

# ACEC NEWS

APRIL 2022 | VOLUME 25 | ISSUE 04

9th Annual REC Archery Fundraiser brings in nearly \$15,000 for the Benda family



Youth Tour  
Winners



Photo credit: Scott Boylen, ACEC Member, Waterville



## A MESSAGE FROM Your General Manager

**Hollie McCormick**  
EVP/General Manager

### ARE YOU READY TO SERVE?

In one of the most notable inaugural speeches, John F. Kennedy spoke his famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." His inspiring words urged Americans to take actions that benefited the greater good. In essence, Kennedy said our country thrives when we all contribute our talents to the common good.

On a smaller scale, I think the same can be said about our co-op, specifically our board members. Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative board members are community-minded individuals with various skill sets. Our Board is made up of people from various professional backgrounds. We rely on their many talents to help us make informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments. Our directors live right here in the Co-op's service area. We consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their perspective on important community issues.

If you're interested in running for the Board, we encourage you to notify us; we will forward your name to the Nominating Committee (made up of co-op members), which meets in May to select candidates to run for the Board. We recognize that it takes many people with different skills to create a well-rounded board that can represent the full spectrum of our community. We want folks with diverse perspectives, experience, expertise, and views when we're seeking new directors. We're seeking local members of our community who can apply their unique talents to benefit all our friends and neighbors. But above all else, we're looking for folks who love our community and want to see it thrive now and in the future.

### What does it mean to serve on the Board?

Serving on ACEC's Board means you're making a difference locally, using your talents and perspective to guide big decisions about the co-op that benefit the larger community. While co-op staff makes the day-to-day decisions, the Board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the community it serves, makes the major decisions. On a granular level, Allamakee-Clayton board members typically provide input and guidance on: **1025**

- Budgets
- Co-op goals and direction
- Co-op's community and charitable contributions
- Capital investments and upgrades in equipment and technology
- Renewable investments and energy mix
- Co-op's role and involvement in economic development

The energy industry is undergoing a significant transition. Technology advancements and increased consumer preference for more renewable energy are driving change. Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative is facing big decisions, and board members have an opportunity to help chart a course for our future.

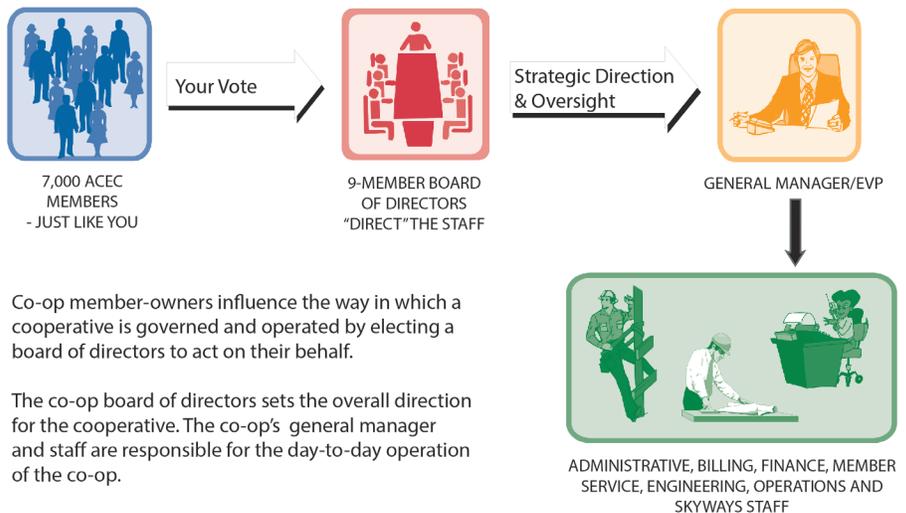
### Opportunity to serve

The Co-op holds its board elections in September. While you don't need to be an expert in electricity or business to run, you need to have a passion for the community and a willingness to serve and learn actively. We're looking for individuals who can represent the whole gamut of the members we serve. Our Board meets regularly, and we offer specialized training opportunities to help board members make informed decisions. Board members gain a deeper understanding of the electric utility industry, the cooperative business model, and local economic development efforts.

Ultimately, our Board is the community pulse for the co-op and helps keep us on the right track. We love our community and want to help it thrive.

To learn more about ACEC's director election process and 2022 details, please visit [acrec.com](http://acrec.com). ■

### The Role of the Cooperative's Board of Directors



Co-op member-owners influence the way in which a cooperative is governed and operated by electing a board of directors to act on their behalf.

The co-op board of directors sets the overall direction for the cooperative. The co-op's general manager and staff are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the co-op.

**If you are interested in running for the office of director, contact the Cooperative by May 7, 2022 for the names of members of the nominating committee.**

### To be eligible to serve as a director, you must:

- Not be a close relative of an incumbent director or a Cooperative employee.
- Be a member in good standing and a bona fide resident of the area served by the Cooperative and the district you are representing.
- Be competent under Iowa law to enter into contracts.
- Not be employed in any way by the Cooperative nor have been employed by the Cooperative at any time during the preceding five years.
- Not be employed in any way by, or financially interested in, a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative.

# FAREWELL DAVE DULL

## New Warehouse Coordinator Named

Dave Dull began his duties as our custodian in May of 2009, keeping busy mowing the lawn, moving snow, and cleaning and maintaining the Cooperative office, garage, and grounds. His duties also included receiving shipments of material and stocking the warehouse. "One of my favorite parts of the job was meeting with the truckers when they brought material in," said Dave. "It was nice to chat with them and see how their travels have been."

He retired from ACEC on April 1, and he and his wife Donna, also retired, are looking forward to traveling and spending time with the family, including daughters Allison, Ashley, and Angie, and nine grandchildren. "We have a trip to Montana coming up because we're huge Yellowstone fans, a concert, and we're taking the grandkids to see Trolls Live." Dave also plans to ride with one of the truckers for a few days (TheTruckersConf.org) while returning from California to Washington, D.C. "If it works out, I will ride with them to D.C. and stay for a few days."



Dave Dull spent his last day as our custodian on April 1. He will miss the people and the atmosphere, but looks forward to more time with family.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

Dave said his retirement is bittersweet. " I will miss the people and the atmosphere but am looking forward to time for my family and me." We wish you the best, Dave, and thank you for your time with ACEC. ■

Doug Moose, former ACEC Equipment Operator/ Groundman, assumed the position of Custodial Services/ Warehouse Coordinator effective April 4.



CALEB EVANSON

RILEY TROENDLE

A special thank you to our judges this year! L-r: LeAnn Meyer, West Union, Connie Euans, South Winneshiek Guidance Counselor, and Janice Koenig, Castalia. We appreciate the time you put into this opportunity for our youth.

## Two High School sophomores Washington, D.C. in June

Congratulations to **Caleb Evanson** and **Riley Troendle** who will represent the Co-op on the 2022 Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. in June. Both students are sophomores at Key High. Youth Tour provides outstanding teens an opportunity to better understand the value of rural electrification and how the federal government works, and an opportunity to learn about careers in the rural electric field. ■



### BOARD BRIEFS | March 28, 2022, Meeting

- Approved the 2022 Reliability Report
- Approved the retention of Dairyland LACBWR allocations
- Received DG interconnection and co-ops' historical and current policies from David Decker and Ryan Wagner
- Selected candidates for the Nominating Committee
- Approved a USDA REDL loan application submission for Sunflower Child Development & Discovery Center
- The board and accounting staff received financial metrics and key ratios from Darrin Lynch, Cooperative Finance Cooperation
- Approved a \$500 donation to the Clayton County Fair Board
- Approved a \$150 donation to the Friends of Yellow River State Forest

# GET YOUR DUCTS IN A ROW

BY: MIRANDA BOUTELLE

Understanding how a heating and cooling system works will help you create a more efficient, comfortable living space. To get started, let's go over how it works.

If you have a forced-air system, you have ducts. A forced-air system consists of the equipment that heats or cools the air and the ductwork that moves it around the home. Your furnace, or air handler, has a fan inside that pushes the heated or cooled air through the supply ducts into the rooms. The return ducts bring air back to the furnace to be heated or cooled and sent back through the home.

This continuous loop of supply and return is susceptible to inefficient practices and leakage.

*Here are some steps to keep your system running efficiently and maintain a comfortable living space.*

## Check your vent dampers.

Make sure the air you paid to heat or cool freely moves through the home.

I wish vents were made without dampers because the feature creates the misconception they should be closed. Closing registers does not save energy. It can cause your system to work harder, shortening its lifespan and increasing duct leakage.

If you don't do anything else after reading this, check that your supply register dampers are open and not blocked by furniture or rugs throughout your home. This is easy to do and costs nothing.

## Seal your ducts.

If your ductwork travels through an attic, crawl space, or other unconditioned—not heated or cooled—space, it could have holes, cracks, or gaps that cause duct leakage. This wastes

energy and money by heating or cooling spaces you don't use.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that 20% to 30% of the air moved through duct systems is lost due to duct leakage. You could have the most efficient heating or cooling unit available, but if your ducts leak, you are wasting energy.

In addition to wasted energy, leaky ducts can cause air-quality issues. Leaks in the return ducts can pull air into the ducts from surrounding spaces through the furnace and then deliver it into the home. Leaks introduce dust, dirt, insulation particles, and other gross stuff in your attic, crawl space, or walls.

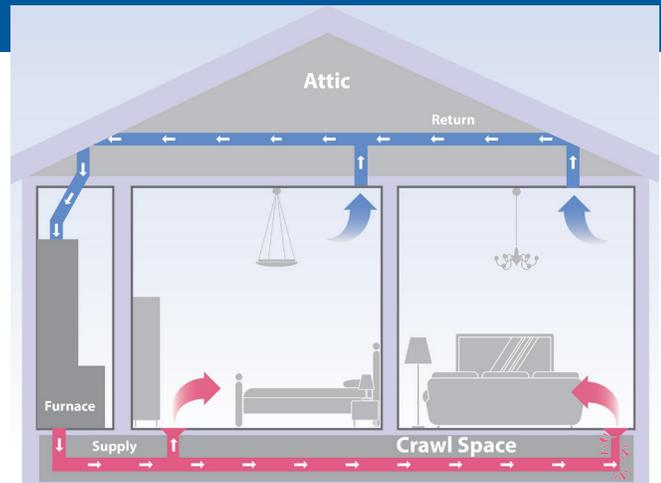
Sealing ducts can be difficult because they hide behind the walls, floor, or ceiling. Attics and crawl spaces can be challenging places to work. You can hire a professional to test your duct system for leakage with specialized equipment and seal your ducts.

If you seal ducts yourself, do not use duct tape. I know it is hard to believe, but duct tape dries out quickly and loses its adhesion. Seal with metal tape or duct mastic designed explicitly for the job.

One relatively easy place to seal is where the duct meets the floor, wall, or ceiling. Remove the registers and look for cracks or gaps around the edges. Remember to wear gloves to protect your hands.

## Change your filter.

The filter is on the return side of the duct system. It could be in the return registers or in the furnace. Checking your system's filter regularly and replacing it when dirty can help you



A forced-air system consists of the equipment that heats or cools the air and the ductwork that moves it around the home. Your furnace fan pushes the heated or cooled air through the supply ducts into the rooms. The return ducts bring air back to the furnace to be heated or cooled again and sent back through the home.

improve your heating and cooling efficiency.

When it comes to filters, my philosophy is to buy cheap and replace often. I don't know about you, but I have a much more difficult time throwing away a \$20 filter than a \$5 filter. Save by buying filters in bulk or setting up auto-ship every three months.

In most cases, filters protect the furnace, not improve air quality. If you are worried about your home's air quality, getting the ducts cleaned and sealed can help. Add an air purifier if you need additional air filtration. Look for Energy Star-rated models.

Now that you know the inner workings of your HVAC system and what it needs to run efficiently, you can improve and maintain the comfort in your home year-round. ■

*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.*



# A BULLSEYE FOR THE BENDA FAMILY

## 9<sup>TH</sup> Annual REC Archery Fundraiser benefits rural Decorah family



State Trooper Ted Benda was killed in the line of duty last October.  
Photo Credit: Iowa State Patrol.

"It doesn't make it better; it just makes it a little easier," said Holly Benda. Holly's family was turned upside down when her husband, Iowa State Trooper Ted Benda, died in October. He swerved to avoid a deer north of



Holly Benda holding Vivyan and Sylvia, the day the Co-op's presented the check.

Postville while driving to respond to a call, tragically leaving behind his wife and four daughters; Madilyn, Avery, Vivyan, and Sylvia.

Every winter, Echo Valley Archers

strategically places targets, with a different theme each year, in the 11,000 square-foot Stephens Building at the Fayette County Fairgrounds. Shooters come from miles around every winter to participate in competitive fun, and in late February, the REC linemen held their 9th Annual REC Archery Fundraiser there.

Since 2018, linemen from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and MiEnergy Cooperative have made the most of the event by raising money for a family in need residing on either MiEnergy or Allamakee-Clayton lines. This year the fundraiser benefited the Benda family, who live in rural Decorah and reside on MiEnergy lines. "We are just a group of people who work in the utility industry that get together once a year to shoot and relax," said Josh Abbott. "When we heard about the auto accident killing two teenage siblings [in 2018] we thought this would be an opportunity to raise some money for local families in need." And since 2018, they have done just that. This year, 150 people, including state troopers and county deputies, joined the REC linemen

for the cause. Generous businesses sponsored the event, and individuals bought raffle tickets.

All told, the event raised **\$14,485** for the Benda family. "I just pray that there is a year you don't have a family that needs the help," said Holly. "That would be a great year," responded Dave.

Thank you to Josh Abbott and Dave Wilkes for doing the lion's share of the work coordinating and pulling the event off. And thank you to individuals who purchased raffle tickets and the numerous businesses who generously sponsored the event and donated to the raffle. **2703**

**"It's like the event was made just for him; it was everything he loved, and I am overwhelmed with the generosity of so many businesses and people."  
—Holly Benda**



Dave Wilkes (MiEnergy) informs Holly Benda of the proceeds raised during the REC Archery Fundraiser.



Holly Benda with her sisters Hannah (l) and Heather (r).



Josh Abbott (l: ACEC) and Dave Wilkes (MiEnergy), who together did the lion's share of the work coordinating the fundraiser, are talking of the generosity of donations and sponsorships for the event.



ACEC and MiEnergy staff present a check to Holly Benda representing proceeds from the 9th Annual Archery Fundraiser. L-r Vivyan Benda, Holly Benda, Hollee McCormick (ACEC) holding Sylvia Benda, Josh Abbott (ACEC) and Dave Wilkes (MiEnergy).

# IOWA'S RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ADVOCATE TO END RURAL ENERGY TAX DURING 2022 "REC DAY ON THE HILL"

Representatives from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative joined the statewide advocacy efforts last month at the State Capitol.

Specifically, advocates talked to legislators about a digital sales tax inequity that Iowa's electric cooperatives hope to resolve before the 2022 Legislative Session ends. The inequity stems from an unintentional error made in 2018 legislation that requires Iowa electric co-ops to pay a new 6% sales and use tax on digital goods and services, even though investor-owned utilities are exempt. Since the law went into effect in 2019, the IAEC estimates that Iowa electric co-ops have collectively paid \$300,000 or more annually in taxes, resulting in roughly \$1 million of unintentional taxes paid by rural Iowans through their energy bills.

We thanked House members for supporting legislation to fix this error through HF 2520 and encouraged senators to take up the issue. Following our advocacy event, the Senate passed SF 2372, a larger legislative package that addresses various policy issues, including language like the House File that would end this rural energy tax. Iowa's electric co-ops sincerely appreciate the work of the House and the Senate on this issue and urge them to agree on which bill to send to the Governor for her consideration to restore tax equity for co-op member-consumers throughout rural Iowa. Learn more about this issue at [iaruralpower.org/advocacy](http://iaruralpower.org/advocacy). **6663**

Advocates also educated legislators on the benefits of the cooperative business model, including local ownership, cost-based rates, and democratic governance. Additionally, several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda, which provided information on economic development, electric vehicles, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, lineman safety innovations, and vegetation management work.



Thank you to our local legislators (l-r Reps. Anne Osmundson, Michael Bergan, and Chad Ingels) for stopping by the ACEC booth. Missing from the photo who also attended is Sen. Mike Klimesh.



ACEC Board of Directors, Arlyn Fossum (far left) and Al Steffens (far right) shown with Kevin Condon and Haley Moon from IAEC.



Participating in REC Day on the Hill last month are l-r: Brenda Hackman, Jennifer Shilling (Dairyland Power), and Ryan Wagner.



Brenda Hackman and Ryan Wagner engage in conversation with Representative Chad Ingels during REC Day on the Hill.



## DIGGING IN?



Before you dig, dial 811 or visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com) to protect underground utilities. Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines, and underground facilities. Contact 811 first and help keep our community safe.

# MEMBER RECIPES



## RHUBARB PIZZA

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1 c. Flour               | <b>Crumb Topping</b>                     |
| 1 tsp. Baking powder     | 3 c. Rhubarb, cut up                     |
| Pinch of salt            | 1-3 oz. Pkg. strawberry jello (no water) |
| 2 T. Margarine, softened | 1 c. Sugar                               |
| 1 Egg                    | ½ c. Flour                               |
| 2 T. milk                | ½ tsp. Cinnamon                          |
|                          | ½ c. Margarine, melted                   |

Sift flour, baking powder, and salt. Cut in margarine; add egg and milk. Press into round pizza pan, or 9" x 13" cake pan.

Combine rhubarb and jello; set aside. Mix sugar, flour, cinnamon, and margarine; mix well until crumbly. Spread rhubarb and jello over crust; sprinkle with crumb topping. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes.

*Sharon Klingeman, Monona*

## RHUBARB CRUNCH

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 c. Flour          | 4 c. Rhubarb, diced |
| 1 c. Brown sugar    | 1 c. Water          |
| 1 c. Oatmeal        | 1 tsp. Vanilla      |
| 1 tsp. Cinnamon     | 1 c. White sugar    |
| ½ tsp. Salt.        | 2 ½ T. Cornstarch   |
| ¾ c. Butter, melted | Whipped topping     |

In a bowl, mix flour, brown sugar, oatmeal, cinnamon, and salt. Add butter. Press half of the mixture into a buttered 9" x 9" baking pan. Pour rhubarb over the mixture. Bring to a boil: water, vanilla, white sugar, and cornstarch. Stir constantly until thick. Pour over rhubarb. Crumble the rest of the flour mixture on top. Bake at 350° for one hour. Serve with whipped topping.

*Lynn Monroe, Postville*

## BUTTERMILK RHUBARB BREAD

*Quick, Easy Bread Recipe loaded with Rhubarb and White Chocolate Chips!*

- |                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| ¾ c. Brown Sugar           | <b>Topping</b>     |
| 1/3 c. Vegetable oil       | 2 T. Sugar         |
| 1 Egg                      | 1 T. Butter melted |
| ½ c. Buttermilk            | ¼ tsp. Cinnamon    |
| ½ tsp. Salt                |                    |
| ½ tsp. Baking Soda         |                    |
| ¼ tsp. Cinnamon            |                    |
| 1 tsp Vanilla              |                    |
| 1 ½ c. Flour               |                    |
| 1 c. Rhubarb, diced        |                    |
| ½ c. White chocolate chips |                    |

Mix all bread ingredients together. Generously grease a bread pan. Pour batter into pan. In a small bowl combine topping ingredients. Sprinkle over batter. Bake at 325° for 55-65 minutes or until it tests done. Allow to cool completely before removing from pan.

*Angela Winters, Nashua (From Family Cookbook)*

## RHUBARB CHEESECAKE SQUARES

- |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| 1 ¼ c. Flour                      |
| ½ c. Old fashion oatmeal          |
| ½ c. Brown sugar                  |
| ½ c. cold butter                  |
| <b>Filling</b>                    |
| 8 oz. Pkg. cream cheese, softened |
| ¾ c. Sugar                        |
| ½ tsp. Salt                       |
| ½ tsp. Vanilla                    |
| ¼ tsp. Cinnamon                   |
| ⅛ tsp. Nutmeg                     |
| 1 Egg, slightly beaten            |
| 1 ½ c. Rhubarb, peeled and diced  |

In a small bowl combine flour, oats, and brown sugar. Cut in butter until crumbly. Set aside 1 cup of mixture and press remaining into the bottom of a greased 9" x 9" pan.

In a small bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in salt, vanilla, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add egg and beat until combined. Stir in rhubarb and pour over crust. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture. Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours and cut into squares.

*Nancy Moon, Monona*

### Looking for a PAST newsletter recipe?

We've uploaded every recipe that we have printed in our newsletters to [acrec.com/member-recipes](http://acrec.com/member-recipes). Search through hundreds of recipes by a specific name or by category.

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jenny McIntyre, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email [jmcintyre@acrec.coop](mailto:jmcintyre@acrec.coop).

You'll receive a \$5 bill credit if your recipe is printed. Please note – recipes must be received by the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month before intended publication.

**May–POTATOES June–STRAWBERRIES July–PEPPERS**

## NOTICE

Please be aware that beginning in May, your statement envelopes will be **WHITE**, versus the yellow envelope you are accustomed to getting. This change is due to supply chain issues, and we are hoping that this will only be the case for a few months. Please watch for a white envelope.



## FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to **Eddie Mihm, Waucoma**, who found his service number in a past newsletter; the Cooperative awarded him a \$17.50 bill credit. Congratulations also to **Donald & Valerie Fox, Harpers Ferry**, who found their service number in a past newsletter. The Cooperative awarded them a \$5 bill credit.



ACEC has hidden **three Service Location numbers** within this newsletter. The numbers are from three different regions of our service area – all three are worth a **\$10 credit** each if found. The Service Location number must be yours to claim the bill credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.

## CONTACT ACEC

### HEADQUARTERS

229 Highway 51 • PO Box 715  
Postville, IA 52162

### PHONE NUMBERS

**LOCAL** 563-864-7611

**TOLL-FREE** 888-788-1551

**PAYMENT LINE 24/7** 833-284-5051

**UNDERGROUND CABLE LOCATING**  
811

**SKYWAYS INTERNET SOLUTIONS**

800-864-1611

### WEBSITE

acrec.com

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### OUTAGES

888-788-1551 or 563-864-7611

### IOWA STATE ONE CALL

811

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**JEFF BRADLEY**, President, Wadena

**MICHAEL D. GIBBS**, Vice President, Waterville

**CINDY HEFFERN**, Sec./Treas., Harpers Ferry

**ROGER ARTHUR**, Sumner

**NELSON CONVERSE**, Postville

**GREG FORMANEK**, Farmersburg

**ARLYN R. FOSSUM**, Waterville

**JERRY KELEHER**, Elkader

**AL STEFFENS**, Clermont

### MANAGEMENT STAFF

**HOLLEE McCORMICK**, EVP/General Manager

**DAVID DECKER**, Director, Finance & Administrative Services

**BRENDA HACKMAN**, Manager, Economic Development & Community Relations

**JENI KOLSRUD**, Manager, Information Technology

**JENNY McINTYRE**, Manager, Marketing & Communications

**JASON TROENDLE**, Director, Operations & Engineering

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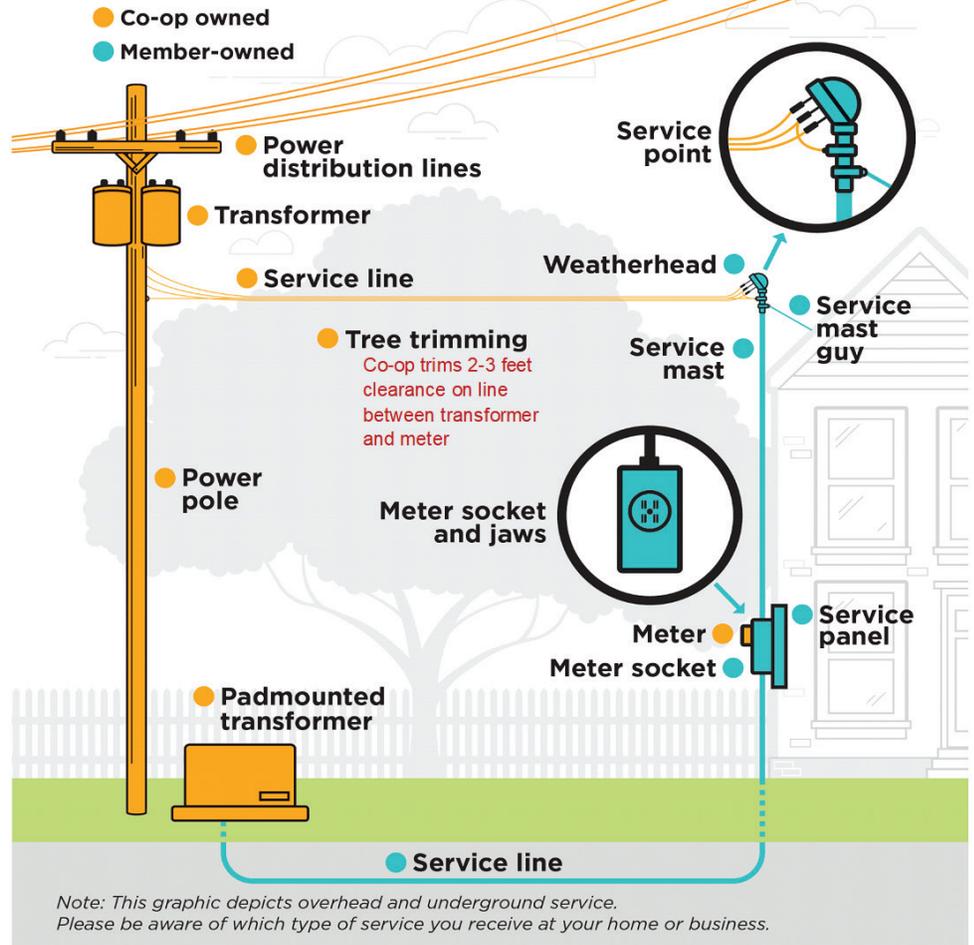
**PAID**  
DPC

# Who Owns What?

## Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

REVISED APR. 2022

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



STAY CONNECTED

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative