

ACEC NEWS

MARCH 2026 | VOLUME 29 | ISSUE 03

THINKING SPRING



GRAIN
BIN NOTICE

SPRING
SAVINGS

PLANTING
SAFETY



A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

Holley McCormick
EVP/General Manager

UNDERSTANDING OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE IOWA ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

In order to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members, it takes teamwork between our Allamakee-Clayton Electric staff and several partner organizations. Earlier this year, I shared how we work with Dairyland Power Cooperative, our Generation & Transmission provider, to bring electricity from La Crosse to our substations and to your homes and businesses. I've also talked about the Cooperative Response Center (CRC) and how they provide a necessary service of dispatching our crews after hours or when we have a major storm that requires assistance beyond our office in Postville.

This month, I'd like to talk about another partnership we have – with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC).

As a member of ACEC, you may have heard about our association with the IAEC. But what exactly is the IAEC, and why is our partnership with them so important? I'd like to shed some light on this vital relationship and the benefits it brings to our cooperative and, ultimately, to you, our valued members.

What is the IAEC?

In the state of Iowa, cooperatives provide power to over 650,000 people, touching into all 99 counties. Cooperatives power 15% of the state's population and over two-thirds of the landmass of Iowa.

The IAEC is a trade association that was established in 1942 to support the work and interests of its member-owned electric utilities. That includes 38 distribution cooperatives, like ACEC, and 9 G&Ts.

According to its mission statement, the "IAEC serves, supports and advocates for members by providing expertise and collaborative leadership."

Today the IAEC employs 17 people in six departments. Those departments provide guidance and assistance in a variety of ways, including legislative representation, regulatory oversight, training and education services, safety programs, communications support and advocacy.

The association serves as a unified voice for cooperatives at the state and national levels, engaging in legislative and regulatory advocacy to protect and promote our interests.

Why We Partner with the IAEC

Our partnership with the IAEC is rooted in a shared commitment to the seven cooperative principles and the goal of serving our communities effectively. By working together, we leverage collective resources and expertise, which enhances our ability to provide service to our members. Here are some key benefits of our membership with the IAEC:

- 1. Advocacy and Representation:** The IAEC represents our cooperative in legislative and regulatory matters, ensuring that our voice is heard on issues that impact rural electrification and energy policy. This advocacy is vital in maintaining a favorable environment for cooperatives to operate and thrive. They work hand-in-hand with ACEC's Brenda Hackman to work with our local legislators on matters important to our members and to cooperatives.
- 2. Education and Training:** The IAEC provides a wealth of educational resources and training programs for cooperative employees and board members. These opportunities help us stay informed about industry trends, regulatory changes, and best practices, enabling us to serve you better. **6784**
- 3. Collaboration and Networking:** Through the IAEC, we connect with other cooperatives across the state, fostering collaboration and sharing of ideas. This network strengthens our ability to innovate and adapt to changing industry dynamics. Whether it's through connections

we make at the various trainings or just reaching out through message boards, we're able to broaden what we do and share resources, saving time and money.

4. Safety and Reliability Programs:

The IAEC supports initiatives that enhance the safety and reliability of our electric service. By participating in these programs, we ensure that we are upholding the highest standards in delivering electricity to your homes and businesses. Not only that but the IAEC travels to our cooperative several times a year to do on-site training. This ensures our employees are up to date on the most recent safety standards.

The Impact on Our Members

At its heart, our partnership with the IAEC is about enhancing the value we provide to you. By being part of a larger cooperative network, we gain access to resources and expertise that would be challenging to achieve independently.

Much like our relationship with Dairyland, working with the IAEC is a cornerstone of our strategy to deliver reliable and affordable electricity while advocating for the needs of our rural communities. We are proud to be part of this cooperative network and are committed to leveraging these partnerships to benefit all our members. ■

BOARD BRIEFS February 23 Meeting

- Approved 2026 Operating Budget
- Reviewed 2025 finances
- Reviewed Dairyland A6 & A7 rates
- Approved Board Resolution to enter into three potential Revolving Loan Fund projects with Dairyland Power
- Leslie Kaufman, CEO of Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, gave a presentation to the Board regarding IAEC activity
- Approved donation requests to Clayton County Fair and Clayton County Development Group

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED LINES

Always assume a downed power line is energized and dangerous, even if it's not sparking or making noise. Know what to do to save lives.

Keep your distance:

- Stay at least 50 feet away.
- Do not touch the line, or anything or anyone it's touching.
- Warn others to stay far back.
- Do not touch or step in water near a downed line. Water conducts electricity and creates a dangerous mix.
- Call 911 and state it's an electrical emergency.


STAY AT LEAST 50 FEET AWAY.


NEVER DRIVE OVER A DOWNED POWER LINE.

If you're inside your vehicle:

- Stay inside and call 911.
- Wait for utility or emergency crews to tell you it's safe to exit.
- Only leave the vehicle if there is immediate danger, like a fire.

If you must exit the vehicle due to fire or other danger:

1. Open a door that's not touching the ground, if possible.
2. Cross your arms over your chest. Jump clear without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time.
3. Land with your feet together. Shuffle or bunny hop, keeping your feet together, and get as far away as you can.
4. Avoid power lines that are on the ground or sagging overhead.
5. Do not go back to the vehicle until it's confirmed safe.

 Safe Electricity.org®

NOTICE Complaint Procedures

The following notice is delivered annually to our members in compliance with Complaint Procedures rules as adopted by the Iowa Utilities Commission (IUC).

If you have a complaint concerning your electric service received from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, contact the Co-op at 229 Hwy. 51, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162, 888-788-1551 or 563-864-7611.

If your complaint is related to Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative service rather than its rates, and Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Commission by calling 515-725-7300 or toll-free 1-877-565-4450, by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069 or by email to customer@iuc.iowa.gov.

THROUGH A MEMBER'S LENS

When winter brought us another blast of snow and cold, we knew our members would be on the spot with some great photos.

This month we selected this photo taken by Lisa Moose, shot south of Waukon on a snowy day. Thanks to all everyone who submitted a photo!



SPRING INTO ENERGY SAVINGS

Spring is a season of renewal—and a great time to refresh your energy habits. As temperatures begin to warm and daily routines shift, a few small changes around your home can add up to meaningful energy savings.

Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative is committed to helping our members use energy wisely while keeping homes comfortable year-round.

Spring is the perfect time to schedule maintenance for your heating and cooling system. Spring and fall checkups conducted by a licensed professional can help ensure your system is running efficiently, safely and reliably before the peak seasons begin. A well-maintained unit uses less energy, lasts longer and helps prevent costly breakdowns when you need it most.

If you're looking for a simple place to start saving, look no further than ceiling fans. Fans don't actually cool or heat the air, but they help you feel more comfortable by moving it. During warmer months, make sure your ceiling fan blades are set to rotate counterclockwise. This creates a downward breeze that makes you feel cooler, allowing you to raise your thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort.

In cooler months, reverse the direction of fan blades clockwise to help push warm air down from the ceiling, improving efficiency when your heating system is running.

Speaking of thermostats, adjusting the temperature just a few degrees can make a noticeable difference on your energy bill. As spring arrives, try setting your thermostat slightly higher when cooling or slightly lower when heating. Even a two- or three-degree adjustment can reduce energy use while still keeping your home comfortable—especially when combined with ceiling fans or open windows on mild, pleasant days.

Hot water use is another area where simple habits matter. Taking shorter showers can help reduce the amount of energy used to heat water, which makes up a significant portion of most energy bills. Cutting just a few minutes off each shower not only saves energy but also conserves water.

Finally, the time of day you use energy can also play a part in saving. When you run major appliances during off-peak hours (when energy demand is lower), you can help reduce pressure on the electric grid—that's a win-win. It helps keep our costs of purchasing power down, which helps you as a member.

ACEC is here to help every season, every step of the way. We offer resources designed to help you lower energy use for your home or business and manage costs. If you have questions or want to learn more about energy efficiency, visit acrec.com or give us a call at 888-788-1551. ■

FREE AND EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

Here are 10 easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer:



1. Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day



6. Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage)



2. Set your thermostat a few degrees higher



7. Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them)



3. Take cooler showers (this feels better in the summer, anyway)



8. Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weather stripping if needed)



4. Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of your oven



9. Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house



5. Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors



10. SHUT THE FRONT DOOR (don't air condition the outdoors)

Safe Electricity.org® Learn more at:

REAP WHAT YOU SOW: STAY SAFE DURING PLANTING SEASON

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. If you farm, remember to take care of yourself by getting as much rest as possible and allowing yourself breaks to clear your head.

Be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm. Be cautious and think twice before acting around electricity. ACEC and Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- **If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out.** Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact) you are now a “pathway to ground” and you could get electrocuted if you step out. Instead, stay where you are and call 9-1-1 to dispatch the appropriate utility to de-energize the power. **1238A**
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.
- When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.
- Even if there is no contact, an electrical current can jump or arc so keep equipment at least 10 feet from surrounding power lines at all times.
- Remember, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- Visually inspect overhead lines, which may not meet height codes due to age or pole damage. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call 9-1-1 to have the operator dispatch the utility.
- Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.
- When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- Train anyone working with or for you (including seasonal employees) to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance. Also design and implement a safety training program that includes a review of electrical hazards and how to safely deal with power lines.
- According to American Family Insurance, “know your PTO.” To stay safe when working with a power take off (PTO), always disengage the PTO, turn off the engine and remove keys before getting off the tractor. Also, never step across a rotating power shaft. ■

DOWNED POWER LINE and Large Equipment Safety

Wait to fold/unfold or raise/lower equipment until you are well into the field, and away from the field's edge.

In an accident or contact with a power line:

1. **Stay Inside the Cab:** The ground may be energized.
2. **Call 9-1-1:** Report downed or damaged lines.
3. **Warn Others:** Tell bystanders to stay away.
4. **Wait for Utility Crew:** Do not exit until it's safe.



If you notice smoke or fire:

5. **Exit Safely:** Cross arms over your chest and jump out with feet together. Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
6. **Move Away:** Shuffle or bunny hop with feet together. Get as far away as you can.



Learn more:



SAFETY MATTERS

MAINTAIN PROPER CLEARANCE AROUND GRAIN BINS

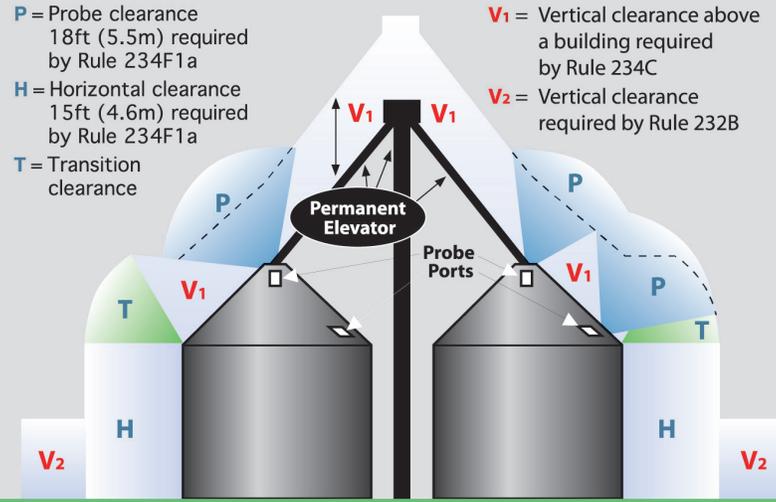
The state of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators. According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 – 25.2(3) b: *An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2023 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after Sept. 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after Dec. 24, 1997.* The Iowa Utilities Commission has adopted this language.

Your local electric cooperative is required by the Iowa Utilities Commission to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants and city and county zoning officials. The drawings on this page show the required clearances. If you have any questions concerning these regulations – or what needs to be done before you begin placing a new grain bin or moving an existing one – please call ACEC at 888-788-1551. ■

Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of the Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2023 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings, refer to that publication.

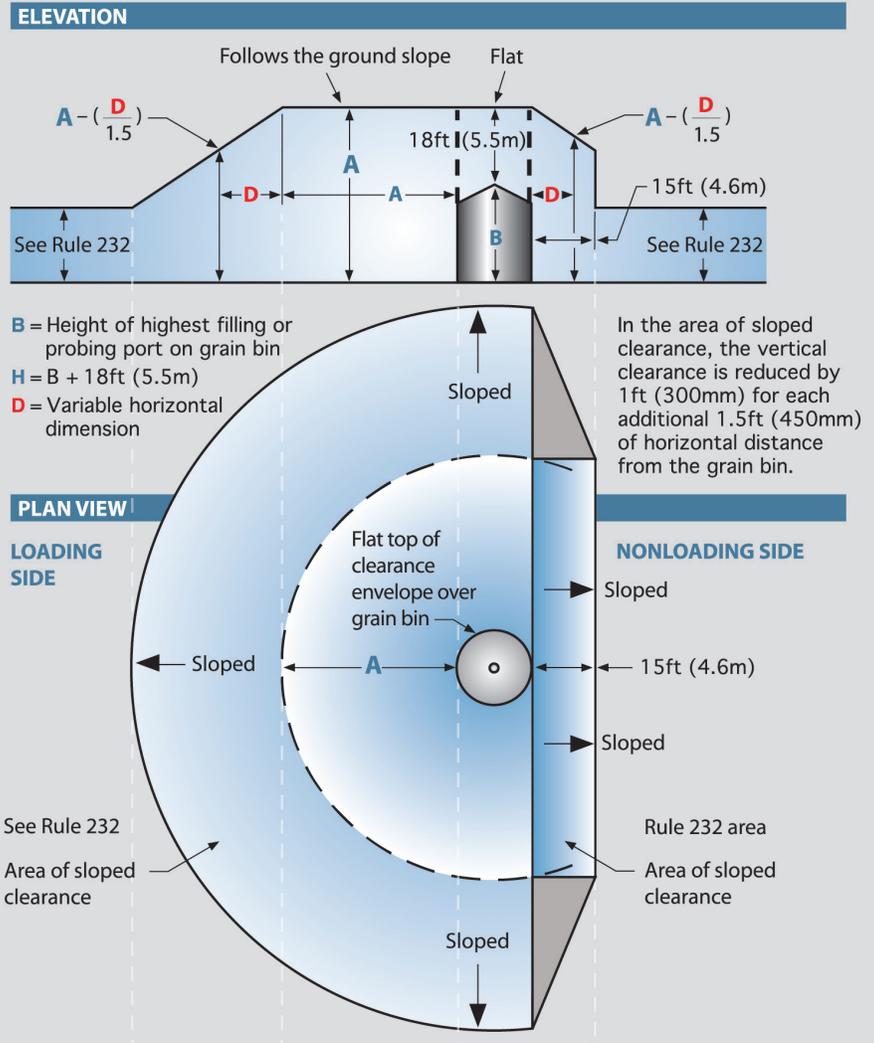
Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphic.

Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by permanently installed augers, conveyors or elevators



From IEEE Std. C2-2023, "National Electrical Safety Code." © Copyright 2022 by IEEE. All rights reserved.

Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors or elevators



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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. **3613**

APRIL – EGGS, MAY – BEEF, JUNE – GRILLED FAVORITES



EGGNOG PIE

- 1 c. eggnog
- ½ c. milk
- 13.4-oz. package vanilla instant pudding
- ⅛ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 4 oz. cool whip
- 1 premade graham cracker pie crust

Directions

Whip the eggnog, milk, vanilla pudding and nutmeg together in a large bowl for about 2 minutes or until it has thickened significantly. Fold in the cool whip, then pour the mix into the graham cracker crust. Cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Slice and serve with a light sprinkling of nutmeg or cinnamon if desired.

■ **Cici Mueller, Postville**

BLACK CAP CRANBERRY PIE

- 2 c. black cap raspberries
- 2 c. (1 can) cranberry sauce
- 4-5 Tbsp. tapioca
- ¾ c. sugar
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 large (or 4 small) pie crusts

Directions

Put cranberry sauce in pan; warm and mash with potato masher. Pour in the rest of the ingredients in the pan, except the black cap raspberries. When everything is fluid and mixed, fold in the black cap raspberries. Pour into one large or two small pie crusts and cover the pies with another crust. Bake for 15 minutes at 400°F. Turn oven down to 350°F and bake for an additional 45-50 minutes. Let cool at least 30 minutes before eating.

■ **Martha Bartenhagen, Elgin**

EAZY PEAZY DUTCH APPLE PIE

Crust for 9" pie pan:

- 1 ½ c. flour
- 1 ½ tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ c. cooking oil
- 2 Tbsp. cold milk

Crust directions:

Mix flour, sugar and salt in pie pan. Whip milk and cooking oil with fork; pour over dry ingredients. Mix thoroughly and press out with hands in your pan. Bake at 425°F for 12 to 15 minutes, set aside.

Filling:

- 4 c. coarsely chopped apples
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- Dash of salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- 2 Tbsp. butter

Topping:

- ¼ c. sugar
- ½ c. flour
- ¼ c. butter

Directions for filling and topping:

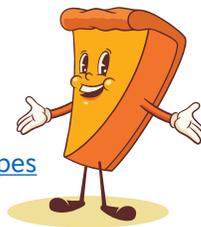
Prepare apples, mix in sugar, flour, salt and spices with apples. Spoon into pie pan and dot with butter. Mix topping ingredients together and sprinkle over apples. Bake at 400°F for 15 minutes and at 350°F until filling is done, about another 45 minutes or until pie bubbles and apples are done.

■ **Ruthie Hilgerson, Saint Olaf**

We got LOTS of pie recipes this month.

View more at:

acrec.com/member-recipes



CYBERSECURITY Tip of the MONTH

Sponsored by



Romance scams, sometimes called sweetheart scams, are one of the most financially and emotionally damaging types of online fraud. Scammers exploit trust, affection and loneliness to steal money and personal information. Romance scammers often follow similar playbooks. Scammers often: ask for money, request hard-to-trace payments, say they live far away, avoid video chats or in-person meetings, move the relationship very fast and push you off the dating platform. Always make sure you share with care and check your privacy settings. If you suspect you are a victim, stop communicating immediately, save evidence, contact your financial institutions and report the scam. ■

~ Courtesy of staysafeonline.org

Looking for a recipe from a previous newsletter? Wanting to try something new?

Check out the recipe section on our website - <https://acrec.com/member-recipes>.

Every recipe submitted to the newsletter is posted on the website. Be sure to submit your recipe for publication as well – people who submit a published recipe receive a \$5 bill credit!

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter.



The numbers are from different regions of our service area – **two are worth \$10.00 and one is 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

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

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    **STAY CONNECTED**



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SAFETY TRAINING

Every month, your ACEC staff attends safety training. In February, we learned more about forklift safety, including hands-on training for those who operate a forklift at work.

Pictured during the training are, at left - a very smiley Jeff Cox; below left - Travis Erickson watching behind him as he nears a corner; below right - Jason Nefzger focusing on carefully moving his pallet. ■

