

# heartland LINK

A publication of East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

## Electricity Powers Quality of Life

Story on page 3

### YOUTH TOUR

page 5

Both sophomores and juniors can now apply!

### NEW WAYS WE'RE USING ELECTRICITY

page 6

Use of electric-powered products and appliances is on the rise.



### QUICK WAYS TO PAY

page 7

Use SmartHub to pay online and on the go.

### DOING MORE WITH LESS

page 11

Cooperatives cover more ground.

### IOWA COOPERATIVES

PER MILE  
OF LINE  
served on  
average



**\$10,800** of r  
per

HONORING  
85 YEARS



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**04 HOLIDAY SAFETY**

10 tips to help you stay jolly!

**04 RENEWABLES CONTRACTS**

Call ECI REC before signing.

**04 CO-OP CONNECTIONS®****04 THE GIFT OF POWER**

ECI REC offers gift cards for the holiday season!

**05 SCHOLARSHIPS**

Seniors, it's time to apply!

**05 YOUTH TOUR**

Apply now for a free trip to Washington, D.C.!

**05 NOTIFICATION PROGRAMS****06 NEW WAYS WE'RE USING ELECTRICITY****07 STAY OFF THE PEAK****07 SMART HUB**

Online payment options and apps for mobile.

**08 PATRONAGE LIST**

Help us connect with members with unclaimed patronage.

**09 PRIVACY POLICY****09 STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP****10 WHAT DOES MY FACILITY CHARGE COVER?****11 POLE-TOP SAFETY TRAINING****11 DOING MORE WITH LESS**

Cooperatives cover more ground than municipalities and investor-owned utilities.

**03 THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY****11 ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH****11 BOARD OF DIRECTORS****12 MESSAGE FROM CEO TERESA FLOYD**

## take the member challenge

1. COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE: But the cost of electricity has only increased \_\_\_\_% per kWh.

2. ENERGY WISE: Before you sign an equipment \_\_\_\_\_ for renewables, call ECI REC at 877-850-4343..

3. ENERGY WISE: That means equipment that uses \_\_\_\_\_ will have a diminishing environmental impact over time.

Find the answers within the stories, features, and content of this newsletter and you could win a prize. Send your answers to [memberchallenge@ecirec.coop](mailto:memberchallenge@ecirec.coop). Or, print the word(s) at the top of the back page, cut it out, and send it to: ECI REC, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember there is a deadline! Entries for this issue must be received by December 1. Sixteen names will be drawn from all correct entries. Members will not be allowed to win more than once per calendar year.

## last issue's challenge winners

The following names were drawn from the September/October 2022 *Heartland Link* entries. These members will receive a \$10 credit on their account.

Steven M. Vaughn

Richard Schlotterback

Eli C. Raue

Mary Ann Cue

Judith A. Thurman

Jerry Jones

Loren Wood

Joyce A. Kitson

Victoria I. Hampton

Jane Ann West

Makenna G. Barth

Steve Saathoff

Douglas A. Smith

Alfred Williams, Jr.

Lucelle Nelson

## Calendar Notes

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME**  
– Sunday, Nov. 6

**CLOSED** – Friday, Nov. 11  
to honor Veterans Day

**CLOSED** – Thursday and  
Friday, Nov. 24 and 25 for  
Thanksgiving

**CLOSED** – Friday, Dec. 23  
and Monday, Dec. 26 for  
Christmas

**CLOSED** – Friday, Dec. 30  
for New Year's Day

## Contact ECI REC

### EMAILS

[memberservices@ecirec.coop](mailto:memberservices@ecirec.coop)  
(rebates, product sales)

[csr@ecirec.coop](mailto:csr@ecirec.coop)  
(billing, new customers)

**WEBSITE**  
[www.ecirec.coop](http://www.ecirec.coop)

### MANAGEMENT TEAM

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PO Box 248  
Urbana, IA  
52345-0248

**PHONE**  
319-443-4343

**TOLL FREE**  
877-850-4343

**FAX** 319-443-4359

### HOURS

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

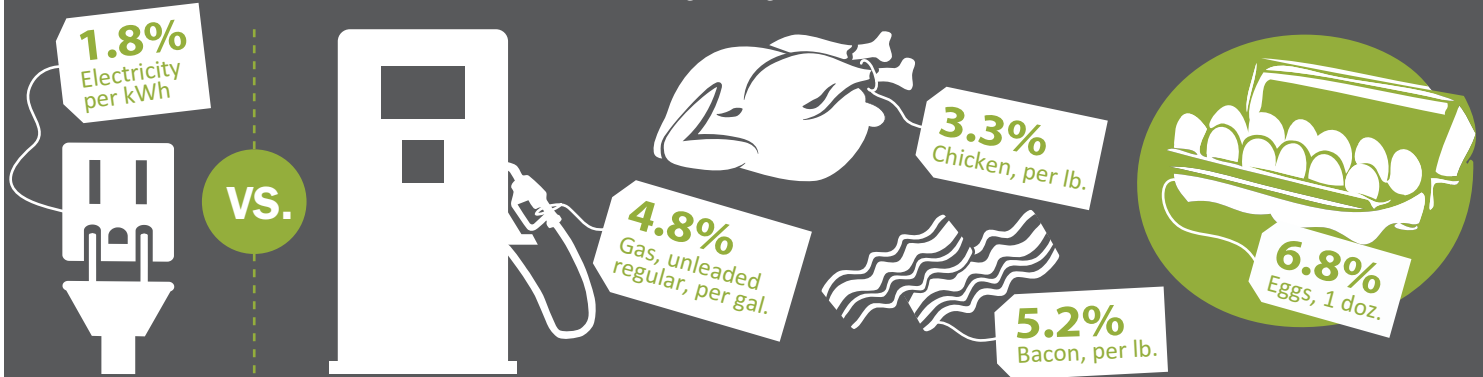
(closed Saturdays,  
Sundays, and holidays)

Stay connected! We post operations news and outage updates at [facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec](https://facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec).

# CHECK OUT THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY

When you're running errands, do you pay attention to how the prices of gas, eggs, and other goods rise over time? Compare the average price increase of these items each year over 10 years to the cost of electricity.

Average Annual Price Increase  
2012-2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index, 12-month percent change averaged from 2012 through 2022

## Electricity Powers Our Quality of Life

*a Cooperative Difference feature*

**IT'S EASY TO TAKE ELECTRICITY** for granted. After all, it's abundant and available with just the flip of a switch!

But when we pause to reflect, we realize that we use electricity almost constantly—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. According to the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances, and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices. When you consider everything that is powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally wince at our monthly bill.


But keep in mind—it's no longer just the "light bill." Electricity powers our quality of life, from the infrastructure of our homes (appliances, water heaters, and HVAC systems) to the ports for charging our smartphones and computers and powering our TVs and Wi-Fi routers.

That's why it's no surprise that there is more demand for electricity than ever before. At home, in schools, at work, and in commercial sectors like transportation, the need for electricity is increasing.

It is known that when demand for something goes up, so too does the price. The price of electricity does also increase with demand, but often at a slower rate than other goods and services. Let's take a look at how the value of electricity compares to other common expenses over the past decade.

Since 2012, the cost of unleaded regular gas has increased 4.8% per gallon. The price of eggs has gone up 6.8% per dozen, while the price of chicken and bacon has increased 3.3% and 5.2% respectively per pound. But the cost of electricity has only increased 1.8% per kWh. Considering the multitude of ways we depend on electricity, it still remains a great value.

So, the next time you're enjoying your favorite podcast, TV series, or movie, consider the value of electricity and how it enhances your quality of life.

Your ECI REC team cares about you, the members we serve, and we understand that electricity is more than a commodity—it's a necessity. That's why ECI REC will continue working hard to keep your lights (and all your other electric devices) powered on! 

Source: NRECA's Straight Talk



# BE SAFE DURING THE HO·HO·HOLIDAYS

## 10 TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY JOLLY



Before you plan out your new holiday lighting scheme or repeat last year's festive design, keep these 10 safety tips in mind when decorating outdoors:

- 1 Do not toss light strands up into the air. They could get too close to or come into contact with a power line.
- 2 Before using a ladder, always look up and assess all power line locations.
- 3 Carry a ladder horizontally when transporting it.
- 4 Keep at least 10 feet between yourself (and any item you are holding) and a power line.
- 5 Do not use staples or nails or tacks to secure light strands, cords, wires, or extension cords.
- 6 String together no more than the number of strands (or fewer) recommended by the manufacturer.
- 7 Plug all lights and extension cords into GFCI-protected outlets.
- 8 Use lights and extension cords rated for outdoor use.
- 9 Do not use frayed, cracked, or otherwise damaged cords, plugs, or lights.
- 10 Use only lights and products certified by a reputable testing lab.

Safe Electricity.org<sup>®</sup> LEARN MORE AT:



## About to Sign Up for Renewable Equipment? Call Us First!

*an Energy Wise feature*

**IF YOU RECEIVE** an offer on equipment like solar panels or small wind electric systems that sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Don't be swayed by aggressive sales tactics or a nontransparent sales rep. Be especially wary if you hear phrases like:

- » You don't need to work with your cooperative.
- » You won't have an electric bill.
- » Your cooperative is against renewables.
- » Your utility will pay you!

**Before you sign an equipment contract for renewables, call ECI REC at 877-850-4343.** Our team is always here to provide the information you need and answer your questions.

## Support these local businesses by using your Co-op Connections<sup>®</sup> Card.

Emmy Lou Candles | Polar Blair's Den | Cy & Charley's Tire & Appliances | E & T NAPA Auto Parts | Fabulous Fridays | Heartland Acres Agribition Center | Cameron Clothing Company | Michael & Dowd | Styles Unlimited | Berry's Lanes, Inc. | In the Country Garden & Gifts | Frazier Nursery | Henkle Creek Mercantile | Subway (Vinton) | Viking Sewing Center | *The NEWS/Buchanan County Review*

Photo credit: BearFotos, shutterstock.com



# Happy Holidays

From our co-op family to yours, wishing you a joyous holiday season and a happy and peaceful new year!

## Give the Gift of Electricity



Giving the gift of electricity may not be at the top of your list of ideas this holiday season, but it may be the perfect fit. Having a winter heating bill covered or partially covered could be a great, unexpected surprise for a friend or family member, and it's easy to do with the Power Boost Gift Certificate from ECI REC. Simply fill out the form online at [ecirec.coop/power-boost-gift-certificate](http://ecirec.coop/power-boost-gift-certificate). Make checks payable to East-Central Iowa REC. You may also access the form by scanning the QR code.





Photo credit: Cooperative.com

## Bank Bucks for College

*a Community Connected reminder*

### HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:

Don't miss out on these scholarship opportunities!


#### ECI REC Scholarship Program

– Up to ten \$1,000 scholarships are available to students who will continue their education in college in any field. Up to two \$1,000 scholarships are also available to students accepted to the Powerline Technology program at Northwest Iowa Community College. The deadline for applications is **Wednesday, March 1, 2023**. Visit [ecirec.coop](http://ecirec.coop) for more details. Look for the Scholarships page in the Community & News menu.

#### Youth Tour Alumni

**Scholarship** – One \$10,000 and four \$1,000 scholarships are available to Electric Cooperative Youth Tour alumni. Visit [www.electric.coop](http://www.electric.coop) for details.

#### Engineers of the Future

**Scholarship** – \$2,000 scholarships are available to students pursuing a career in engineering. Visit [www.electric.coop](http://www.electric.coop) for details. 


## Youth Tour Gives High Schoolers Inside Access to Washington, D.C.

*a Community Connected reminder*



**THE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR** is back for 2023 with an exciting change—starting this year, both high school **juniors and sophomores** can apply!

ECI REC is looking for two eligible students to sponsor on this once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C. The event will take place this summer. To apply, students must be heading into their sophomore or junior year of high school and have parents or legal guardians who are members of ECI REC. Applications can be found on our Youth Tour page at [ecirec.coop](http://ecirec.coop), and they are due **Wednesday, February 22, 2023**.


Youth Tour is one of the most important programs ECI REC takes part in. Our teens are our future, and our future is looking brighter every day. For more information about the Youth Tour program, email us at [iowayouthtour@ecirec.coop](mailto:iowayouthtour@ecirec.coop) or call us toll free at 877-850-4343. Also, follow the Iowa Youth Tour on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram! 

### THINGS YOU'LL SEE AND DO ON YOUTH TOUR

**Washington Monument | World War II Memorial | Albert Einstein Memorial | Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial | Vietnam Veterans Memorial | National Mall | Potomac River Boat Cruise | Holocaust Memorial | Madame Tussauds Wax Museum | Ford's Theatre Korean War Veterans Memorial | Lincoln Memorial | Washington National Cathedral Mount Vernon | Iwo Jima Sunset Parade | White House | U.S. Capitol | Newseum**

## Cooperative Offers Two Helpful Notification Programs *a Keeping the Lights On message*


### THE NOTIFY LANDLORD BEFORE DISCONNECT PROGRAM

is available if you own rental property that resides in ECI REC's service area and receives electricity from the Cooperative. Once enrolled, you will be notified prior to a meter disconnect while you are renting out the property, which can be helpful if your tenant contacts ECI REC to disconnect the meter when they are moving out. Or, a renter may have late bill payments that could result in meter disconnection. In certain situations and weather conditions, the owner may want to avoid the disconnect. 



**NOTIFY  
LANDLORD  
BEFORE  
DISCONNECT**

### THE HELPING HAND REMINDER PROGRAM

is a good option for members who struggle to pay electric bills in a timely fashion, perhaps due to illness or forgetfulness. When the account of an enrolled member becomes delinquent, ECI REC notifies their designated contact person. The contact person then reminds the member who missed their payment—they are under no obligation to pay the delinquent bill. Members can withdraw from the program at any time by contacting an ECI REC member service representative at 877-850-4343. 



**HELPING  
HAND  
REMINDER**

**Enrollment for both programs can be completed by filling out the forms online at [ecirec.coop](http://ecirec.coop) under Account Services, Member Programs. Or, access either form online by scanning its QR code above.**



# New Ways We're Using Electricity

an Energy Wise feature



**IF YOU LISTEN CAREFULLY**, you can hear a *quiet* transformation happening—electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among consumers!

The trend is called “beneficial electrification.” Advancements in technology and battery power, coupled with decreasing costs, are winning over consumers who are looking for an alternative to gas-powered equipment that has comparable utility and versatility. As an added bonus, electric equipment is also quieter and better for the environment than its gas-powered counterparts.

## A GROWING NUMBER OF OPTIONS

“A few years back, the list of new electric product categories that were making their way to the market was limited—electric scooters, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and vehicles,” said Keith Dennis, an energy industry expert and president of the Beneficial Electrification League.

Today, the number of available electric products is exploding.

“There are electric bikes, school buses, pressure washers, utility terrain vehicles, backhoes—even airplanes and boats,” Keith continued. “With the expansion of batteries and advancements in technology, we are seeing almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel as having an electric replacement available on the market.”

A case in point is the increasing use of electric power tools and equipment. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Handheld tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered tools. For DIYers and those in the building trades, national brands like Makita, Ryobi, and Milwaukee offer electric versions of their most popular products, including drills, saws, sanders, and other tools. In addition to standard offerings, consumers can now purchase a wider array of specialty tools that plug in, such as power inverters, air inflators, and battery chargers.

The quality of zero- or low-emissions lawn equipment is also improving. More national brands are offering a wider selection of electric lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers, and snow blowers.

What about inside the home? For starters, robotic vacuums are gaining popularity. And many consumers and homebuilders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings.


According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the combined use of appliances like clothes washers, dryers, dishwashers, stoves, and other electrical equipment accounts for the largest percentage of electricity consumption in the average home (see pie chart).

Going electric with appliances makes sense. For example, both traditional electric stoves and induction stovetops are significantly more efficient than gas ovens. That’s because conventional residential cooking tops typically use gas or resistance heating elements to transfer energy, with efficiencies of approximately 32% and 75% respectively (according to ENERGY STAR®). Electric induction stoves, which cook food without any flame, reduce indoor air pollution and can bring water to a boil about twice as fast as a gas stove.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GOING ELECTRIC?

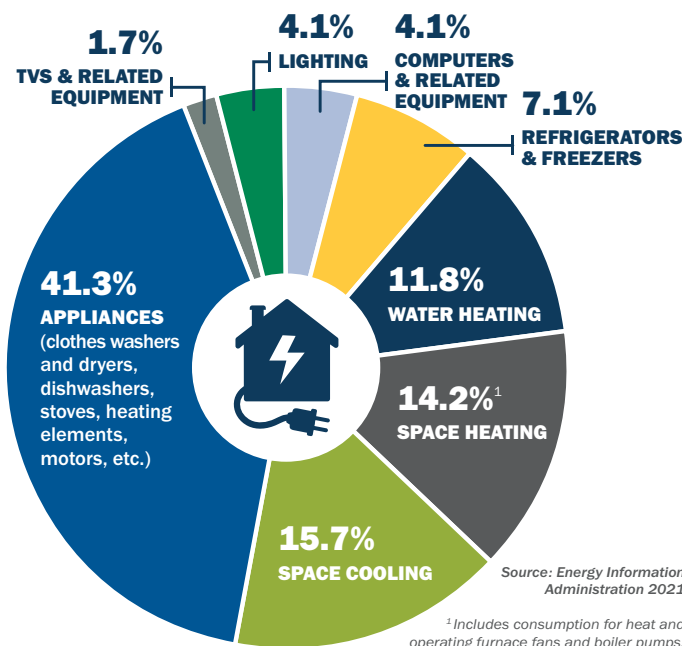
Beyond efficiency and savings, electric equipment also requires less maintenance than gas-powered equipment—often the biggest task is keeping it charged. Electric equipment is also quieter, so you can listen to music or your favorite podcast while completing indoor and outdoor chores.

By virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. In essence, electricity is becoming cleaner through increases in renewable energy generation. That means equipment that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact over time. Quite a hat trick—improving efficiency, quality of life, *and* helping the environment!

Questions about electric-powered tools and equipment for your home? Call 877-850-4343 and let us help! As a member-owned cooperative, we work for you, offering friendly, local, reliable, no-cost help with all your energy-efficient household decisions. 

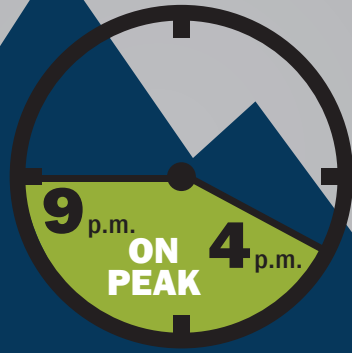
Source: NRECA's Straight Talk

## How Americans Use Electricity



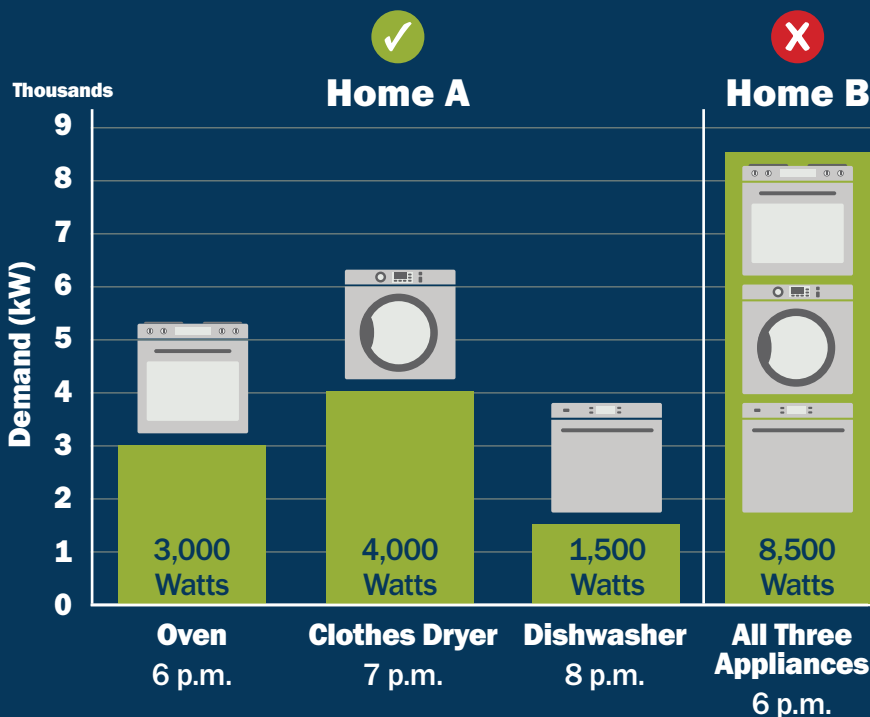


# Switch your thinking and TAKE A LOAD OFF THE PEAK



Frigid winter temperatures increase electricity usage for everyone. However, there are ways you can help ECI REC (and your fellow members) save money!

- 1. Keep electricity usage to a minimum between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.** ECI REC pays the most for electricity used in these peak hours. If you cut back during this window, everyone saves.
- 2. Coordinate the number of appliances you operate at once.** Staggering the use of appliances reduces the demand on our system, which means lower costs.



## Results

**Home A** staggered the use of their appliances during peak hours, creating less of a demand on the Cooperative's system.

**Home B** used all three appliances at once during peak hours, creating higher demand, which could increase costs.

## Quick Ways to Pay Your Electric Bill

Did you know you can make quick automated payments through SmartHub ... without creating an online account?

Here's how:

- » Call SmartHub's automated system toll-free number: 888-223-2048.
- » Use the Pay Now application. Go to [www.ecirec.coop](http://www.ecirec.coop). In the Account Login section of the home page, click the Pay Now button. Then enter your account number and last name or business name to access your account and pay your bill.

YOU CAN PAY  
**ONLINE**  
OR BY  
**PHONE**



Welcome to East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative's online account portal.

Welcome to Pay Now!

Welcome to the Pay Now Site

Account Number:

Last Name Or Business Name:

Submit

Reset

\* Easy Bill Pay with no registration required!

\* Use your account number and last name/business name to access your account for payment.

000000000000



## Take SmartHub Mobile!

Download the SmartHub app in the Apple or Android store so you can access your account 24/7. You can register for the first time using the app too! Scan the QR codes below, or use the Download the App button in the Account Login section of our home page.



Android Users



Apple Users




# Help Us Find These Former Members

*a Cooperative Difference report*

**IN MAY**, the Board of Directors of East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative voted to retire \$456,041 in patronage back to its members. These margins represent 100% of its 2007 margins. They were credited to current members on their June bills. Former members were sent checks. The 90-day window to cash these checks has now passed, and the people listed below have not yet cashed their checks. These dividends will be forfeited to the Cooperative if not claimed within one year.

If you know of someone listed below, please contact that person, or their next of kin, and ask them to contact our office. ECI REC will require personal identification and/or legal documentation from these people to confirm their membership before dividends can be claimed. Please do not contact ECI REC unless you have the necessary documentation for the member listed. This list was current at the time of this printing.

**Patronage represents the margins, or profits, that the Cooperative earns on electricity purchased by its member-accounts. These margins are the member-accounts' equity in East-Central Iowa REC. The Cooperative uses this equity to maintain its poles and wires, rebuild its distribution system, and pay expenses. When ECI REC's financial condition allows, these margins are returned back to the members who generated them. In the past 10 years, ECI REC has returned \$5,264,649 to its members.** 

Abbott, Daniel  
Abbott, Joel E  
Achey, Curtis  
Adair, Dean  
Albaugh Sr, Don  
Albertsen, Caleb L  
Allen Sr, Robert L  
Allers, Henry F  
Alltel  
Alpers, Karina  
Alvarez, Kathrine  
Amana Golf Inc  
Amos, Ronald  
Anderson, Gerald R  
Anderson, Nadine  
Anderson, Paul J  
Andrews, Cindy K  
Ansley, Debbie  
Appleton, Randy L  
Aragon, Dennis  
Arnold, Lori  
Atherley, Michael R  
Avenson, Clayton C  
AZ Recovery  
Backer, Harry L  
Baird, David A  
Baker, Donna L  
Baker, Josh J  
Baker, Ryan  
Ballard, Jeff  
Ballard, Scott W  
Barbee, Dee L  
Barbour, Melia D  
Barton, Robert  
Bascom, Jerry  
Bean, Geraldine A  
Bearbower, Stacy  
Beatty, Todd A  
Beauregard, Scott P  
Beck, Jacie  
Belknap, Duane  
Bembenek, Bob  
Bender, Scott  
Bennett, David W  
Bensend, Marvin  
Benton/Linn Wireless  
Beyer, Kelli  
Bilsland, Clarence  
Birker, Bonnie  
Bishop, Randall J  
Blood, Karin B  
Boelter, Velma  
Boggess, Marc E  
Bohnsack, Todd A  
Boies, Mark  
Bonafas, Larry P  
Borre, Dorna  
Bourget, Tige  
Bowers, Jesse R  
Boyer, Ron  
Brandley, Sonia  
Brannaman, Bryan  
Brazil, Anthony E

Brecht Sr, Ronald  
Brekke, Todd  
Bridgewater, Steve  
Brimmer, Frank R  
Brinkema, Jack E  
Brown, Adam R  
Brown, Dennis L  
Brown, Diane S  
Brunko, Andy  
Buck, John  
Bumgarner, Kimberly  
Burch, Douglas  
Burnell, Keith  
Cain, Robby S  
Campbell, Hunter  
Carlson, Thomas  
Carr, Steve L  
Carstensen, Jenifer  
Cedar Valley Egg Farm  
Chaffee, Mark  
Channell, April  
Chensvold, Shawn  
Cherry, Philip R  
Chessser, Stephanie  
Childress, April  
Chinchar, Brent  
Clark, Lloyd I  
Clark, Roberta  
Clark, Stephen  
Clement, Jeni J  
Clinton, Erwin L  
Cono Christian School  
Corbett, John  
Cornwell, Beulah M  
Cotes, David  
Countryman, Betty J  
Courtier, Lynn  
Covington, Andrew L  
Covington, Hope E  
Cox, Dana  
Cram, Kelly M  
Cram, Michael C  
Crawford, Bryan O  
Crawford, Malinda S  
Criswell, Brent  
Croal, Margaret J  
Csongradi, William  
Cue, Robert M  
Dallenbach, Dustin D  
Daniel K Yoder & Son  
Dardenne, Roger A  
Darland, Jackie  
Dave Frank Construction  
Davies, Renee C  
Davis, Christine R  
Davis, Danny  
Day, Debra  
Dean, Jeffrey  
Deardorff, David  
Demeulenaere, Dale F  
Demoss, Corey  
Dewaard, Wilma  
Deweese, Mishelle D

Dickey, Clint D  
Dix, Raymond  
Docekal, Richard  
Dochterman, Corey P  
Donnelly, Dick J  
Donnelly, John  
Donnelly, Leo  
Drane, Stephen R  
Driscoll, Todd C  
Dudley, Dick  
Duffield, Curtis L  
Dulin, Kim  
Dunkelberger, Dena  
Dunn, Chris  
Durbala, Una  
Dutka, Jessica J  
Eckes, William C  
Edgewood Feedmill  
Edmondson, Laura C  
Edsill, Kevin C  
Edwards, Caitlin A  
Edwards, Wilford J  
Eiben, Galen  
Ellis, Shauna L  
Fairchild Feed & Supply  
Faith Bible Institute  
Fehr, Viki  
Fencil, David P  
Ferguson, Jamie  
Ferguson, Kristine  
Fettkether, George R  
First Choice Builders  
Fisher, Dean  
Fitzpatrick, Jerry  
Fleming, Roger  
Fletcher, Mark D  
Floyd, Roland  
Foels, Mark  
Forney, Jerry  
Fowlkes Jr, Arthur P  
Fowlkes, Ronald L  
Franzenburg Estate  
Freiling, Quint  
Freyermuth, Verona  
Frieden, Jeremy J  
Frimml-Geater, Carolyn J  
Fuller, Jeff P  
Futrell, William  
Gardner, Chad  
Gas, Garvin L  
Gates, Dorothy A  
Geater, Mike  
Geiger, June I  
Getty, David D  
Gibson, Larry J  
Glime, Brittney L  
Good, Frank  
Goodall, Ray B  
Graf, Tim L  
Gregerson, Kelly  
Greiner, Craig  
Griffin, Steve

Griffith, Bernice F  
Griffith, Craig  
Grindley, Gary A  
Grosse, Brent  
Grover, James  
Gusta, Shannon K  
Gutknecht, Hans  
Hadachek, Jon R  
Hadsell, Richard  
Hala, Harry G  
Hallmark Farms LTD  
Halverson, Josh  
Hamblin, Mary  
Hamilton, Tracy  
Hancor of Iowa  
Hanna, Norma  
Hannan, Mark  
Hansen, T L  
Hansen, Vicki  
Hanson, Cady A  
Hanson, Edward R  
Harkin, Patricia  
Harkness, Catherine  
Harrell, Theodore  
Harris, Craig S  
Hart, Brian L  
Hartz, Tyler  
Hatfield, Dustin  
Heck, Donald R  
Heise, Stephan  
Heiserman, David J  
Heit, Brian J  
Helbert, Michael  
Henry, Richard W  
Hensing, Jennie Estate  
Hertzberg, Veronica  
Herzog, Mary E  
Heyer, Barbara E  
Hicks, John Ed  
Hicks, John Ed  
Higgins, Connie A  
Hobbs, Amos D  
Hockey, Richard  
Hoffman, Vernon Estate  
Hohn, Steve  
Hol, Eric  
Hollister, Casey  
Holt, Dixie B  
Holtzman, Katey M  
Holub, Gary L  
Hopkins, Annette  
Hopkins, Earl  
Howard, Bryan L  
Hromidko, Kurtis  
Hulse Farm Trust  
Hunt, Rita P  
Hunter Companies  
Hunter, John  
Hupfeld, Melvin  
Hutchings, Trinatee L  
Hutchinson, Michele  
Hutton, Angela M  
Hyde, Evelyn F

Ingraham, Kaitlyn M  
Iowa Wireless  
Irish, Stacy V  
Ites, Scott  
Jacobs, Cindy A  
James, Charles E  
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Yearous, Jerry C  
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Young, Richard P  
Yunker, Gerald W  
Zuck, Levi J

## Privacy Policy for East-Central Iowa REC

**Our Commitment to Privacy:** At East-Central Iowa REC, confidentiality is very important to us. As we continue to improve and expand our services and delivery channels, we recognize our customers' need and desire to preserve their privacy and confidentiality. East-Central Iowa REC recognizes the trust you have placed in us and is committed to safeguarding the privacy of our customers' information. The following policy affirms our continued commitment to preserving customer confidentiality.

**The Information We Collect:** We receive and retain information about our customers through many sources:

- » Information we receive from you on applications or other forms;
- » Information about your transactions with us, our affiliates, or others; and
- » Information we receive from a consumer-reporting agency.

**The Way We Use Information:** We limit the use and collection of nonpublic personal information to that which is necessary to maintain and administer financial services. We do not share this information with outside parties unless:

- » The information is provided to help complete a customer-initiated transaction (such as credit reporting agencies, document processing companies, etc.);
- » The customer has requested it;
- » The disclosure is required by law (e.g., subpoena, investigation of fraudulent activity, etc.); or
- » The disclosure is required by banking regulation (e.g., Fair Lending Reporting Act, Home Mortgage Disclosure Act).

When customer information is provided to any of the third parties just mentioned, that third party must agree to adhere to privacy principles that provide for keeping such information confidential.

**Limiting Employee Access to Information:** East-Central Iowa REC limits employee access to customer information to those with a business reason for knowing such information. All of our employees are educated on the importance of confidentiality and customer privacy. Any employee who violates the financial privacy of our customers will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures and possible termination.

**Protection of Information via Established Security Procedures:** To prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and ensure the correct use of information, we have put in place appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure the information.

**Maintaining Accurate Information:** We have established procedures so that our customers' financial information is accurate, current, and complete in accordance with reasonable commercial standards. East-Central Iowa REC will respond to requests to correct inaccurate information in a timely manner.

At East-Central Iowa REC, we value our customer relationships. We want you to understand how we use the information you provide and our commitment to ensuring your personal privacy. If you have any questions about how East-Central Iowa REC protects your information, please contact us at 877-850-4343 or email [ecirec@ecirec.coop](mailto:ecirec@ecirec.coop).

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c. Total paid distribution	7,293	7,315
d. Free or nominal rate distribution	0	0
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## Message From the CEO continued from page 12

Below are brief explanations of the three cost categories considered by the cost-of-service study:

**Facility Charge.** This is a flat monthly charge that represents the fixed costs of making electricity available to your meter.

Regardless of how much energy you consume, equipment is required to deliver it to your home or business. ECI REC continues to make significant investments in our 25 substations; 2,293 miles of distribution line and poles; meters; transformers; facilities; trucks; technology; and great employees. Your Cooperative provides the necessary infrastructure for delivering power. The perfect facility or fixed-rate scenario would be that we collect all our fixed costs, or the true cost of service to deliver energy to you 24/7, 365 days a year. At present, ECI REC collects about 75% of the actual fixed costs via the Facility Charge. The remaining “shortfall” needed to make up those fixed costs is currently collected in the first block of energy (first 1,000 kWh used).

**Energy Charge.** In addition to recovering a portion of the fixed costs, the Energy Charge includes the cost of wholesale power we purchase from our power provider, Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO).

The cost-of-service study looks at wholesale power cost trends, which represent 60% of ECI REC’s annual expenses. Our power provider has experienced significant increases in the purchased power market, which has led them to increase ECI REC’s wholesale power rates three times in 2022. The total increase of nearly one cent (\$0.01) per kWh is estimated to amount to over \$925,000 in additional wholesale power costs. This trend of higher wholesale power costs is expected to carry into 2023. ECI REC’s current rates have a two-tiered Energy Charge—the goal for future rates is to simplify and move to one Energy Charge.

**System Demand (Capacity) Charge.** This charge applies to member facilities that require a large amount of electricity during a short period of time (even if it is only for an hour).

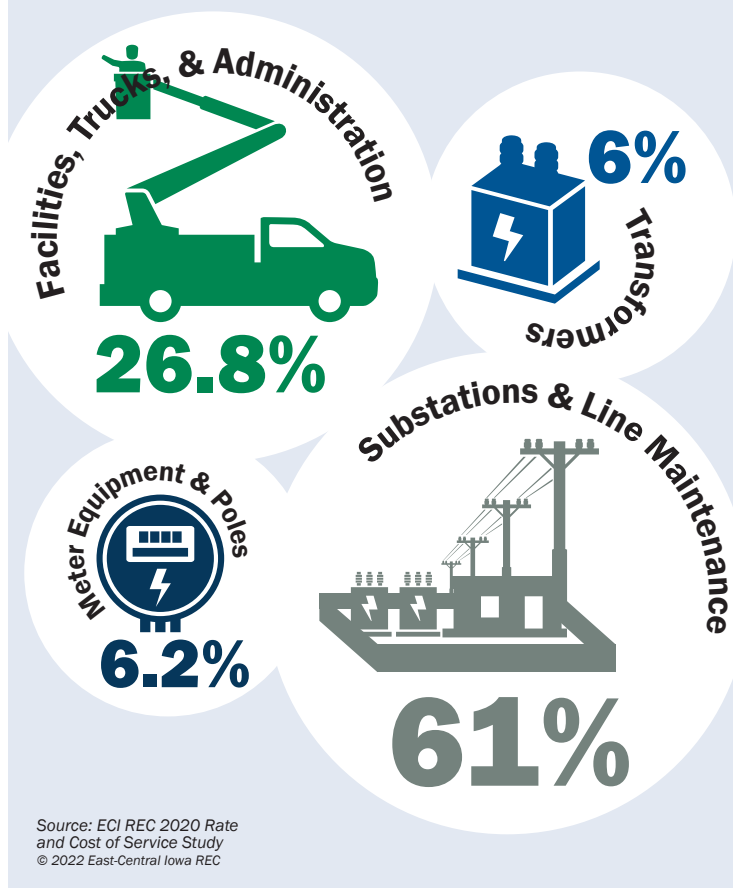
These kinds of large energy demands require bigger wires to get energy to the member’s meter, bigger poles to carry the bigger wires, and transformers and breakers large enough to handle the electric load. The System Demand Charges can be as high as the Energy Charges (kWh usage) ECI REC sees on our wholesale power bill. Most member rate classes put demand on the Cooperative’s distribution system; currently, a portion of the cost of system demand is recovered in the Energy Charge.

Your Cooperative’s current strategy for electric rates is to move toward collecting more of our fixed costs in the Facility Charge and simplifying the Energy Charge component. This approach minimizes subsidies amongst rate classes. In the future, the

## What does my FACILITY CHARGE cover?

Ever wondered what your monthly Facility Charge supports? It takes a solid infrastructure and great people to keep safe, 99.98% reliable, and affordable power flowing to your home.

Here’s how ECI REC’s Facility Charge breaks down:



demand for energy, and the way our members use energy, will evolve. The fixed costs recovery component provides a foundation for future rate-making strategies.

Like our members, ECI REC cannot predict the economy or the weather. However, we can try to be as transparent as possible and keep our membership informed. Regardless of the potential challenges we face, electricity remains a good value. As we work to complete our review of the cost-of-service study and determine what rates need to be for 2023, we remain committed to our mission and vision: To demonstrate the advantages of your member-owned Cooperative and make a difference in the lives of those we serve. 🌱

**CALL  
BEFORE  
YOU  
DIG**  
IT'S THE LAW!



**Iowa One Call:  
811 or 800-292-8989**



# DOING MORE WITH LESS

Electric cooperatives like ECI REC serve primarily rural areas, which means we cover a lot more ground than municipalities and investor-owned utilities.

Because cooperatives must maintain more infrastructure with less revenue, we structure rates and fees to recover costs.

## IOWA MUNICIPALITIES

**58**  
CUSTOMERS

PER MILE  
OF LINE  
served on  
average



GENERATING

**\$131,000** of revenue  
per mile of line

## IOWA INVESTOR-OWNED UTILITIES

**28**  
CUSTOMERS

PER MILE  
OF LINE  
served on  
average



GENERATING

**\$85,000** of revenue  
per mile of line

## IOWA COOPERATIVES

**3.6**  
MEMBERS

PER MILE  
OF LINE  
served on  
average



GENERATING

**\$10,800** of revenue  
per mile of line



Photo credit: Lisa Franck

Lineworker Trent Koopmann secures a safety mannequin mimicking a disabled co-worker during pole-top rescue training, which took place in September at ECI REC's Independence Operations Center.

## Pole-Top Rescue Training

*a Safety update*

**ALL ECI REC LINeworkERS** are required to pass a pole-top rescue course each year. The timed exercises ensure each lineworker can safely secure and lower an injured or stranded co-worker using two methods: manually with a rope, clips, and cables, or by lowering the co-worker using the truck bucket. Lineworkers also undergo annual CPR and first-aid review and training to prepare them in case they have to take such measures in the field. 🙌



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Is your home heating system ready for the winter chill? One of the easiest ways to keep your system running efficiently is to regularly replace filters. If your central air system has a furnace filter, it should be replaced about every 90 days.

If your home is heated through warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, or radiators, remember to clean them regularly to boost efficiency.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)

## YOUR BOARD

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CLIP AND MAIL

See page 2 for the Member Challenge questions.

Answers: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: NO ANSWERS will be taken over the phone.

Find tools for members at  
[www.ecirec.coop](http://www.ecirec.coop)



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CEO TERESA FLOYD

## Message From the CEO: Delving into ECI REC's Recent Cost-of-Service Study

**OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS**, your Cooperative has been reviewing our recent cost-of-service study. The purpose of this study is to assess our current rate structure, increased costs, and the strategies or changes that may be needed to ensure the long-term financial health of ECI REC. The number-one reason we go through this process is to determine if our current rate structure is collecting enough revenue to support your Cooperative.

As members, it's important that you understand what makes up the rate you pay for your electricity, especially as we face changes in 2023.

The cost-of-service study considers the fixed costs, energy costs, demand (capacity) costs, and any current and future projections of what is needed to provide highly safe, 99.98% reliable, environmentally responsible electricity at a fair cost. The study looks at our current rate structure and trends in the industry for rate diversification.

The end goal is to establish continuity between rate classes that are both fair for the membership and equitable for the viability of ECI REC to continue serving safe and reliable electricity.

continued on page 10