

● MARCH 2026

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Proudly powering you:
The heart behind your power**

Nominate a veteran

Pasta and pizza night recipes

Grundy County REC board elections ▶ See Page 5

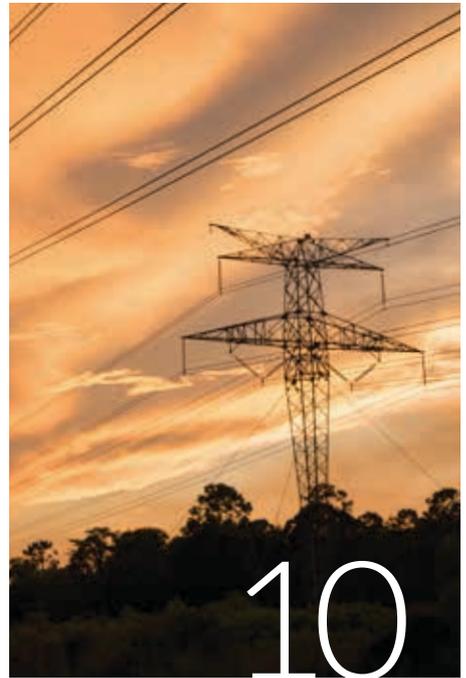
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Luckier than a four-leaf clover

EDITOR
Ann Foster Thelen

DESIGNERS
Megan Walters
Bree Glenn
Lorelai O'Hara

IAEC DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Erin Campbell

IAEC ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST
Cherie Moen

IAEC EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Leslie Kaufman

IAEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Kevin Wheeler, Access Energy Cooperative – NRECA Representative
Terry Sullivan, Corridor Energy Cooperative – Managers' Representative

Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine (ISSN: 2770-8683) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase **Iowa Electric Cooperative Living** is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

Editorial Office
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350.

Email Address
editor@ieclmagazine.com. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

Website
www.ieclmagazine.com

Postmaster
Send address changes to *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

Change of Address
Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Stacey Snyder, a Butler County REC member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES CHAMPION UTILITY WORKER SAFETY

BY JAY CEPERLEY



As we enter the month of March, Iowa's electric cooperatives are proud to recognize and celebrate the essential work of utility workers across our state.

Iowa Utility Worker Appreciation Day, observed each year on March 8, offers an important opportunity to honor the dedication, professionalism and service of the men and women who keep our communities connected, safe and reliably powered. These workers respond at all hours, often in hazardous conditions, to restore electricity and maintain the systems that power modern life. Their commitment ensures that Iowa families, farms and businesses receive dependable service every day.

A longstanding commitment to safety

Iowa's electric cooperatives have always maintained a strong and unwavering commitment to safety. This priority is deeply rooted in our mission of powering lives and informs how we serve our members, support our employees and protect the communities we operate in. We have consistently championed initiatives that improve the safety of Iowans, including hands-free driving legislation designed to reduce distracted driving, as well as the "Move Over, Slow Down" law, which requires motorists to move over and slow down when passing work vehicles on the roadside. These efforts reflect a broader goal: ensuring that not only utility workers, but all community members, can work and travel safely throughout our state.

With the 2026 Iowa Legislative Session fully underway, Iowa's electric cooperatives are actively engaged at the Capitol to ensure that our

members' voices are heard. Safety remains one of our highest priorities, shaping not only our daily operations but also our advocacy efforts.

Strengthening protections for utility workers

This year, our ongoing commitment to safety is reflected in new legislation proposed by Iowa's electric cooperatives that would increase penalties for individuals who threaten, harass or assault utility workers while they are performing their duties. Lineworkers are often required to enter unpredictable, high-risk environments to restore power, post for disconnection and trim vegetation. When they encounter hostile or aggressive behavior, the dangers they face increase significantly. Because Iowa law requires these workers to respond in such situations, they deserve the

strongest possible legal protections already given to other public servants like first responders, corrections officers and healthcare workers.

Regardless of the outcome of this year's legislation, Iowa's electric cooperatives will continue advocating for robust protections for utility workers. Our commitment to safety remains steadfast. These efforts reflect our longstanding mission: to champion safety, support our workforce and serve the best interests of the communities we proudly power.

Jay Ceperley is the advocacy coordinator for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



March 8 is
Iowa Utility Worker
Appreciation Day

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

WIN AN EMILE HENRY PIZZA STONE AND COOKBOOK!



Finished with Emile Henry's proprietary glaze, this 16-inch pizza stone produces perfectly crispy crusts. The piece withstands exceptionally high heat, so it can be used in the oven or on the grill. Plus, chef and author Alexandra Stafford showcases pizza in her latest cookbook. Each recipe focuses on seasonal ingredients and is paired with a complementary salad.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than March 31.

You must be a member of one of Iowa's electric cooperatives to win. There's no obligation associated with entering, we don't share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified.

The winner of the Ninja Crispi Air Fryer from the January issue was **Ray Netherton**, a **North West REC** member-consumer.

ENTER ONLINE BY MARCH 31!

PROUDLY POWERING YOU: THE HEART BEHIND YOUR POWER

BY MICHAEL GEERDES



March 6 is Employee Appreciation Day, and I'd like to take a moment to recognize something I believe is our greatest strength and

asset: our employees.

Most of our employees live right here in the communities we serve. Some may be your neighbors, your friends or even your family members. They shop in the same stores, serve and volunteer for the same organizations, attend the same school events and cheer on the same local teams – they take great pride in serving the communities they call home.

Electricity doesn't just "show up" or "happen." It takes dedicated employees



working behind the scenes and out in the field to deliver the safe, reliable and affordable electric service our members count on. They truly are the heart of this cooperative.

When storms roll through and the lights go out, our crews are often working long hours, sometimes overnight and in tough conditions, to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. Even on calm, sunny days, our team is working to maintain lines, inspect equipment, respond to any outages that may occur and plan improvements that help keep our system strong. They are also answering phones, assisting members, connecting new members, managing accounts, coordinating projects and handling the countless details that keep this cooperative running smoothly. They do it all with our members in mind.

Here at Grundy County REC, Employee Appreciation Day is a good reminder that while poles, wires, trucks and technology are important, it's the people – their training, commitment and care for our membership that truly keep our cooperative running.

On behalf of our board of directors and staff, thank you for the trust you place in us each and every day. On behalf of our employees, thank you for the kind words, patience and support you show, especially during challenging times; it truly means more than you know.

Please join me in recognizing and thanking the hardworking men and women who proudly power you here at Grundy County REC.

Michael Geerdes is the general manager for Grundy County REC.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

"Our mission is to provide our members safe, reliable, electric service"



Office: Grundy County REC
303 N Park Avenue • P.O. Box 39
Grundy Center, IA 50638

Phone: 319-824-5251

Fax: 319-824-3118

Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):
800-292-8989

Website: www.grundycountyrecia.com

Facebook: facebook.com/GrundyCountyREC

Email: mgeerdes@grundycountyrecia.org

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Call our office 24/7: 319-824-5251

General Manager: Michael Geerdes

Officers and Directors:

District 1: Kevin Pruisner
District 2: Norbert Boyle
District 3: Nick Strohhahn
District 4: Larry Rohach
District 5: Matt Kopriva
District 6: Roger Brown
District 7: Jason Paper

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DIRECTORS REPRESENT GRUNDY COUNTY REC AND MEMBERS IN DES MOINES

Grundy County REC Director Larry Rohach and Board President Kevin Pruisner joined more than 150 other co-op advocates in downtown Des Moines in January for the Legislative "Welcome Back" Reception at the start of the 91st Iowa General Assembly. At this event, they discussed priorities that impact the cooperative and its members face-to-face with state legislators, including Rep. Pat Grassley and Sen. Annette Sweeney.



GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR REC BOARD

Serving on the Grundy County REC board of directors means you're making a difference locally, using your talents and perspective to guide big decisions about the co-op that, in turn, benefit the larger community.

While day-to-day decisions are made by co-op staff, major decisions are made by the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the community it serves. On a granular level, our board members typically provide input and guidance on the following:

- Budgets
- Co-op goals and direction
- Co-op community and charitable contributions
- Capital investments and upgrades in equipment and technology
- Renewable investments and energy mix

- Co-op role and involvement in economic development
- Representation of our co-op and industry organizations at state, regional and national meetings

Board election details and timeline

Grundy County REC's board elections will be held at the September annual meeting. Additional information regarding qualification requirements, deadlines and other relevant information will be shared over the next few months.

What it means to serve

While you don't need to be an expert in electricity or business to run, you do need a passion for the community and a willingness to actively serve and learn. We're looking for individuals who can represent the full gamut of the members we serve.



District seats up for election in 2026:

District 4 – Currently filled by Larry Rohach

District 5 – Currently filled by Roger Brown

Our board meets on a regular basis, and we offer specialized training opportunities to help board members make informed decisions. Board members gain a deeper understanding of the electric utility industry, the cooperative business model and local economic development efforts.

To learn more about the cooperative's director election process and 2026 details, please contact Allyson Miller at amiller@grundycountyrecia.org. See below for official election information.

**Appointments will be shared via mass email and on the cooperative's Facebook page and website.*



ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION: ANNUAL DIRECTOR ELECTION PROCESS

ARTICLE IX

SECTION 1. The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Board of seven (7) directors who must be members of the Association.

SECTION 2. (a) The territory served or to be served by the Cooperative shall be divided into seven (7) districts, each of which shall contain as nearly as possible the same number of members and shall be composed of one or more contiguous townships. Each district shall be represented by one (1) Board Member. (The district breakdowns are available at the cooperative headquarters; members can request a printed or emailed copy.)

(b) Not less than one hundred twenty (120) days before the Annual Meeting of the members at which meeting, Board Members are to be elected, the Board should review the composition of the seven districts and, if it would find inequalities in representation, which could be corrected by a redelineation in the districts, the Board should reconstitute the districts so that each shall contain as nearly as possible, the same number of members.

(c) The Nominating Committee shall be appointed not less than sixty (60) days or more than one hundred eighty (180) days prior to the Annual Meeting. Such Nominating Committee shall be composed of those Directors of the

Cooperative whose terms expire one (1) year after the Annual Meeting for which nomination of candidates for Directors are being made and other members of the Cooperative who shall be appointed by the President of the Board of Directors. The members appointed by the President of the Board of Directors shall be members of the districts for which Directors shall be elected at the current Annual Meeting. Each nominee for Director shall be a voting member who resides in the district for which a Director is being elected at the current Annual Meeting and shall meet the qualifications for becoming or remaining a Director.

The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of nominees identifying each candidate by name, address, and the Director district in which they reside. The Nominating Committee shall make a good faith effort to nominate two (2) candidates for each Director position to be filled. In the event the Committee is unable to identify two (2) candidates for each position who consent to be nominated, the Committee may nominate only one (1) candidate for the position. The written list of nominations of the Nominating Committee shall be posted at the office of the Association not less than thirty (30) days prior to mailing the notice of the Annual Meeting of members. For ten (10) days after posting of the list of nominations

by the committee, additional nominations of members residing in the district of the vacancy may be made by written petition on forms provided on request of any member and signed by not less than fifteen (15) members of the Association. Any member nominated shall give prior consent to such nomination whether by committee or petition.

The notice of the Annual Meeting of members shall list the names of all nominees for the office of Director.

(d) At each regular Annual Meeting, a number of Directors equal to the number of

Directors whose terms expire at the time of such Meeting shall be elected to hold office for the term of three (3) years, and until their respective successors shall have been elected and qualified.

(e) The election of Directors shall be by ballot.

(f) Each voting member of the Cooperative present at the Annual Meeting shall be entitled to vote for one (1) candidate in each district from which Directors are to be elected at the Annual Meeting. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes in each District at the Annual Meeting shall be considered elected as a Board Member for that district.

A NATIONAL VIEW WITH LOCAL ROOTS

BY ANN FOSTER THELEN



Mike Partin
President of the
National Rural
Electric Cooperative
Association



Leslie Kaufman
Executive Vice President
and General Manager of
the Iowa Association
of Electric Cooperatives

In 2025, Mike Partin was elected president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). He began working for the members of Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative in central Tennessee in 1998, has served as CEO since 2015 and has represented Tennessee on the NRECA board of directors since 2019. NRECA is the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives across the U.S.

During the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' (IAEC) annual meeting in December, Partin sat

down with Leslie Kaufman, IAEC executive vice president and general manager, to discuss important energy topics. More than 375 Iowa cooperative leaders and directors were in attendance to engage in the discussion. We are pleased to share a snapshot of the discussion with *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* readers.

Leslie Kaufman: Mike, you serve as both president of NRECA and CEO of your local electric cooperative. Why is it so important for cooperative leaders to be involved at the state, regional and national levels?

Mike Partin: Engagement matters because this industry is changing fast. Whether you're a director or a staff member, you don't come to the table just to hear reports. You come to make a difference. If we think we're on an island as one cooperative, we're doing our members a disservice. The best ideas come from learning what other cooperatives are facing and how they're responding. Electric cooperatives serve nearly 60% of the nation's landmass, and

rural areas, including places like Iowa, are growing. To stay ahead, we have to lean into leadership, training and collaboration. That's how we remain drivers of innovation in our communities.

Kaufman: As you travel across the country, what common challenges or trends are you hearing about from electric cooperatives?

Partin: One big issue is data centers. They're moving into rural America, and that creates opportunity but also risk. We need to have reliable energy capacity to serve those loads. A key question is also how to serve that load without shifting costs onto existing members. Those agreements must be structured carefully.

Cybersecurity is another growing concern. A decade ago, we weren't talking about ransomware. Now it's a real threat. On the East Coast, some cooperatives recently went into major storms unable to access their systems and maps because of cyberattacks. That's something no cooperative can afford.

Workforce development is also a top priority. How do we recruit, train and retain good people, especially as experienced workers retire and younger employees come in with different expectations?

Kaufman: From an advocacy standpoint, what are the top priorities for NRECA right now?

Partin: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reform is at the top of the list. The system is broken. Currently, cooperatives can wait five or six years for reimbursement after a major disaster, forcing them to borrow just to stay afloat. That's not sustainable.

We're pushing legislation that would require FEMA to act within 120 days and reimburse interest if delays continue. Of the 435 congressional districts, 433 experienced a disaster declaration in the last decade, so this issue affects everyone, including Iowa. That's why cooperative leaders are actively talking with their elected officials and helping move this forward.

Kaufman: You stepped into the NRECA presidency during a new presidential administration. How does that affect the way NRECA operates in Washington, D.C.?

Partin: One of the biggest challenges is policy whiplash. Our industry, especially generation and transmission cooperatives, makes 60- to 80-year investments, but national energy policy often swings dramatically from

one administration to the next. That uncertainty makes planning harder.

What we're seeing now is more recognition that electricity is foundational. Data centers, manufacturing and national defense all depend on reliable, baseload (24/7) power. Energy security is national security. That understanding gives us a chance to push for policies that support an all-of-the-above approach to generation and faster permitting for needed infrastructure.

Kaufman: You've talked about some powerful moments you've experienced in leadership. Is there one that really stands out?

Partin: One that still gives me goosebumps is seeing lights come on for the first time in a village in Guatemala through the electric cooperative international program. Walking up a ridge at night and seeing that village lit up reminds you of why this work through the NRECA International Program matters.

Another moment was being at the White House and seeing one of my linemen standing behind the President of the U.S. No matter your politics, that's a powerful reminder that the people who keep the lights on matter.



Scan the QR code to learn how Iowa's electric cooperatives support international electrification.

Kaufman: Partnerships are critical in Washington. Who are some of the key allies cooperatives work with?

Partin: Depending on the issue, we partner with municipal utilities, investor-owned utilities, farm organizations like Farm Bureau and homebuilders. Strategic alliances help open doors and amplify our voice. For three years running, NRECA has been named the most effective trade association in Washington, D.C., but that effectiveness comes from collaboration. Relationships matter.

Kaufman: From a CEO perspective, what keeps you up at night?

Partin: Safety, without question. We know how to build lines and restore power, but keeping employees safe is the responsibility that weighs heaviest. Am I doing enough? Am I setting the right tone? Am I leading by example?

That concern doesn't change when I put on my national hat. Whether at the local or national level, leadership means making sure people go home safe at the end of the day.

Kaufman: With all the challenges facing the industry, what gives you hope?

Partin: The people. When I attend director trainings or emerging leader programs, I see how committed electric cooperative folks are. They all "signed up" to make a difference.

This is not a stale industry. There's innovation everywhere, from technology to workforce development to global electrification. I truly believe there's never been a more exciting time to be part of America's electric cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives were founded to power possibility, and that mission continues today, from Iowa's rural communities to villages halfway around the world. As Partin reminded attendees, the cooperative model works because it puts people first and because leaders are willing to step up, engage and shape the future together.

Ann Foster Thelen is the editor of Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine.





RASPBERRY-CHIPOTLE BARBECUE CHICKEN PIZZA

- 1 thin ready-made pizza crust
- ¼ cup red raspberry preserves or jelly
- ¼ cup hickory smoke flavored barbecue sauce
- ¼ teaspoon ground chipotle chili powder
- 6 ounces chicken, cooked and cubed
- 2-3 tablespoons onion, chopped
- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Place pizza crust on a pizza pan. Mix preserves, barbecue sauce and chili powder. Spread mixture evenly over dough. Top with chicken, onion and cheese. Bake at 425 degrees F for 12-20 minutes, until cheese is melted and pizza crust edges are golden brown. Raspberry preserves can be substituted with Concord grape jelly. *Serves 4, two pieces per person*

Mary Grossman • Carroll
Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative

SPINACH AND CHICKEN PESTO PIZZA

- 1 ready-to-serve, 12-14-inch pizza crust
- 2-3 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup pesto
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach leaves, washed
- 1 cup chicken, cooked and diced
- ¼ cup roasted red bell peppers, chopped and drained
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- hot pepper flakes, to taste

Place pizza crust on an ungreased pizza pan and brush the edges with olive oil. Spoon pesto onto the middle and spread evenly out to the crust. Top with mozzarella, spinach, chicken, red bell peppers, garlic salt and hot pepper flakes. Bake at 425 degrees F for 10-12 minutes, or until crust is golden brown. *Yield: 6 servings*

MacKenzie Rutter • Ankeny
Consumers Energy

TOMATO AND FETA BAKED PASTA

- 12 ounces rigatoni pasta, cooked and drained
- 1½ cups ham, chopped
- 4 large plum tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup feta cheese
- 2 cups mozzarella cheese
- 1½ teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 cup half and half
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste

Place cooked pasta in a buttered 9x13-inch dish. Mix ham, tomatoes, cheese and thyme. Spread over pasta, then pour half and half over top. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover with foil and bake at 375 degrees F for 20 minutes. Stir and continue baking 40 minutes longer. *Serves 6*

Hana Hartter • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

GOAT CHEESE MUSHROOM PASTA

- 1 8-ounce box of your favorite pasta
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ red onion, diced
- 1 package baby bella mushrooms, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 4 ounces plain goat cheese, cubed
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon rosemary
- 1 teaspoon thyme

Boil noodles until al dente. While boiling, place a pan on medium heat, add olive oil and onion. Cook until translucent, then add mushrooms. As the mushrooms soften, add garlic and sauté for another 30 seconds. Place the goat cheese in the pan and add heavy cream. Add rosemary and thyme. Once goat cheese is combined with the cream to create a smooth sauce, toss drained noodles into the pan and coat. *Serves 3-4*

Monika Olmstead • Huxley
Consumers Energy



Visit www.ieclmagazine.com and search our online archive of hundreds of recipes in various categories.

UPSIDE DOWN PIZZA

- 1½ pounds ground beef, pork or turkey
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- optional vegetables: mushrooms, onion or green pepper (chopped)
- pepperoni
- 1 16-ounce jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups mozzarella cheese
- Parmesan cheese

Brown meat with salt, pepper and optional vegetables. When the meat is cooked, drain fat. Mix the meat with pepperoni and spaghetti sauce. Add mixture into a 9x13-inch baking dish. Mix together flour, eggs, milk and oil into a pizza dough. Sprinkle the mozzarella cheese on meat mixture in baking dish then top with dough. Finally add parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 degrees F for 1 hour. *Yield: 12 servings*

Judy Jackson • Hedrick
Access Energy Cooperative

SALMON PASTA

- 1 12- or 16-ounce salmon filet
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ package Gustare Vita tagliatelle (8 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon salted butter
- 1 cup yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup white wine
- ⅓ cup sundried tomato paste
- 1 12.5-ounce jar alfredo sauce
- fresh basil, optional for garnish

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place salmon on prepared baking sheet. Pat salmon dry with paper towel. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and paprika. Bake at 425 degrees F for 4-6 minutes per half inch thickness, until 145 degrees F and salmon flakes easily with fork. Meanwhile, cook tagliatelle according to package directions in a large pot of boiling salted water. Drain, reserving ½ cup pasta water. Return pasta to the pot and keep warm. Heat a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add butter and sauté onion until translucent. Add garlic and cook about 30 seconds, until fragrant. Pour in wine and simmer until reduced by half. Stir in sundried tomato paste and alfredo sauce. Cook until heated through. Add sauce to cooked pasta and toss until coated. If sauce is too thick, add reserved pasta water until desired consistency. Flake salmon into large pieces and gently stir into pasta. Garnish with fresh basil if desired. *Serves 4*

Pam Dick • Dexter
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

CHICKEN ORZO

- 2 chicken breasts
- salt
- black pepper
- paprika
- onion powder
- red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1½ cups orzo pasta
- 1 16-ounce can chicken broth
- spinach leaves, to taste
- splash heavy cream
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan

Cut chicken into large serving size pieces and add seasonings to taste. Sear chicken on both sides in medium skillet, then lower heat and add butter. Cover and continue until cooked through. Remove chicken and brown garlic and onion in the drippings. Add orzo, allow to toast while stirring. Add chicken broth, spinach and heavy cream. Stir slowly on medium heat while distributing all evenly. Add chicken and cook on low until orzo is done and all flavors have permeated throughout. Serve topped with parmesan cheese. *Serves 4*

Marilyn Alferts • Neola
Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative

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Deadline is March 31

I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream! We're looking for your favorite **ice cream recipes** - anything from homemade blends to desserts with ice cream or tasty toppings. Selected submission will appear in our July issue to celebrate National Ice Cream Month. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name, recipe category and number of servings on all submissions.



EMAIL: recipes@ieclmagazine.com

MAIL: Recipes

Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48
Des Moines, IA 50322

POWER PLAYERS OF THE GRID

BY ANTHONY BUCKLEY

Transmission lines move enormous amounts of electricity efficiently across regions.
Photo Source: NRECA

Every time you flip a switch, you're connecting to one of the most complex systems ever built, also known as the North American electric grid. Often called the largest interconnected machine in the world, this network spans the U.S., Canada and parts of Mexico. It includes thousands of generators, hundreds of thousands of miles of transmission lines and millions of miles of distribution power lines all working together to keep the lights on day and night.

But how does electricity actually get from a power plant to your home? And where do electric cooperatives fit in? Let's break it down.

The U.S. electric grid has three major components: generators, transmission and distribution. Each plays a critical role in delivering electricity where and when it is needed.

Generators: Making the power

In the U.S., most power plants produce electricity by burning fossil fuels or by harnessing renewable resources like solar, wind and water. To ensure

that enough electricity is generated to keep the lights on at an affordable price, two main structures exist.

The first is a "vertically integrated" model, where in some regions, a single utility owns everything from power plants to power lines and delivers electricity directly to consumers.

In other areas, a second model is used. Instead of one company making and delivering power, many companies sell electricity in a competitive market. Utilities buy electricity from these generators and deliver it to consumers like you. In this model, a group called a regional transmission operator (RTO) or independent system operator (ISO) helps keep everything running smoothly. They make sure enough power is available every second of the day. This system is called a wholesale market, and it lets utilities buy extra power when they need it.

Most electric cooperatives don't own large power plants. Instead, they purchase power through long-term contracts, wholesale markets or from

their generation and transmission cooperative (G&T), a member-owned utility that serves multiple co-ops in a designated region. G&T cooperatives are owned by distribution co-ops like yours. There are 64 G&T cooperatives across the U.S., and they often own power plants and transmission lines. G&Ts also plan for the future by investing in new generation sources, building infrastructure and integrating renewables, all while staying true to the cooperative model: member-focused, not profit-driven.

Once electricity is generated, it doesn't stay at the power plant. It begins a long journey to reach homes, farms and businesses. Power must travel across regions to where it's needed most, and that's where the transmission system comes in. These high-voltage lines act like energy superhighways, moving electricity efficiently over hundreds of miles before it's stepped down for local distribution and, ultimately, for the devices you use every day.

Transmission: The energy superhighway

Transmission lines move enormous amounts of electricity efficiently across regions. Most distribution co-ops don't own these transmission lines, but they rely on their G&T cooperative to handle this part of the journey. G&Ts make sure power gets from the plant to your local co-op.

However, the electricity carried by transmission lines cannot be used as is because the voltage levels are too high. That's the job of the distribution network, which is the final step that brings power to your lights, appliances and devices.

Distribution: The last mile

The distribution network is the "last mile" segment of the electric grid and delivers generated energy

from the transmission network to consumers. The high-voltage power from transmission lines is converted to lower voltages that home appliances, electric vehicles and personal devices can use. This is where your electric cooperative comes in to keep local lines maintained and power flowing to members 24/7.

Understanding how power moves from generation to your home helps explain why reliability and affordability depend on teamwork and collaboration between your local co-op, its G&T partners and the broader grid. Together, co-ops are preparing for tomorrow's challenges, so you can count on safe, reliable power for years to come.

Anthony Buckley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

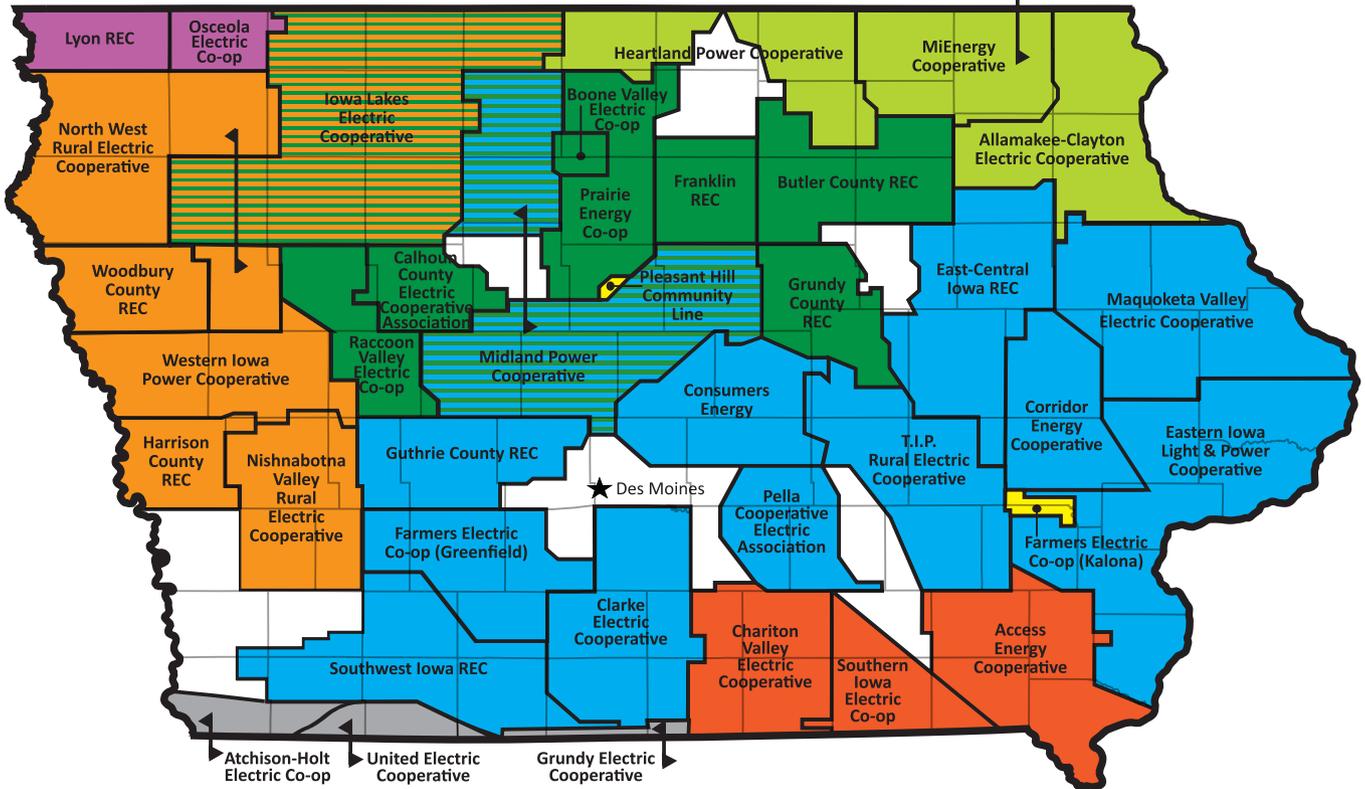


The complex electric grid includes thousands of generators, hundreds of thousands of miles of transmission lines and millions of miles of distribution power lines all working together to keep the lights on day and night. Photo Source: NRECA



Your local electric co-op maintains distribution power lines to keep electricity flowing to members 24/7. Photo Source: Dairyland Power

Electric Distribution Cooperative Members of IAEC:



Generation & Transmission Cooperative Members of IAEC:

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- N.W. Electric Power Cooperative / wholesale power from Associated Electric Co-op
- Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative / wholesale power from Associated Electric Co-op
- Corn Belt Power Cooperative / wholesale power from Basin Electric Co-op
- L & O Power Cooperative / wholesale power from Basin Electric Co-op
- Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative / wholesale power from Basin Electric Co-op



HELP US PREVENT BURNED UTILITY POLE DAMAGE

BY ERIK FREESE

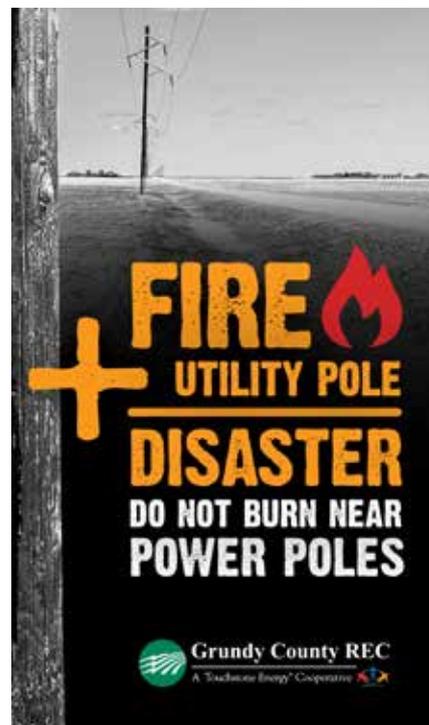
We understand that controlled burns can be an important part of vegetation management.

However, leaving fields and ditches unattended during this process is extremely dangerous and can result in utility poles being damaged or burnt and power disruptions for you, your neighbors and fellow members.

Last year, Grundy County REC had numerous instances where poles were damaged or burnt, in what appears to be controlled burning incidents. Replacing utility poles, cleaning oil spills from damaged transformers and repairing underground service wires are necessary to restore power. This damage caused unnecessary outages and costly repairs.

- 1** **Make yourself aware of laws and regulations.** Only those who are experienced with fire and burn paths should conduct one.
- 2** **Take special note of nearby utility poles and lines.** Burning a utility pole could cause a widespread power outage and be costly for the individual responsible for the fire.
- 3** **Properly prepare the controlled burn area first.** Trim grass and weeds and soak the area near the poles with water beforehand. This will help prevent fires from encroaching. Be careful to keep water streams out of power lines.
- 4** **Contact Grundy County REC and 911 if a utility pole catches on fire.**

Erik Freese is the operations manager at Grundy County REC.



NOMINATE A VETERAN SUBMISSION DETAILS

Veteran's name:

Veteran's service address:

Grundy County REC account #
(if known):

Veteran's phone #:

Veteran's email (if available):

NOMINATE A VETERAN

Do you know a veteran or are you a veteran and a Grundy County REC member? The co-op is looking for veterans in our service territory to be entered into a drawing to receive an American flag and flagpole, installed by the Veteran Flagpole Initiative at no cost.

This initiative is near and dear to Grundy County REC First Class Lineman Derek Snakenberg's heart. Derek is an active volunteer with this organization and ran a day of RAGBRAI last year to help raise funds and awareness along the route, while assisting with multiple installs.

"Installing a flagpole seems like such an easy way to give back to our veterans but being a part of the experience and seeing the impact, you can see the meaning behind it is anything but small," he shared. "It's my way of honoring the sacrifice, pride and unwavering commitment of



those who gave so much for each and every one of us. Every flagpole we install, every flag that is raised, shows that their service is seen, remembered and appreciated."

The winner will be randomly selected on March 30; all other entries will be submitted to the Veteran Flagpole Initiative database.

GRUNDY COUNTY REC: THEN AND NOW

What's the significance of March 24? That day in 1938 marks when the first home was energized on our lines, a home first known as the Charlie Weakland farm. This photo was taken in 1961 for a marketing brochure, with the following quote: "It marked the beginning of a quiet revolution in farm life, for it ended the drudgery of farming and homemaking."



From the very first energized home to now proudly serving nearly 1,900 members, our dedication to the members of Grundy County REC is stronger than ever. We are proud of where we came from and excited to continue powering you into the future.

CUT THAT PAPER CLUTTER

Receive a one-time \$5 bill credit when you sign up for paperless billing on SmartHub!



Busy with spring cleaning? Cut the paper clutter and switch to paperless billing with Grundy County REC.

Questions? Call 319-824-5251 or visit www.grundycountyrecia.com

**Large commercial accounts not eligible. One bill credit per member, not per billing account.*

Energy Trail Tour 2026

Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) and Corn Belt Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer.

This three-day adventure will allow you to experience, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are then returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Enjoy interactive walking tours through a hydroelectric and coal-fired energy generation facility and other stops along the way. Meet other cooperative member-owners while traveling together across the Dakotas onboard a motorcoach bound for the North Dakota's Energy Loop. Two lucky couples from Grundy County REC will be selected at random from those who sign up.

YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip.

Our first and second choice of dates:

June 24-26 1st 2nd
 July 8-10 1st 2nd (please circle)

I/we have have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person _____

Second Person _____

Address _____

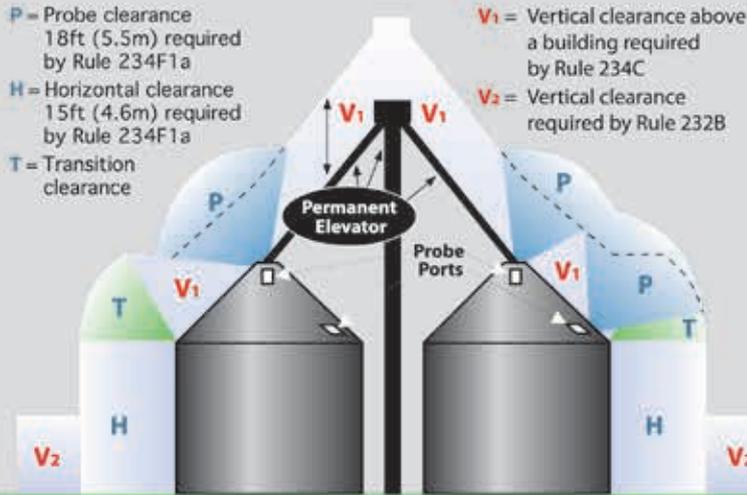
City _____

Phone _____

Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by April 17, 2026.

* There is no cost to the member, and lodging in Le Mars will be arranged for the day prior to trip departure.

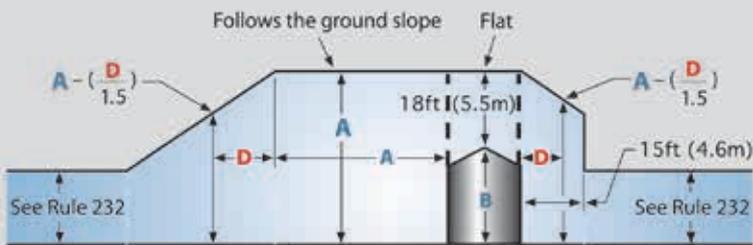
Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by permanently installed augers, conveyors or elevators



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

ELEVATION



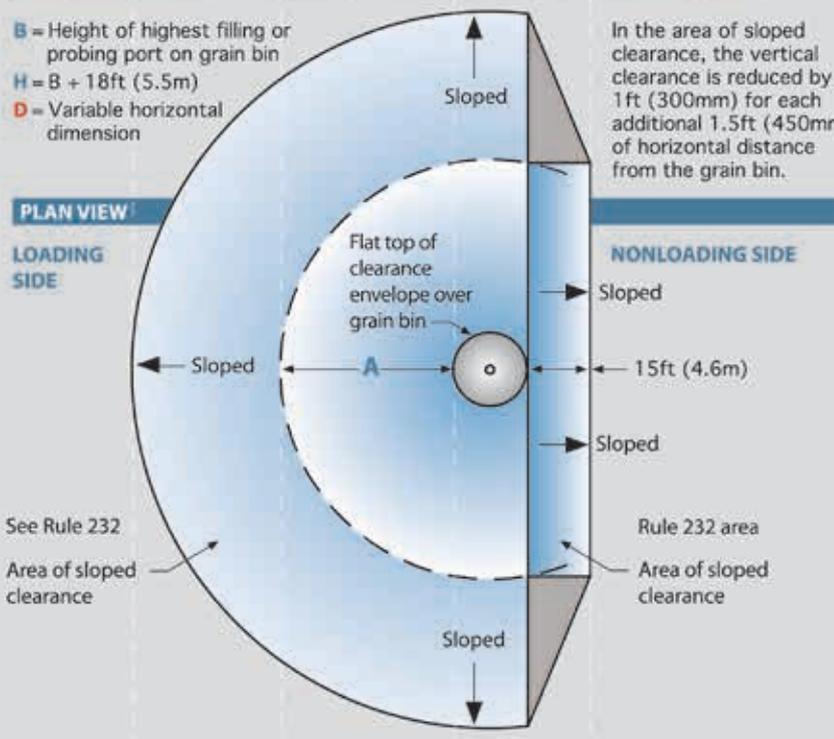
- B** = Height of highest filling or probing port on grain bin
- H** = B + 18ft (5.5m)
- D** = Variable horizontal dimension

In the area of sloped clearance, the vertical clearance is reduced by 1ft (300mm) for each additional 1.5ft (450mm) of horizontal distance from the grain bin.

PLAN VIEW

LOADING SIDE

NONLOADING SIDE



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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, but your co-op's policies may be more restrictive. 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 your electric co-op for help.

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 graphical.

LUCKIER THAN A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

March is a time to celebrate all things Irish, including proverbs like “a good friend is like a four-leaf clover; hard to find and lucky to have.”

I’ve been thinking about the clubs that have thrived in Iowa’s small towns and rural neighborhoods, like the Friendly Club my grandma and mom belonged to. While many of those clubs are memories now, I was lucky to be a guest at Carol Hardy’s home in Lohrville for the January meeting of the Adaza Thursday Club.

My friend Lou Blanchfield tipped me off that the club is 100 years old. I asked how one becomes a member. “Your mother-in-law invites you!” joked Lou, noting that her mother-in-law Margaret’s grandmother was a charter member.

True to the club’s name, members still gather on the first Thursday of the month in each other’s homes. Their club has even outlived Adaza itself.

Keeping Adaza alive in spirit

Adaza’s story began in 1881. Around this time, the railroad put in a stub track southeast of the new Calhoun County town of Lohrville, at a little spot called Cottonwood. When a landowner named Captain Albert Head stepped off the train in 1882, he looked at Cottonwood and said, “Ain’t it a daisy?”

That offhand comment transformed Cottonwood into Adaza, which grew to include general stores, a grain elevator, creamery, hotel, blacksmith, bank, lumberyard, post office, school and two churches.

Adaza started fading by the 1920s. The Methodist Episcopal Church disbanded in 1924. Undeterred, a group of ladies met at Ruth Baldrige’s home on Aug. 6, 1925, and created the Adaza Thursday Club. They elected club officers, set dues at 25 cents a year, and established roll calls and programs for upcoming meetings.



A recent meeting of the Adaza Thursday Club at Carol Hardy’s home in Lohrville.

Through the decades, club members also hosted picnics, wedding showers and baby showers with skits and plenty of homemade food. New members were advised to wash their windows and bleach their porch steps before hosting club. For many years, Irene Rossmanith, followed by Pat Schmitt, dutifully recorded the club’s activities, submitting this Adaza news to local newspapers.

The club endured, even as Adaza dwindled to a ghost town. By 1981, dues were \$2 a year – “still a bargain for nine or 10 get-togethers with friends and neighbors,” noted “The History and Memories of Adaza: 1881-1981.”

Still gathering, still connected

While many of those friends and neighbors are gone, the ties that bind are strong. Jane (Hardy) Beschorner, Marty (Guess) Hennesy and her sister Ann (Guess) Gemberling, are second-generation club members. Most members today reside in a 10-mile radius of Adaza.

Dues (\$5 a year) are donated to food pantries, the high school after-prom party or flowers for club members who are ill. While members still enjoy refreshments at meetings, gone are the ornate glass snack-set trays that every good hostess used back in the day.

Sometimes this fun bunch schedules field trips to area orchards, wineries



A Maple Bacon Onion Cheese Dip was served at the meeting (recipe pictured below).



or the local care center, where they visit club member Barb Winkelman, who’s almost 99.

Other times the ladies get crafty. A few years ago, they had a jewelry-making workshop to transform Swarovski crystals into earrings and necklaces. The crystals were extras from the chandeliers at the renovated Community Memorial Building in Lake City. Club members donated the jewelry to support fundraisers for this historic gem.

Newer members like Marilyn Parker appreciate how the club helps them get to know more people. All the members treasure their deep friendships – gifts that are hard to find and lucky to have. “It’s fun, and we like each other,” said Jane Beschorner. “Why wouldn’t we keep getting together?”

Were there any clubs like this in your neighborhood? Share your stories with me at yettergirl@yahoo.com.

Darcy Dougherty Maulsby lives near her family’s Century Farm northwest of Lake City. Visit her at www.darcymaulsby.com.



Scan the QR code for the Maple Bacon Onion Cheese Dip recipe pictured above.

Visit our website at www.grundycountyrecia.com



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WE HAVE MEMBERS
WE
ACTIVELY
LIVE
OUR COMMITMENT



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