

ACEC NEWS

JULY 2024 | VOLUME 27 | ISSUE 07

**ALLAMAKEE
CLAYTON**
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SOUNDING
THE ALARM

UPDATE FROM DC

NEW EMPLOYEES

**WE LOVE OUR
MEMBERS!**

See page 4 for more photos
from the ACEC picnic.

Dress like a lineman
Photo Op



A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

WATCH THE CLOCK TO LOCK IN ENERGY SAVINGS

As temperatures rise and summer activities heat up, a reliable flow of electricity is essential to ensure ACEC members stay cool and connected.

Summer brings some extreme temps, which means people will be spending more time indoors to avoid the heat, and air conditioners will be working overtime. This increased use of electricity will cause spikes in demand, also known as energy peaks. During peak times, ACEC must work closely with our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power, to ensure a balanced supply of electricity is always available to meet our members' energy needs.

The electric grid is essentially a giant network that connects power plants, utility poles and power lines to homes and businesses across the country, throughout our state and to our local communities. All parts of the network must work together to ensure the flow of electricity stays balanced 24/7.

When the demand for electricity is higher than usual, power providers must ramp up electricity production—whether from coal, natural gas, wind, solar or other energy sources—and utilities will pay more for electricity produced during the peak. These higher prices along with the general increase in electricity use are why you typically see higher bills during the hottest months. In extreme cases, demand can overpower the available supply, causing electricity shortages. During these times, utilities are required to implement rolling power outages to reduce the demand for electricity and re-balance the grid.

When our area experiences extreme summer heat and higher demand for electricity, you can help by conserving energy. It's easy—just check the clock and avoid your energy-intensive activities and chores during peak hours. ACEC's peak hours during summer months are 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Friday.

When we all work together to reduce energy use during peak times, ACEC can lock in lower electricity rates so everyone in our community saves. Conserving during peak times also eases pressure on the grid and helps balance the supply and demand of electricity.

Here are a few recommendations to help you save energy (and money) during the summer peak:

- Set your thermostat a few degrees higher. If you have a smart or programmable thermostat, adjust the settings so your cooling system syncs with the off-peak hours.
- Speaking of raising the thermostat, did you know ceiling fans can make you feel 4 degrees cooler? Operate ceiling or oscillating fans in occupied rooms to supplement your air conditioning. Be sure to raise the thermostat while fans are running for maximum energy savings. Remember, fans cool people (not homes), so turn them off when you leave the room.
- Plan energy-intensive activities like laundry and running the dishwasher for off-peak hours. Use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters and other appliances in the same way.
- Unplug electronics when they're not in use or use power strips to manage devices.
- Close drapes and blinds during the afternoon to block unnecessary heat from sunlight.

When we all work together to beat the summer peak, our entire community benefits. Saving energy during peak times reduces your bills, keeps electric rates lower for all and relieves pressure on the grid. ■

TIPS TO BEAT THE SUMMER PEAK

When we all work together to lower energy use during peak hours, we can lock in lower electricity rates, so everyone saves. Here are a few simple ways to save during peak summer hours.

- 1 Raise the thermostat a few degrees.
- 2 Use ceiling fans (in occupied rooms) to feel cooler.
- 3 Avoid using major appliances.
- 4 Close drapes and blinds to block heat from the sun.
- 5 Turn off and unplug non-essential electronics and lights.



BOARD BRIEFS | June 24 Meeting

- Approved Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Fee/Dues for FY 24/25
- Approved Compass Financial Forecast
- Heard Dairyland Power updates and information from Brent Ridge, Dairyland CEO, and April Wehling, Dairyland CFO

IOWA YOUTHS TAKE ON D.C.

ACEC reps return from Youth Tour trip

Two Northeast Iowa teens had the opportunity to experience Washington D.C. like they never imagined in June. Hannah Hagen and Ethan Squier were chosen to represent Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative on the National Electric Cooperative Youth Tour of Washington, D.C. June 15-21. In all, 35 students represented the state of Iowa this year.

“The Youth Tour was an amazing opportunity. I was able to see first-hand how our government operates and also learn about the history of our great nation. The trip covered a range of emotions. Visiting the Holocaust Museum was definitely a solemn experience. Experiencing the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier gave me goosebumps. Seeing the war monuments made me feel very patriotic and grateful for those who have served. I was honored to meet Senators Grassley and Ernst. Making memories and building friendships with students from across the nation was fun!” said ACEC Representative Ethan Squier.

“My favorite stop was the Air and Space Museum. Getting to see the Discovery Space Shuttle was something I’ve always wanted to do. I had the opportunity to serve as the Treasurer for our Snack Cooperative, giving me further insight into how cooperatives work. It’s hard to put into words how grateful I am to

the Allamakee-Clayton Electric Co-op for this opportunity. It is a trip I will treasure forever.”

“Youth Tour was truly such a wonderful experience that I would recommend to anyone. Leaving for this trip I was partially nervous because I have never been in a big city before, but I am so glad that I was blessed enough to embark on this wonderful learning experience. I gained a better understanding of our government and how different departments collaborate to improve our way of life in Iowa,” said Hannah Hagen, another ACEC representative.

“I also learned more about our country’s history during Youth Tour, and it truly changed my perspective, especially seeing the monuments and memorials in person. I developed a genuine appreciation for these structures, understanding their significance and the individuals they were built to honor. I would also like to personally thank the Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative for their support and for making this trip a reality. Their assistance has enabled me to create lasting memories and reflections that I can fondly look back on and be able to share with others.”

Each year in June, high school students participate in a weeklong program to gain



Hannah Hagen



Ethan Squier



experience in government operations, the electric cooperative business model and today’s pressing issues in the energy industry. Students also met with their elected officials in the U.S. House and Senate, toured historic sites and ran a Snack Cooperative.

ACEC will accept applications for the 2025 Youth Tour beginning in December. For more information, visit IowaYouthTour.com. ■



GREAT START TO THE SUMMER

ACEC celebrates members with annual picnic



Lucas Connor enjoys a trip down the bounce house slide



CEC's Ben Schulmeister serves former line worker Marv Winter



The orange cream and shamrock frozen yogurt from Country View Dairy were a hit



Brexlee Schulmeister dresses for the job



Isabella Koenig and Addison Bently pose during the Big Four Fair



Thank you to everyone who was able to attend our annual member appreciation picnic!

ON THE COVER: Cade Wynthein poses as a lineman during our annual picnic.



Karen and Alan Feldman of Farmersburg pose with one of the ACEC trucks





3RD ANNUAL MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC

It was a family affair at the Big Four Fair. Pictured are members Robby and Jenna Wemark with their children and parents.

PICNIC PRIZE WINNERS!

Blackstone Grill

Judy Hanson, West Union

CGI Rocker Chair

Lydia Guyer, Luana

Light

Connie Lauer, West Union

\$25 Bill Credit

Rose Lansing, Elgin

Gail Lansing, Waukon

Robert Hulgán, Waukon

ACEC Blanket

Cindy Butikofer, Elgin

John Foels, Postville

Richard Valdez, Postville

ACEC Tumbler

Bill Christofferson, Postville

Stephanie Penney, Hawkeye

ACEC Ice/Hot Pack & Scissors

Janet Livingood, Postville

Kermit Miller, Postville

Ben Grangaard, Waukon

Karen Guyer, Clermont

2024 Nominating Committee

Each year, the ACEC Board of Directors appoints a nominating committee to select candidates to run for the board of directors. This year's nominating committee gathered in early June to select director candidates to run for the Board of Directors election in September. Look for the candidate bios in the ACEC Annual Report, which hits mailboxes in August. ■



Thank you to the nominating committee, who recently assisted with the board nomination process. Pictured are, front row, from left—**Brian Houlihan**, Harpers Ferry; **Dean Fritz**, Hawkeye; **Justin Grove**, Monona; **Matt Henkes**, Luana. Back row—**Gary Grimm**, Harpers Ferry; **Randy Helgerson**, Elgin; **Rickey Blietz**, McGregor; **Tim Bruihler**, Hawkeye.

SOUNDING THE ALARM: FEDERAL ENERGY POLICY THREATENS ELECTRIC RELIABILITY

By Chuck Soderberg, retiring executive vice president and general manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives



Those of us who work in the electric utility sector are deeply concerned how federal energy policy is threatening electric reliability for the families, businesses and communities we serve. It's time to sound the alarm and raise awareness of how these misguided mandates will negatively impact our country.

In April, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its final Power Plant Rule, which includes four major environmental regulations. One regulation under Section 111 of the Clean Air Act (also known as the Greenhouse Gas Rule) will limit emissions from existing coal and new natural gas power plants. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) stands with the Iowa Attorney General, the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) and the Iowa Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) in opposing these regulations on the grounds that they are unlawful, unrealistic and unachievable.

The EPA's Power Plant Rule requires existing coal and natural gas generation facilities to deploy carbon capture and sequestration at a level that is not yet achievable or commercially viable. The other three regulations in the rule tighten already stringent standards for mercury and air toxins and wastewater and impose additional burdensome requirements on legacy coal ash sites.

Specifically, the Power Plant Rule will force the early closure of "always available" electric generation sources and limit the construction of new natural gas plants as our nation's economy will require more electric generation in the years ahead. Existing coal-fired units that plan to operate past 2032 and until 2039 must co-fire with natural gas at a 40% rate starting in 2030. To operate past 2039, existing coal-fired plants must capture or avoid 90% of their carbon emissions by 2032. The Power Plant Rule also requires the same 90% carbon capture or avoidance for new natural gas plants operating at baseload (above a 40% capacity factor). These new standards will impact electric

utilities' ability to economically and reliably replace lost coal generation.

"These reckless regulations are not based in reality and pose an immediate threat to the electric grid and will negatively impact electric reliability here in Iowa," remarked Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager of IAEC. "We are sounding the alarm that these EPA mandates will drastically diminish electric cooperatives' ability to provide dependable power when our member-consumers need it most."

With the Power Plant Rule, the EPA is overreaching its legal boundaries, disregarding practicality and endangering national energy security. These new mandates jeopardize affordable and reliable electricity by forcing the premature closure of "always available" power plants while also making it harder to permit, site and build critical new generation facilities. As electric demand increases each year, replacing dispatchable electric generation sources like coal and natural gas with intermittent power sources like solar and wind is a recipe for disaster. We support an "all of the above" electric generation strategy that prioritizes reliability.

Iowa's electric utilities are not alone in our concern. In filing joint comments on the proposed EPA Power Plant Rules back in 2023, Iowa's OCA and the IUB expressed the following opposition to the mandates: "*The proposed rules treat reliability as merely one of many considerations, and do a poor job in making that consideration.*" ... "*The proposed rules are rushed, the record does not meaningfully consider the impact of this truly essential service, and EPA myopically pursues a narrow goal at the expense of larger societal benefits like life, heat, and jobs.*"

National utility trade associations – including the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Edison Electric Institute and the American Public Power Association – and a coalition of

27 attorneys

general, including Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird, have filed separate lawsuits in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, petitioning for review of the EPA's Power Plant Rule and to stay the rule while the Court decides the motion.

Additionally, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) has noted this growing capacity shortfall which has resulted from the reduction in reliable electric generation and the increase in electric demand. In its 2024 Summer Reliability Assessment, NERC warns that there is an elevated seasonal risk for several regions of the country, including parts of the Midwest. This means there is potential for insufficient operating reserves in above-normal peak conditions. And in 2023, NERC listed energy policy as the highest significant risk to grid reliability.

Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission operator which covers parts of western Iowa, warns that the EPA's rule poses reliability risks. "*SPP is concerned that limited technological and infrastructure availability and the compliance time frame will have deleterious impacts including the retirement of, or the decision not to build, thousands of mega-watts of baseload thermal generation.*"

Iowa's economy can't succeed without reliable electricity, and the EPA cannot ignore growing reliability challenges at this critical time for our nation's energy future. The EPA must follow the law and set realistic standards based on technology that has been adequately demonstrated and is achievable. With the Power Plant Rule, the EPA has set an unworkable timeframe in violation of the Clean Air Act and Supreme Court decisions.

Federal energy policy has now become a major threat to electric reliability and it's time to take a stand and sound the alarm to protect the Iowans we serve. ■

MEMBER RECIPES

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jennifer Achenbach, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email jachenbach@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 the intended publication.

September – **VEGETARIAN**; October – **PIES**



BEST EASY SMOKED BRISKET

1 15 lb. brisket

For the brisket baste

1 c. beer
¼ c. apple cider vinegar
¼ c. beef stock
5 Tbsp. butter, melted

For the brisket rub

2 Tbsp. garlic powder
2 Tbsp. onion powder
2 Tbsp. paprika
2 Tbsp. chili powder
2 Tbsp. kosher salt
2 Tbsp. coarse ground black pepper
1 Tbsp. brown sugar

Directions

When ready to cook, start the Traeger grill on smoke (super smoke for the Timberline grill) with the lid open until the fire is established (4-5 minutes). Set the temperature to 225°F and preheat, lid closed, for 10 minutes. Mix together garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, chili powder, kosher salt, pepper and brown sugar in a small bowl. Season brisket on all sides. Place brisket, fat side down, on grill grate. Cook brisket until it reaches an internal temperature of 160° (about 3-4 hours). While it is cooking, combine the beer, apple cider vinegar, beef stock and butter to make a brisket baste. When brisket reaches internal temperature of 160°F, remove from grill. Double wrap meat in aluminum foil and pour the brisket baste around the meat within the foil packet. Return brisket to grill and cook until it reaches an internal temperature of 204°F (about 3-4 hours more). Once finished, remove from grill, unwrap from foil and let rest for 15 minutes. Cut against the grain and serve.

■ *Nancy Einck, Waukon*

ONION POTATOES

1 thinly sliced potato (per person)
¼ - ½ small, thinly sliced onion (per potato)

3 Tbsp. butter, or more to your taste (per potato)

Salt & pepper – or seasonings of your choice

Directions

Crisscross two large heavy duty strips of foil. Place on foil, in layers, potatoes, onions, butter and seasonings. Wrap the foil around the mixture and seal as tight as you can. Place on grill for about 20 minutes, turning occasionally.

■ *Becky Engelhardt, Postville*

BLUEBERRY COFFEE CAKE

Crumb topping

¾ c. brown sugar
1 c. flour
½ c. cold butter, cut in chunks
½ tsp. salt
1 ½ tsp. cinnamon

Cake

1 c. sugar
1 c. sour cream
3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
1 c. unsalted butter
⅔ c. brown sugar
½ c. milk
Juice and zest from one lemon
3 c. flour
1 tsp. salt
3 tsp. baking powder
3 ½ c. blueberries (frozen, not thawed)

Directions

For topping: Mix all toppings like a pie dough. Put it in the refrigerator while mixing the cake. *For the cake:* Mix the sugar, brown sugar, sour cream, milk, vanilla, butter and lemon juice and zest. Add in the flour, baking powder and salt. Fold in blueberries (if using fresh blueberries, cut down baking time). Bake in a 9x13" greased pan at 350° for 40 minutes

■ *Sharon Bruening, Monona*

CYBERSECURITY

Tip of the MONTH

Smart speakers and digital assistants such as Amazon Echo, Google Nest, Apple HomePod, and Sonos Era are integral to many modern households. However, security risks come with this convenience. Make sure you follow some simple steps so you can enjoy the devices while protecting your data. Understand the risks – like any other device or gadget that connects to the internet, digital assistants are vulnerable to cyber threats. Research security features and privacy policies beyond comparing prices and features. Change the default password right away and turn on multi-factor authentication. Finally, configure privacy settings to your own comfort. ■

~ information from staysafeonline.org.

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PLUGGED IN: Electric Vehicle Update

JUNE

of miles driven: **231 miles**

kWh's charged: **62 kWh**

Total cost to charge
.13 x 62kWh = **\$8.06**



FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to **Douglas and Mary Piper of Strawberry Point** for finding their service number in a recent newsletter. The Cooperative awarded them a bill credit of \$10.00.

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter. The numbers are from different regions of our service area – **all three are worth \$5.00**. The service location number must be yours to claim the credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



CONTACT ACEC

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WELCOME

Say hello to our new employees

Two new employees joined the ACEC office in June. Welcome Sam and Philip!



Sam Ash started June 3rd as the equipment technician. Sam has spent the past 12 years as an industrial electrician. Sam is a native of Waukon who previously lived in Cedar Rapids. He graduated from Kirkwood Community College and holds a journeyman electrician certificate, as well as an associate of science degree in industrial maintenance. He and his wife, Dacia, have two children, Tegan (13) and Walker (1.5). In his free time, he enjoys hunting, fishing and woodworking



Philip French started June 5th as the summer help for the operations team. Philip is a 2022 South Winn High School graduate and recently completed line school in Sheldon, IA, at Northwest Iowa Community College.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 