

acec NEWS



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**BEST WISHES AND GRATITUDE
EXTENDED TO THREE FORMER
CO-OP EMPLOYEES WHO COLLECTIVELY
DEDICATED MORE THAN 70 YEARS
OF SERVICE TO ALLAMAKEE-CLAYTON
ELECTRIC. See page 6.**

**IMPORTANT
ANNUAL MEETING
ANNOUNCEMENT
-PAGE 3**





A MESSAGE FROM
Your General Manager

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

Outsmart Utility Scammers This Summer

With all of the confusion and uncertainty in our world today, scammers are taking advantage of these circumstances to target consumers by phone, email and text. These con artists claim to be from your local utility and the caller ID on your phone or their email address may even look legitimate.

Consumers in good standing with their utilities are often caught off-guard by the aggressive tone of these impersonators. They will usually speak with a sense of urgency, ensuring customers do not have time to ask questions or verify their claims. See the sidebar on the adjacent page for the most common types of utility scams.

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) 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.

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 electric bill, a real co-op representative will encourage you to do so for your own peace of mind. **5275**

Always ask questions

Ask the person contacting you to provide you with your account number, your last payment amount, date of payment, their name and their supervisor's name. If he/she is a legitimate



utility representative, this information will be readily accessible. If not, hang up or shut the door, and call your co-op directly to report the suspicious activity.

Contact the co-op 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.

Hollie McCormick

BOARD BRIEFS

At the June 29 meeting of the Board of Directors, information was received and action taken on the following:

- ✦ Approved resolution to change the format of the Annual Meeting allowing mail-in ballots to go towards quorum requirements
- ✦ Approved adding the discontinuation of the \$5 membership fee on this year's annual meeting ballot
- ✦ Comprehensive overview of Skyways Department and approval securing a contracted fiber engineer to help plot future projects
- ✦ Approved a cost-share application with Dairyland Power Cooperative to assist with marketing a Farmers Market in Postville (\$300)

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 27, 2020.

5 Most Common Utility Scams

1 Disconnection Deception

Scammers call threatening disconnection of your electric service, demanding immediate payment by prepaid cards purchased at a local retail store (or credit card, debit card, bank draft, wiring money, etc.), and insisting you call them back with the card information to make payment.

TIP Your local electric co-op will send you one or more disconnection notices in the mail if your payment is past due, and they will offer several payment options without specifying the type of payment you need to make.

2 Overpayment Trick

Scammers call claiming you have overpaid your utility bill, and you need to provide personal bank account information or a credit card number to facilitate a refund.

TIP Your electric co-op may apply any overpayments you have made to your utility account, allowing the credit balance to cover any future charges, or refund any overpayment by mailing a check.

3 Smishing Scam

Smishing, short for SMS phishing, is a relatively new scam that attempts to trick mobile phone users into giving scammers personal information, which can be used for identity theft, via a text or SMS message. Scammers like smishing, as consumers tend to be more inclined to trust text messages.

TIP Utility companies typically do not text you unless you have signed up for a specific notification service offered by your utility.

4 Equipment or Repair Bogus Fee

Scammers call demanding a separate payment to replace or install a utility-related device or meter.

TIP If your electric co-op needs to upgrade or replace a piece of equipment, someone will contact you ahead of time as a courtesy. If there is a charge related to work on equipment you might own, it will typically be included in your monthly bill.

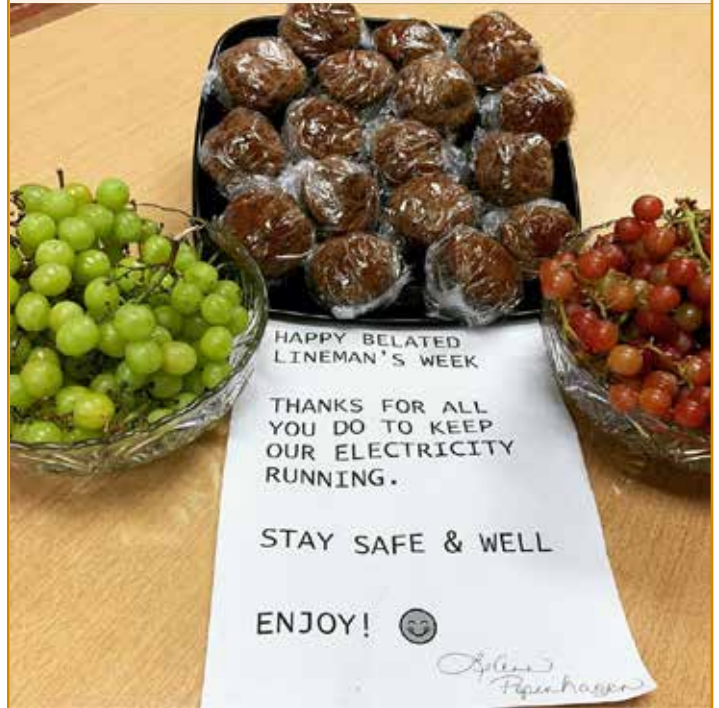
5 Bogus Bills

Scammers send suspicious emails that appear to be a bill sent by your local electric co-op, potentially featuring the co-op's logo and color scheme.

TIP Do not click on any links or attachments in any email unless you have verified the sender. You may be directed to a scam website designed to steal your personal information, or you might install malicious software onto your computer without ever knowing it. Your local electric co-op typically sends bills by mail, unless you have opted to receive your bill by email.

Source: Consumer's Guide to Imposter Utility Scams.

Thank you to member LeAnn Popenhagen (Wadena) for remembering our line crews.



Your thoughtfulness is appreciated!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

2020 ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

Due to COVID-19 precautions, there will be NO member attended annual meeting this year. Director elections for Districts A and C will occur via mail or can be dropped off during the drive-through service at the Cooperative on Monday, September 14 between the hours of 1:30 and 6:30 p.m. Look for more information in next month's Annual Report.

Co-op advocacy remains focused ON MEMBER-CONSUMERS

BY KEVIN CONDON

The cooperative principle of Concern for Community drives our response to the pandemic



KEVIN CONDON, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, IOWA ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Life is undoubtedly different from a year ago. At this time last year, the pages of this magazine highlighted a productive Iowa legislative session and another successful fly-in to Washington, D.C., to advocate on behalf of Iowa's electric cooperatives and the 650,000 member-consumers we serve. We discussed tweaks to the tax code that help you, a co-op member-consumer, save more money by restoring the Iowa geothermal tax credit. We described our (eventually successful) effort to convince Congress to fix an oversight from previous legislation that would have put your cooperative's not-for-profit status in jeopardy.

This year, all of that "normal" advocacy news is on hold. The Iowa Legislature stopped meeting in mid-March with weeks of uncertainty about when it would reconvene. It wasn't until mid-May that plans were announced to resume the session in early June. While Congress has continued to meet during

the pandemic, their time has been dominated by how best to equip Americans to withstand the medical and economic impacts of COVID-19. As decision-makers in D.C. scrambled to respond to the unraveling situation, restrictions have been placed on nearly every corner of the country, affecting just about every aspect of daily life.

Throughout it all, our advocacy has never shifted from what we focus on in good times and bad: you, the member-consumer. Everything Iowa's electric cooperatives do in the public policy arena is rooted in the fact that without you, there is no cooperative, there is no community to provide power to, no economy to support. Your locally owned cooperative stayed true to its core mission of providing you reliable and affordable power. Likewise, our outreach to Iowa's elected officials at all levels of government has not wavered from those same goals. Making sure that we keep the lights on is always our highest priority. **4220**

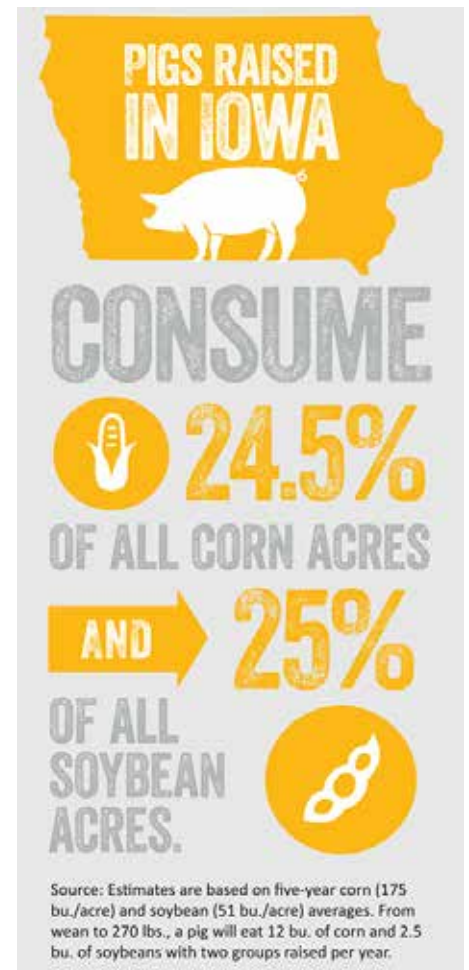
WORKING WITH IOWA'S AG LEADERS

Your electric cooperative is speaking with lawmakers to make sure they understand that the best way for them to help the electric co-ops and Iowa's rural economy is to help *you*. The cooperative principle of "Concern for Community" has been driving our response to the pandemic every day.

In rural Iowa, we grow corn and soybeans. We raise cattle, pigs and poultry. The agriculture economy is woven into the

fabric of every county in the state. When ag struggles, Iowa struggles. In addition to farms and homes, Iowa's electric co-ops provide power to many commercial and industrial facilities, such as biofuels plants, meat and poultry processing facilities, and the by-product businesses directly tied to those industries. The stability of those installations provides strong markets that many member-consumers can depend on. The ripple effects from disruptions are felt throughout the supply chain. A near collapse can be devastating.

In May, a group of upper Midwest statewide electric cooperative associations and their member cooperatives penned a letter to the region's members of Congress urging additional support for the rural economy by adhering to the nation's Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS). They asked Congressional representatives to reject additional waivers from the Environmental Protection Agency, which would further erode demand for ethanol at a time when fewer gas tanks are being filled. The letter also highlights the gut-wrenching decision that many farmers have had to make in euthanizing cattle and pigs as food processing industries have closed due to COVID-19 outbreaks. Congress and the Trump Administration must do more to help these markets. Coincidentally, this cooperative message was being delivered at about the time that a group of U.S. Senators, led by Iowa's Joni Ernst and Chuck Grassley, sent two separate letters calling on the President to "uphold the RFS" and provide assistance to the pork industry, whose "crisis is immediate."



In late May, Sens. Grassley and Amy Klobuchar (Minnesota) introduced legislation to support biofuel producers negatively affected by the pandemic. This legislation will require the U.S. Department of Agriculture to reimburse biofuel producers for their feedstock purchases from Jan. 1, 2020, through March 31, 2020, through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

“The biofuels industry works directly with our farmers. And the current disruptions from the pandemic have created ripple effects, including steep declines in corn and soybean prices. We need to continue to support those farmers who feed and fuel our country and the world. This bill will help ensure biofuel producers survive this economic downturn and also ensure corn and soybean farmers have a place to sell their products,” Grassley says.

As the coronavirus pandemic spread, gasoline use in the U.S. plummeted to 50-year lows around the country. From March 8 to April 4 of this year, the total miles driven dropped by 58 percent. This rapid decrease in consumption led to more than 130 biofuel plants to partially or fully shut down.

“Grassley’s bill would provide much-needed relief for biofuels producers in the face of COVID-19 demand destruction. The pandemic hit Iowa’s biofuels industry hard and around 40 percent of the state’s ethanol production capacity remains offline,” says Iowa Renewable Fuels Association Executive Director Monte Shaw.

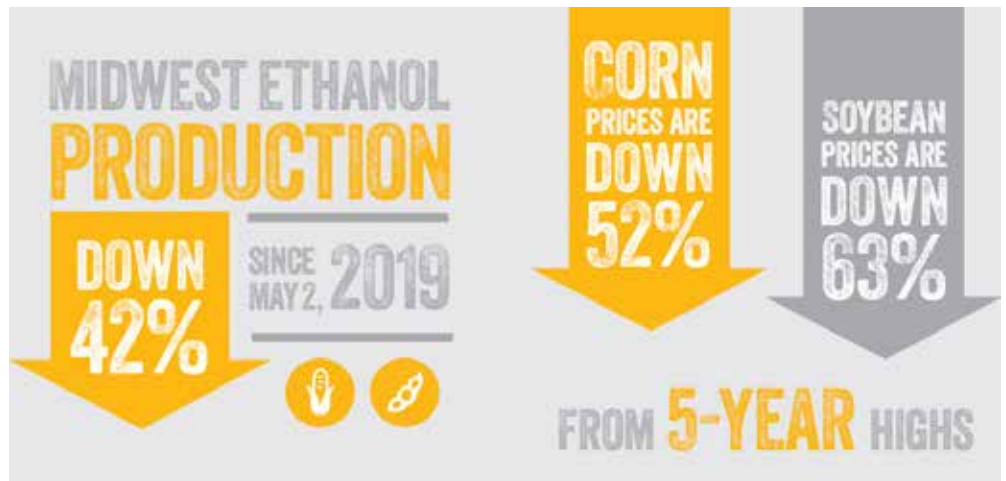
CALLING ADVOCATES INTO ACTION

The electric cooperatives’ grassroots program – known as *Iowa Rural Power* – launched a “Call to Action” for our advocates. The request encouraged Iowa lawmakers to continue focusing on getting communities served by electric cooperatives the critical assistance needed now while preparing for long-term aid.

We are hoping to amplify the strong message being delivered by our fellow rural-focused colleagues from groups, including the Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, Iowa Poultry Association and Iowa Egg Council.

NAVIGATING A NEW NORMAL

As Congress tackles the next phase of federal assistance to COVID-19 and as the Iowa Legislature reconvenes to address statewide impacts, your local electric cooperative will insist that the



government’s response be focused on member-consumers and protecting your way of life. We know that when member-consumers are healthy, the co-op is healthy. Embracing the words of President John F. Kennedy, “a rising tide lifts all boats,” we will continue to advocate for public policies that respond to the urgent needs of Iowa’s rural communities. **1216-X**

As we all discover the “new normal,” remember that your cooperative is there for you. If you are experiencing financial trouble in paying your utility bills in full, please reach out to your co-op to discuss payment options. If you’re able to help your fellow member-consumers meet that commitment, please reach out to your co-op to learn more about charitable opportunities.

You are our focus. You are our concern. You are the cooperative.

THIS ARTICLE WAS REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM “LIVING WITH ENERGY IN IOWA) JUNE 2020.

“Thank you for your generosity and for selecting me for the Hauschild Memorial Scholarship. I am still deciding whether I am going to continue my education in the electrical field or continue my full-time job. I appreciate the money that will be provided by Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative for my schooling. Thank you.”
—Tate Langreck, West Union

“Thank you for awarding me the Robert Hauschild Memorial Scholarship. It will help me with my college goals.”
—Spencer Larson, McGregor

BEST WISHES TO THESE THREE!

JOHN MOLUMBY

“Working with people in new technologies that saved them money and time through energy efficiencies has been rewarding work for me,” said John. “I have enjoyed sitting down at the kitchen table and learning how members’ farms and businesses operated so I could help them to improve older, less efficient equipment.”

John joined ACEC in August of 1999, after an already long history of work in the agricultural community. He is a graduate of Iowa State and taught agriculture for five years at Valley CEW High School, Elgin, before putting in ten years for Land ‘O Lakes at the United Cooperative in Monona.

As the member services manager, John said that his most significant achievement was helping members save money through energy efficiency and sales tax exemptions. “I was able to help members receive USDA funds for a total savings of over 1.4 million dollars through energy audits for grants offered.”

John retired from the Co-op on June 30 after almost 21 years. John and his wife, Cathy, also retired, live in Elgin and are parents to three grown sons: Matthew, Michael, and Jacob and three grandsons: Finnigan, Rowan, and Rylan. Enjoy your retirement years, and the Co-op thanks you for all the services helping our members with their energy efficiency needs, John!



Jed Siebrecht
Equipment Operator
29 years

John Molumby
Member Services Manager
21 years

Dave Dougherty
Fleet Services Technician
21½ years

JED SIEBRECHT

Jed joined Allamakee-Clayton Electric as an equipment operator in 1991 after a few years of driving truck and farming. He worked the next 29 years assisting linecrews as an equipment operator in the construction and maintenance of the electric distribution facility. “During my time with the Co-op, I liked working on storm damage, both at home and away from our service area assisting other Co-ops,” said Jed. In retirement, he is looking forward to all the projects he can get done at home, spending time with his family and helping his son, Jared, with his business. Jed and his wife, Lori, also have a daughter, Jenna, and one grandson, Keaton. Thank you, Jed, for your service, and we hope you enjoy your retirement years.

DAVE DOUGHERTY

Dave finalized maintenance on cooperative vehicles one last time on June 30. The Cooperative would like to extend a thank you to Dave for his dedication and hard work as our fleet services technician for nearly 22 years. In his role, he was responsible for all co-op vehicle maintenance, including the service of other equipment, often at odd times of the day and night. “I’ve enjoyed working here, and I will miss the employees,” said Dave. “It’s a great place to work, and I feel like I am walking away from my family of almost 21 years.”

Dave joined ABM Equipment in the sales department and covers Iowa, South Dakota, and southern Minnesota. “Although I enjoyed the challenge of keeping all the vehicles and other equipment going, it’s time for something new.” Dave and his wife, Brenda, have five children: Stacia, Nick, Heidi, Jacob, and Olivia, and they are looking forward to their first grandchild due at the end of this month.

Summer Salads



BOWTIE PASTA SALAD

- 4 c. bowtie pasta
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 cucumber, seeded and diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 tomatoes, seeded and cut up

Dressing:

- 1 c. sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. vegetable oil
- $\frac{2}{3}$ c. ketchup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. paprika
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. pepper

Cook pasta according to package directions. Combine pasta, pepper, cucumber, onion and tomatoes. Combine dressing ingredients, and pour over pasta and mix.

Shari McElree, Elgin

CABBAGE SALAD

Dressing:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. olive oil
- 2 T. white sugar (or to taste)
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 medium head cabbage, shredded
- 1 apple, diced
- 2 carrots, shredded

Combine dressing ingredients. Stir together cabbage, apple and carrots and toss with dressing. Can make ahead and store in refrigerator.

Beverly Elsinger, Guttenberg

BIG MAC SALAD

- 2 lb. ground beef
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. water or beef broth
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ T. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 lg. onion, diced
- 1 T. butter
- 3-4 heads romaine lettuce, chopped
- 3-4 tomatoes, chopped
- 8 oz. cheddar cheese, shredded
- 3-4 dill pickles, chopped (or $\frac{1}{3}$ c. dill relish)
- Thousand Island dressing
- Sesame seeds
- Croutons

Brown meat and drain fat. Add water, Worcestershire, paprika, salt and pepper. Sauté onion in butter until translucent. Layer lettuce, meat, onion, tomatoes, cheese, pickles, and dressing. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and croutons. This can be made as individual salads or as one large salad. Serves. 6-8.

Josh and Heidi Schmidgall, Elgin

SHRIMP CAULIFLOWER SALAD

- 1 small head cauliflower, cut into small pieces
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. cooked minute rice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium green pepper, diced
- 3 T. onion, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. green olives with pimentos, diced
- 1-4 oz. can shrimp, drained
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. mayonnaise
- 1 T. lemon juice

Mix all ingredients and refrigerate at least one hour before serving.

Evie VerNess, Harpers Ferry

Have an idea for a recipe topic? We'd love to hear it.

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jenny McIntyre, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or jmcintyre@acrec.coop.

You'll receive a \$5 bill credit if your recipe is printed.

Please note – recipes must be received by the 25th day of the month before intended publication.

September — SALMON October — SHEET PAN RECIPES

November — 5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Three service numbers are hidden within the text of this newsletter. The numbers are from three different regions of our service area – two are worth a \$10 bill credit and one is

worth a \$12.50 bill credit if found. To claim the credit, the number must be yours and you need to notify us when you find it.



CONTACT ACEC

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WEBSITE

acrec.com

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

PRSR STD
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August 10 Is
Move Over or
Slow Down Day
a Safety reminder



Remember, when you see any vehicle on the side of the road with flashing or hazards lights, Move Over or Slow Down. It's the law, and you just might save a life.



CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY



The Postville Pirates got help earlier this month with the construction of their new playground as area businesses, including Allamakee-Clayton Electric, sent employees to assist with the assembly. ACEC employees Jeff Cox, Blair Everman, Aandi Deering, Jessica Deering, and Ben Grangaard battled the heat to help get the project completed for the kids. See more photos on our Facebook page.



Blair Everman operates a concrete saw in preparation for placing a supporting pole for the new playground in Postville.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 