency. There are many styles available to match the architecture, whether your home is historic or modern.

When completely replacing a door and the frame, you can use expanding foam or caulk to fill the space between the door jamb and structural framing.

Upgrading the door you have

If a new door isn't in your budget, there are less expensive options to reduce air leakage and improve your home's efficiency.

All of that coming and going throughout the years can wear out weatherstripping. If you can see daylight around the edges of the door or underneath it, it's time to stop those air leaks. Weatherstripping around the door jamb can be adjusted to make a snug seal or if it's too worn, weatherstripping can be replaced completely. Apply one continuous strip along each side, and make sure it meets tightly at the corners.

Adding a storm door can also help with efficiency and is less expensive than replacing the entire door. Most storm doors have options for using a screen or glass. Swapping the screen for the glass insert can help save energy in both the winter and in the summer if you use air conditioning. Consider a storm door that's easy to switch between glass and screen so you can maximize the benefits.

Open the door to energy savings by improving the efficiency of your exterior doors – without compromising the aesthetics of your home.

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



Adding a storm door can help seal in your home and is less expensive than replacing the entire door.
Photo Source: Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources



If you can see daylight around the edges of the door or underneath it, seal in those air leaks with weatherstripping and a door sweep.
Photo Source: Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST UTILITY SCAMS

"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?

No matter the season, scammers frequently target consumers, and members of Iowa's electric cooperatives are not immune. Phone scammers often appear to be calling from local numbers and claim to be from the local electric cooperative. Sometimes, the calls include prerecorded messages. In almost all the calls, the scammers threaten the innocent person on the other end of the line, demanding immediate payment to prevent disconnection of electric service.

Your local electric co-op will 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.

1 Protect personal information

Never provide or confirm personal information (Social Security number, date of birth) 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 type 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.

2 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.

3 Always ask questions

Ask the person contacting you to provide you with your account number, your last payment amount, date of payment and their employee identification number. If the individual is 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.

4 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 information on protecting yourself against various scams, visit the Iowa Attorney General's website at www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov and click Consumer Tips & Information under the FOR CONSUMERS tab.

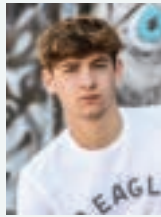


ACCESS ENERGY COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

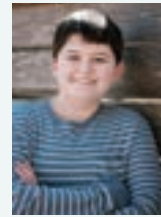
Congratulations to area high school students who were recently selected as recipients of the 2023 Access Energy Cooperative scholarship program! Six students received a \$1,500 award.

Access Energy Cooperative awards six \$1,500 scholarships each year, two in each of its three districts. The parents or guardians of the applicant must be members of the co-op.

Applicants are asked to provide information on their academics, achievements, community involvement and answers to a few electric industry-related questions.



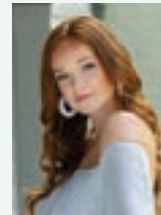
Grant Lilley, son of Brooke and Clayton Lilley, plans to attend Iowa State University to pursue a career in engineering.



Danielle Muhs, daughter of David Muhs, plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Platteville to study music along with a STEM major.



Shelby Baldosier, daughter of Brian and Denise Baldosier, plans to attend Mesalands Community College to study farrier science.



Abby Korschgen, daughter of John and Kim Korschgen, plans to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia to attain a degree in business.



Alexa Dingman, daughter of John and Tracy Dingman, plans to attend the University of Iowa.



Makayla Morrison, the daughter of Matt and Bridget Morrison, plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to pursue a career in elementary education.

CREATE FRESH SAVINGS WITH A DIY CLOTHESLINE

If you have enough outdoor space available, installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy.



Not only will you save on dryer costs – in the summer, you can also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be making your air conditioner work harder. Additionally, air drying is gentler on fabrics and will keep your clothes and linens looking fresh longer.

You can create your own clothesline with two T-posts, wire and hook-and-eye turnbuckles. Depending on your soil, you may need a small amount of concrete to set the posts.

Another option is installing a line between two trees. A typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line, so keep this in mind as you're determining the best location.

If an outdoor clothesline isn't an option, no sweat! You can easily create an indoor drying rack that folds to save space.

Home improvement websites like www.thespruce.com and www.hgtv.com offer step-by-step tutorials for a variety of indoor clothes racks.

Check out our website at www.accessenergycoop.com for additional energy-saving ideas and tips.





IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

The magazine
for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives.

July 2023

Visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com

FOCUSED ON YOUR STREET. NOT WALL STREET.

Think of your not-for-profit Touchstone Energy cooperative as your very own local energy advisor. After all, we're owned by you and the other members in our community, which means you'll always have a say in how your co-op runs. To learn more, visit TouchstoneEnergy.com.

YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.



Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives
of Iowa