

heartland LINK

A publication of East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative



Hurricane-Level Winds Cause Massive Damage

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Photo credit: Nathan Groom

Photo from Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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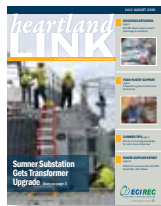
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our members say thank you

“I was so happy with the quick work tonight near the Casey's in Urbana!” **ANONYMOUS**

“Thank you all, from the office to the crews. You give GREAT service with capital letters. Thank you and keep up the great work.” **NANCY COVENTRY**

email newsletter signup



Email Lisa Franck in Member Communications (lisa.franck@ecirec.coop) to begin receiving the *Heartland Link* as a PDF in your inbox. We can also stop postal delivery—just indicate that preference as well.

take the member challenge

1. KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON: By August 15, they had re-set around ____ poles and put up several miles of line.

2. COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE: We hosted our Annual Meeting _____ and awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 10 graduating seniors who plan to further their education in a diverse range of programs.

3. SAFETY: The best defense against a utility scammer is an _____ consumer.

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. 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 October 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 July/Aug. 2020 *Heartland Link* entries. These members will receive a \$10 credit on their account.

William Balsanek

Dudley Maas

Donna Lough

Michael & Lisa Wojcik

Dianna Wiese

Russell Glime

Jacklyn & Joe Tallerico

Matt Erlandson

Gary K. Waters

James Green

Clark Russell

Russell C. Smith

Urban Berkes Trust

Beth Parmely

Mike Stafford

Robert & Kimberly Gibson

Calendar Notes

Sept. 7 – Closed for Labor Day

Nov. 11 – Closed for Veterans Day

Contact ECI REC

EMAILS

memberservices@ecirec.coop
(rebates, product sales)

csr@ecirec.coop
(billing, new customers)

WEB SITE

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HOURS

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

(closed Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)



OPERATIONS NEWS
OUTAGE UPDATES

facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec



Photo credits: Lisa Franck, Nathan Groom, and Adam Albertsen



Hurricane-Level Winds Cause Massive Damage

a Keeping the Lights On feature

ON MONDAY, AUGUST 10, a derecho ripped across the Midwest, causing widespread damage in Iowa. A derecho is characterized by long-lived, straight-lined windstorms and fast-moving severe thunderstorms. The strongest winds were felt in the Highway 30/Interstate 80 corridor and clocked in near 120 mph.

Not only did these hurricane-level winds flatten crops and cause extensive property damage, they left hundreds of thousands of Iowans without power. Governor Kim Reynolds enacted a disaster proclamation for 27 counties.

In the ECI REC service territory, the southern district was hit hardest. At the peak, over 4,000 member-accounts (meters) were without power. An estimated 500 poles were brought down, and ECI REC lost transmission power to 10 of the 12 substations that serve the area.

“The damage was extensive,” said Line Superintendent Tom

Schmitt. “We were down to less than 20% of the normal energy supply resources we have available to provide electric service to our members.”

In the days following the storm, ECI REC line crews began working 16- to 18-hour days. Through the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, we put out a call for six crews, three digger derricks, and three large bucket trucks to assist in repairing the damage to our system. Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative and North West REC answered the call, along with our longtime contractor Highline Construction, Inc.

The crews re-routed power from the two fully energized substations to partially energize the 10 that were down. CIPCO, our power provider, sent several line crews and personnel to help restore the transmission equipment that feeds these substations. To prevent the circuits at the functioning substations from becoming overloaded, we asked

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New Website Coming Soon!

a Cooperative Difference announcement

We are excited to announce our website is getting a refresh! A redesigned ecirec.coop is set to go live in September.

Here's a sneak peek of what you can expect from the new site:

- » Streamlined content
- » Simplified navigation
- » Easy-to-use online forms
- » Integrated SmartHub login
- » Improved mobile responsiveness
- » ECI REC Facebook feed
- » And more

Thank you to the ECI REC team, which has been working hard to build our new website! 🙌

Power On: October is National Co-op Month

a Cooperative Difference event

AS AN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the members we serve. Because we are a cooperative, our mission is also to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community.

This mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guide all cooperatives is concern for community. This principle is part of the essential DNA of East-Central Iowa REC, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we Power On. Keeping this theme in mind, ECI REC recognizes the essential role cooperatives play in serving a special community like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March that the COVID-19 virus would become a test of our community and our nation? The changes driven by the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we've all been challenged to operate differently, and ECI REC has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure the reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees began working on staggered schedules and following social distancing guidelines. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation. We also adjusted our walk-in office availability and in-person service protocols to protect our employees and our valued members. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help

with their electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements. Our RECare program (see page 11 for signup information) provides funds to local community action agencies that distribute assistance to low-income members. Your donations to this program will help pay winter heating bills and assist in the weatherization of homes.

And while we certainly missed visiting with our members in person, we still found ways to stay connected. We hosted our Annual Meeting virtually and awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 10 graduating seniors who plan to further their education in a diverse range of programs. The Board of Directors also moved to use some of ECI REC's Community Reinvestment Funds to donate \$500 each to three food pantries located in Benton, Buchanan, and Fayette Counties.

We've seen other local businesses rise to meet similar challenges during this time, because that's what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, we're heartened to see how everyone is pulling together. East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative is built by our community to serve our community—and we'll continue to Power On. 🙌



Hurricane-Level Winds Cause Massive Damage *continued from page 3*

members with power to limit their energy usage.

Two of the four truckloads of new poles arrived early on August 11. Line crews immediately began resetting poles and lines. By August 15, they had reset around 250 poles and put up several miles of line. At the Van Horn substation, transmission crews focused on rebuilding 26 double-circuit transmission structures that were damaged by the storm. In addition to the field work, hundreds of phone calls were handled by ECI REC's member service reps and our after-hours dispatch.

CEO Teresa Floyd and other members of the ECI REC team made hotel reservations for the mutual aid co-ops. They also secured food and drinks and prepared meals during the week and into the weekend. By the morning of Sunday, August 16, the emergency period of restoration was complete, and the additional crews had headed back home. All member-accounts that were safe to energize had power. 🌱

Sources: KCCI, Forbes, Weather.gov

Henkes Honored for 25 Years of Service

a Keeping the Lights On spotlight

AT ECI REC'S June safety meeting, Engineering Design Technician Dave Henkes (Hank) was recognized for his 25 years of service. To honor Hank, CEO Steve Marlow—who retired on August 3—presented him with a personalized crystal award, thanking Hank for his over two decades of dedication to ECI REC and our members. Way to go Hank, and congratulations! 🌱



Photo credit: Teresa Schreiner

New Growth and Promotions in the ECI REC Team

a Keeping the Lights On feature



Jennifer, 25 years
Manager of
Finance

Leadership Team Gains 25 Years of ECI REC Experience

Jennifer Schmitz was promoted to manager of the Finance team effective September 1. She is in her twenty-fifth year at ECI REC and has been serving as cost records administrator. Along with a strong accounting background, Jennifer has a wealth of knowledge in the financial arm of the Cooperative. She will now manage finance, accounting, payroll, and cost records. Jennifer is very excited for this change and is looking forward to her new leadership role. Congratulations, Jennifer!

Consumer Service and Member Service Teams Consolidate

Meet your restructured Member Service team! Adam Albertsen will lead this team of four, along with Member Service Tech John Tegler. Adam has 20 years under his belt at ECI REC. For five of those years, he has served on the management team as director of Member Service. In his new capacity, his title will change to member service manager effective October 1. Along with Adam's title change, all Consumer Service titles will be revised to Member Service. Congratulations to you and your new team, Adam! 🌱



Adam, 20 years
Member Service
Manager



John, 26 years
Member Service
Technician



Kelly, 21 years
Member Service
Supervisor



Holly, 14 years
Member Service
Representative



Robin, 9 years
Member Service
Representative



Molly, 19 years
Member Service
Representative

Our vision remains steadfast: To make a difference in the lives of those we serve!

Annual Meeting of the Members in Review

a Cooperative Difference feature

THE 25TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS of East-Central Iowa REC was held virtually on June 18. Typically, the annual event garners around 300 in attendance. This year, circumstances spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic and recommendations provided by federal, state, and local authorities led ECI REC to move the meeting to a virtual platform.

The virtual meeting was held via Zoom and recorded. Members can watch the recording by visiting the News and Events section of ecirec.coop and clicking on the link in the 2020 Annual Meeting highlights article.

One of the primary pieces of the Annual Meeting is the Board elections. This year, members could vote by mail-in ballot, or they could vote online via SmartHub or the link included in the Annual Meeting Notice that was mailed out to the membership.

Jeff Elliott (District 1) and Steve Rau (District 9) were re-elected to serve another three-year term on the Board of Directors.

A Board reorganization meeting followed the main meeting. Re-elected to office were Steve Rau, president; Jeff Elliott, vice president; Ryan Kress, secretary/treasurer; and Gary McKenna, assistant secretary/treasurer.

This year's theme—Powering Tomorrow with Today's Innovations—is not new to ECI REC. It has been an underlying force throughout the life of the Cooperative, as we've embraced innovative and forward-thinking opportunities to achieve the best interest of you, our member-consumers.

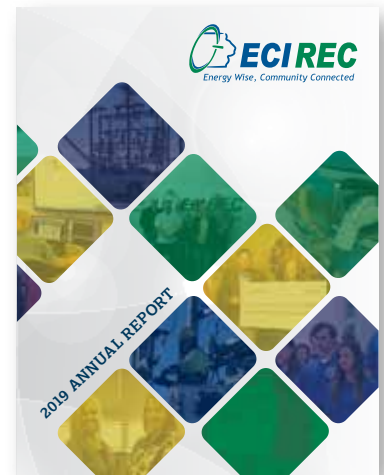
Members who cast a ballot in this year's election were entered to win one of ten \$100 bill credits. Winners were electronically selected from the ballot validation database (five paper voting members and five electronic voting members).



Photo credit: Lisa Franck

The following members were the recipients of the \$100 bill credits. The winners saw their credit on their July billing statement.

John J. Kemp
Bart Frush
Clark E. Crisman
Scott Dinderman
Jeffrey R. Hutton
John Wroten
Delbert L. Hillman
Leon Goedken
Jeff D. Andersen
Timothy L. Donnelly



Couldn't make the meeting? Download the Annual Report from our website: ecirec.coop



STEVE RAU
2020/2021
President - District 9



JEFF ELLIOTT
2020/2021 Vice
President - District 1



RYAN KRESS
2020/2021
Secretary/Treasurer
- District 10



GARY MCKENNA
2020/2021
Asst. Secretary/
Treasurer - District 4



ECI REC Recognized with Economic Development Impact Award

a Community Connected feature

EAST-CENTRAL IOWA REC has been recognized by the Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) for economic development accomplishments and commitment to community. At our June Board of Directors meeting, IADG President Rand Fisher and Senior VP of Finance & Operations Bruce Nuzum presented CEO Teresa Floyd and the ECI REC Board with the IADG Impact Award for community development.

A recent example of ECI REC's commitment to community is our support of Dr. Robert Pipho's new dental facility in Dysart. ECI REC secured an award from the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program to provide a \$480,000 pass-through loan to support construction of the office. The space provides increased capacity to better serve the citizens of Dysart and the surrounding area. In addition to this project, ECI REC also actively



Left to right: IADG President Rand Fisher, Board President Steve Rau, CEO Teresa Floyd, and IADG VP of Finance & Operations Bruce Nuzum. Photo credit: Lisa Franck

provides technical assistance and funding to projects across our service territory through our revolving loan fund.

"We commend East-Central Iowa REC for being an active supporter of this new dental office and so many other initiatives in the communities they serve," said Rand Fisher. "They provide essential financial and technical assistance that many times is a critical component in successfully securing projects that create jobs and

support community vitality."

The Iowa Area Development Group is a business and community development leader that partners with over 220 Iowa entities, including Iowa's member-owned electric cooperatives. IADG has assisted with over 2,100 successful business expansions and start-up projects. Founded in 1985, the Iowa Area Development Group was established to promote and strengthen rural Iowa development opportunities. 

Revolving Loan Fund Supports Local Economy

a Community Connected article

BUSINESS OWNERS TAKE NOTE—your project may be eligible for a loan through the ECI REC revolving loan fund. Anyone may apply for a loan for any community or economic development project that benefits the rural area, such as new or expanding private businesses, non-profit groups, and city or county governments. Loan recipients are not required to receive electric service from ECI REC.

"One of ECI REC's core goals is supporting the growth and development of our members' hometowns," said CEO Teresa Floyd. "The recipients of these loans are assets to their communities, and they're key to helping ensure the long-term viability of the rural economy."

The Loan Review Committee and the ECI REC Board of Directors consider the financial need of the project; the probability of success; the benefits of the project to the rural area, including the number of jobs to be created or retained; diversification of the economy; quality job creation in terms of pay scale and benefits packages; and community development projects and improvements to the community infrastructure.

Please call 877-850-4343 for more information on loan requirements and terms. 

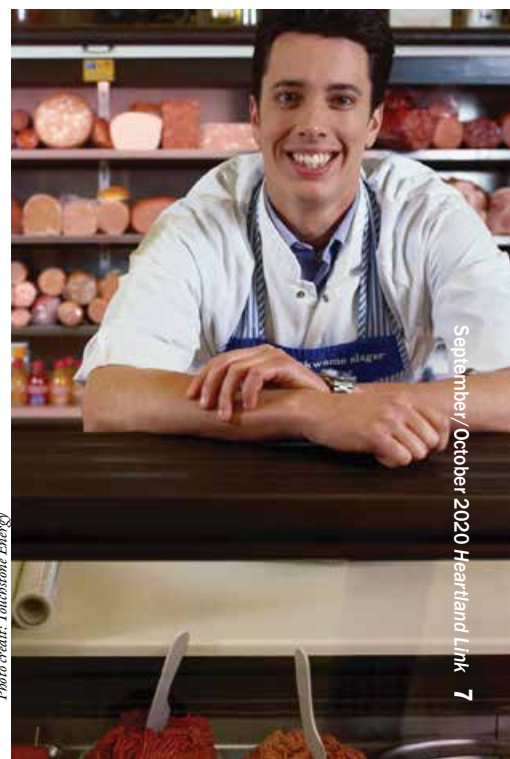


Photo credit: Touchstone Energy

Budget Billing Levels Monthly Payments for Members

a Keeping the Lights On reminder

ECI REC OFFERS BUDGET BILLING to make financial planning easier and help members anticipate monthly costs. We calculate your monthly payment based on your 12-month usage history. Accounts are periodically reviewed to ensure payments match actual usage, so you do not face a large debit or credit at the end of the year.

There are several ways you can enroll:

- Go to ecirec.coop and complete the budget billing form, then submit by email or USPS mail.
- Email csr@ecirec.coop.
- Make an inquiry via SmartHub, under the Contact Us section.
- Call our toll-free number, 877-850-4343.
- Visit our Urbana headquarters building.
- Complete the budget billing form below and mail it to
ECI REC | Billing | PO Box 248 | Urbana, IA 52345-0248.

Note: Budget billing only applies for members who have an ECI REC usage history of less than 3,000 kWh.

Get Smart Bonus Tip

Tired of paper clutter? Worried about forgetting a utility bill? The SmartHub online payment portal is the way to go. You can sign up for automatic payments and paperless billing, plus access a wide range of account-related information. Register for SmartHub today at ecirec.smarthub.coop.



YES, tell me my monthly budget amount.

Name: _____

ECI REC Account No.(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Email: _____



Photo credit: Farnedman | Dreamstime.com

Electric Water Heaters Offer Many Benefits

an Energy Wise feature

ARE YOU IN THE MARKET FOR A NEW WATER HEATER? If you already have an electric unit, you know the benefits; but if you have a propane (gas) water heater, or are contemplating one, here are a few points to ponder.

Safety – An electric water heater requires no venting, no gas line, and offers no CO₂ concerns.


Space – The water heater space allotment in your home often determines what will work best. An electric water heater installation requires zero clearance.

Maintenance – Electric water heaters are very low maintenance; there are no moving parts and no pilot lights to be concerned with.

Price – An energy-efficient 50-gallon electric water heater will cost a family of four about \$40 per month to operate. Electric rates are considerably more stable than gas. For example, East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative's price per kilowatt-hour has increased 4.6% (less than a half a cent) over the past 10 years. Installation costs are also considerably less with an electric water heater.

Energy Efficiency – Consider the ultimate in electric water heating with an air source heat pump water heater. With an efficiency rating of at least 2.4 (240%), they are the most efficient water heaters on the market today.

Incentives – Buy a new, energy-efficient electric water heater and receive a \$75 rebate. Receive a \$650 rebate for the purchase of an air source heat pump water heater.

Still can't decide? Give us a call 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. 

ECI REC Weatherization Incentives

an Energy Wise feature

Make upgrades now to save this winter

Requirements (with or without LIHEAP)

- » Must have electric heat and/or central air (homes with natural gas do not qualify).
- » Home must be built prior to 2000.
- » Must be upgrade to existing home (new additions do not qualify).
- » Project cost must be \$150 or more (labor costs for self-installed projects cannot be included).

Electric Heat (with or without air conditioning)

- » Attic/Ceiling Insulation - 60% up to \$600
- » Wall Insulation - 60% up to \$600
- » Foundation Insulation - 60% up to \$600
- » Infiltration Control - 60% up to \$200
- » Duct Insulation/Sealing - 60% up to \$200

Maximum rebate per home \$2,200

Central AC Only (non-electric heating)

- » Attic/Ceiling Insulation - 15% up to \$150
- » Wall Insulation - 15% up to \$150

Maximum rebate per home \$300

LIHEAP Qualified (See LIHEAP weatherization income guidelines to the right)

Electric Heat (with or without air conditioning)

- » Attic/Ceiling Insulation - 80% up to \$800
- » Wall Insulation - 80% up to \$800
- » Foundation Insulation - 80% up to \$800
- » Infiltration Control - 80% up to \$200
- » Duct Insulation/Sealing - 80% up to \$200

Maximum rebate per home \$2,800

Central AC Only (non-electric heating)

- » Attic/Ceiling Insulation - 20% up to \$150
- » Wall Insulation - 20% up to \$150

Maximum rebate per home \$300

State Releases 2020-2021 LIHEAP Requirements

an Energy Wise update

THE 2020-2021 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing.

If you are not sure where to apply, dial 2-1-1 or visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply> to contact your local community action agency.

You may also write to: **LIHEAP, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319.**

HOW TO APPLY FOR LIHEAP

WHEN TO APPLY

- » Elderly (60 and over) and/or disabled: October 1, 2020, to April 30, 2021
- » All other households: November 1, 2020, to April 30, 2021

WHAT TO TAKE

- » Proof of income for all household members age 19 and over; depending upon your household income type, income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or the last calendar year—whichever is easier or more beneficial for you
- » Proof of Social Security numbers for **all household members** (documentation required)
- » Most recent heat bill
- » Most recent electric bill

WAGE EARNERS

- » Please bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIXED INCOME

- » This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, and pensions. Please bring copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS

- » Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIP RECIPIENTS

- » Please bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information.

If you receive alimony or child support, it will also need to be verified. Additional income not listed here may be required.

INCOME MAXIMUMS

Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$22,330
2	\$30,170
3	\$38,010
4	\$45,850
5	\$53,690
6	\$61,530
7	\$69,370
8	\$77,210
<i>For households with more than eight members, \$7,840 for each additional member.</i>	

REMINDER: Heat Plus Rate Offers Winter Savings

ECI REC's Heat Plus rate will take effect October 1, 2020, and is available through May 31, 2021. Even with lower gas prices, our Heat Plus rate of **.0485 cents/kWh** remains a great value for members using primarily electric heating. Call 877-850-4343 or visit ecirec.coop to see if you qualify for the Heat Plus rate.

Your Support Can Help Influence Energy Policy

a Looking Out For You article

TODAY MORE THAN EVER, what is happening in Des Moines, Iowa, and Washington, D.C., can impact your cost of power and its reliability. Through political action committees (PACs), members can support the campaigns of those officials who have shown themselves supportive of our goals. Because it is illegal for cooperative funds to be contributed to election campaigns, these PACs rely on donations from cooperative employees, directors, and members like you.

The two PACs members can consider donating to are the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE), which sends funds to candidates for federal elections, and the Friends of Rural Electrification (FORE), which supports candidates running for state office. Sign up today by filling out the form below. 📄

Yes, I will support ACRE and FORE.

☐ I will make a one-time contribution of \$_____. My check is enclosed.

Make checks payable to REC Transmittal Account.

☐ I will contribute monthly. Please add \$_____ each month to my electric bill.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Account Number: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Outsmart Utility Scammers This Summer

a Safety guide



Photo credit: freestockphoto.com

Scammers are taking advantage of the confusion and uncertainty in our world and targeting consumers by phone, email, and text. These con artists claim to be from your local utility, and the caller ID or email address may even look legitimate. Consumers in good standing with their utilities are often caught off guard by the aggressive tone of these impersonators. The scammers will usually speak with a sense of urgency, ensuring customers do not have time to ask questions or verify their claims.

The best defense against a utility scammer is an educated consumer. Follow these tips from Utilities United Against Scams to protect yourself from a potential scam.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Never provide or confirm personal information (Social Security number, date of birth) or financial information (banking account information, debit or credit card information) to anyone initiating contact with you and claiming to be from your local electric cooperative. Never give out information or provide payment to callers or unexpected individual(s) appearing at your door, claiming to represent your cooperative. Your local cooperative will already have your relevant personal and account information.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Do not be rushed. If you receive a call, text, email, or visitor saying you have to pay your bill immediately to avoid disconnection, tell them you would like to verify they are a legitimate representative by calling a verified number for the cooperative office. Beware if a representative exhibits impatience, annoyance, or anger when you question their authority. While a scammer will discourage you from hanging up and calling the number on your utility bill, a real cooperative representative will encourage you to do so for your own peace of mind.

ALWAYS ASK QUESTIONS

Ask the person contacting you to provide your account number, your last payment amount, date of payment, and their employee identification number. If the person is a legitimate utility representative, this information will be readily accessible. If they will not answer your questions, hang up or shut the door, then call your utility directly to report the suspicious activity.

CONTACT YOUR UTILITY DIRECTLY

If you receive a suspicious call or visit, immediately contact the local police and your electric cooperative. Share details of the interaction, which might aid in a possible criminal investigation.

For more tips, download a free copy of the Consumer's Guide to Imposter Utility Scams at www.utilities-united.org. Remember, contact your local electric cooperative directly if you receive a suspicious call, text, email, or visit from someone claiming to represent the utility. 📄

Source: Director of Communications Erin Campbell, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. Published in *Living with Energy in Iowa* (July).

Questions or Complaints

ECI REC strives to provide you with the best service at the lowest possible cost. But sometimes you have questions regarding your electrical service or billing, or possibly a complaint. We would like to know. Please contact us! Our office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Local phone: 319-443-4343
Toll free: 877-850-4343
Fax: 319-443-4359
Email: ecirec@ecirec.coop
Mail: 2400 Bing Miller Lane,
PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345

If you have a complaint related to East-Central Iowa REC's service, rather than its rates, and the complaint is not resolved, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board.

Toll free: 877-565-4450
Fax: 515-725-7399
Email: customer@iub.iowa.gov
(in subject area, note customer service)
Mail: Customer Service, Iowa Utilities Board, 1375 Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Heating requires more energy than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42% of your energy bill. With proper equipment maintenance and upgrades like additional insulation and air sealing, you can save about 30% on your energy bill.

HARVEST SAFETY TIP

Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.



YOUR BOARD

Board District 1 - Jeff Elliott
(2020/2021 Vice President)

Board District 2 - Julie Kester

Board District 3 - Allen Albers

Board District 4 - Gary McKenna
(2020/2021 Asst. Secretary/Treasurer)

Board District 6 - Don Shonka

Board District 8 - Nick Donlea

Board District 9 - Steve Rau
(2020/2021 President)

Board District 10 - Ryan Kress
(2019/2020 Secretary/Treasurer)

CLASSIFIEDS: Free to members only

FOR SALE: Three-point hitch pig transport; several 4' tall steel gates in various lengths, prices negotiable. Urbana. Ph: 319-443-2228.

FOR SALE: John Deere 6600 combine (late model, hydrostatic, air conditioned, clean and in great condition—always kept in shed). \$3,500. 443 4-row corn head also available. Ph: 319-361-7721.

Please email your ad to classifieds@ecirec.coop. Ads for the Nov./Dec. Heartland Link must be received by Oct. 1, 2020.

East-Central Iowa REC will publish non-commercial advertisements as a service to our members. All ads are free. They may be submitted by any member or employee of East-Central Iowa REC. Ads should contain a phone number, name (if desired), a brief description of items with price if applicable. Each ad is limited to maximum of 50 words; please type or print clearly. Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad. No ads will be taken over the telephone—please email, mail, or bring your ad to the office.

RECare: How Members Support Members in Need

a Community Connected article

CONTRIBUTING TO RECare is one easy way to help others! The program distributes funds to low-income energy consumers in Benton and Buchanan Counties via community action agencies. Donations help pay these members' heating bills or weatherization costs. ECI REC would like to thank all the members who are giving to others in our communities. Even a small amount can help those less fortunate.

From July 2019 to June 2020, 64 members contributed to RECare through monthly contributions. Five members contributed via one-time donations. Members contributed \$6,145, an increase of \$370 from last period.

Help ECI REC exceed that number of participants in 2020–2021! To sign up for RECare or make a one-time donation, call 877-850-4343 or fill out and return the form on ecirec.coop under Account Services, Member Programs, RECare.



Heartland Link (USPS No. 313-160) is published bimonthly for \$3.30 per year by East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, 2400 Bing Miller Ln., Urbana, IA 52345-0248 with outposts located at 1707 First St. E. Independence, IA 50644 and 1600 West D. St., Vinton, IA 52349. Periodicals class postage paid at Independence, IA, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Heartland Link, 2400 Bing Miller Lane, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345.

Phone: (319) 443-4343
Ownership: East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative
Publisher: Teresa Floyd
Editor: Lisa Franck

East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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.

Members get connected at www.ecirec.coop



24-Hour Bill Pay With SmartHub
See account information at ecirec.coop or download the app.



Outage Center & Map
View current outages via SmartHub or at outages.ecirec.coop:81.



Online Forms
Access rebate, service request, and program sign-up forms.



Call Before You Dig
Notify utilities before you dig at www.iowaonecall.com or call 811.



Facebook
Find news and updates at facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec.



Co-op Connections®
Get discounts on everyday expenses. Visit www.connections.coop or download the mobile app.



Heartland Link E-Newsletter
Email ecirec@ecirec.coop and ask to receive our newsletter via email.



FREE Monthly Energy Tips
Sign up at www.myenergytips.com to get the Watts \$mart e-newsletter.



Iowa Rural Power
Join grassroots advocates for Iowa's electric cooperatives. Visit www.iaruralpower.org.



Message From CEO Teresa Floyd: Gratitude After the Storm

STRATEGIC PLANNING, the new 2021–2024 Work Plan, the cost of service study, and the 2021 budget—these were just a few things on my list for my first message to our members. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that six weeks into my new role as CEO I would be writing about a major outage that affected nearly half of our members and our distribution system. The devastation left behind by the derecho is hard to put into words.

I am humbled by the ECI REC team's unfailing loyalty and service to our members. It's just amazing how everyone pulled together and continues to push through to recover from the storm. I'd like to thank our team for their incredible hard work—they make my job easy, and I can always trust them to do what's right for our members. I am so thankful everyone returned safely to their families each night.

I'd also like to thank the mutual aid personnel from North West REC and Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, as well as the Highline Construction crews, who left their homes and families to help get our members back online. They were instrumental in speeding power restoration, as was our power supplier, CIPCO.

Finally, I'd like to thank our members for their patience and their efforts to only use power as they absolutely needed it. Thank you to those who have reached out with words of encouragement and gratitude—we share those messages with our crews, and they are much appreciated!