

Please don't post items on utility poles

Signs, balloons, and other materials on utility poles are more than just an unpleasant eyesore; they can be dangerous—even life threatening—to the professionals who maintain our vital lines of electricity, communication, and other services. Butler County REC urges everyone to help keep utility poles free of such materials.

The clamped safety boots used by line workers to climb poles are vulnerable to becoming snagged on staples and nails embedded in posts. Foreign objects can also tear utility workers' protective clothing, which is the first line of protection from an electric shock. These can also injure workers despite the safety gear they wear to avoid contact with rough surfaces.

Posting items to power poles can also be a public safety hazard. The materials posted on the poles not only distract people as they drive, but they also degrade the quality, effectiveness, and stability of the wood. Posting items to utility poles is usually a violation of local ordinances as well.

It is also just as important to avoid tampering with or disrupting the guy wires that surround utility poles. Please inform children not to play or swing on guy wires, and maintain your distance when performing yard work. If you see the poles or guy wires are disrupted in some way, please call Butler County REC immediately.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Linda Cuvelier, New Hartford, who won a \$25 bill credit from *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine when her recipe for rhubarb punch was published in the May 2020 issue.



Consider sending your favorite recipe to *Living with Energy in Iowa*. If yours is chosen, you will earn a \$25 power bill credit. Page 9 of every issue details how to submit your recipe either by email or by mail to the magazine's headquarters.

If you're looking for a new recipe, visit livingwithenergyiniowa.com, click on Recipe Archive at the top and search by main ingredient and/or category.

Let's get cooking!



Years of service awarded

Employee longevity is important for business continuity and member service. At a recent Butler County REC employee/safety meeting, five employees were recognized for their years of service to the cooperative and its members.

Pictured left to right: Jane Bradley, executive assistant, 35 years; Mike Boomgarden, energy services advisor, 30 years; Gary Doehrmann, accountant, 10 years; and Lori Beach, financial accountant, 25 years. Not pictured: Ben Bowman, crew chief, 15 years.

Thank you for your dedication!

We're here to help you save

Your electric cooperative is here for you with information and ideas to help you save energy and money.

Summer is a great time to conduct an energy assessment of your home and identify ways to boost energy efficiency. Understanding how your home uses energy can help you determine the best ways to modify energy use and keep more money in your wallet.

An energy assessment is one of the best ways to determine how energy efficient your home is—and can help you identify areas for potential energy savings. Try ENERGY STAR®'s online assessment. Visit energystar.gov, then enter "home energy yardstick" in the search box to get started. Or, you can contact us to conduct an assessment.

Another way to save is to shift

some of your daily chores such as running the dishwasher or doing laundry during off-peak hours (when people are using less electricity). By doing so, you may see meaningful savings on your energy bills.

Or, if you have a furnace, use your programmable thermostat to adjust the settings so that your heating and air conditioning systems sync with the off-peak rate periods. You can also use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters, and other appliances in the same way. Be sure to program the timers to coincide with the less expensive off-peak times.



And finally, if you are in the market for a new appliance, look for the ENERGY-STAR® label on the Energy Guide to be able to take advantage of your electric cooperative's rebates.

As your trusted energy advisor, we're here to help. If you have questions about your bill or additional ways to save energy, please let us know. We're only one click or phone call away.

Attending Farm Progress Show?

Visit the Rural Electric Cooperatives of Iowa at Lot 10S to enter in prize drawings, learn about electric safety and energy efficiency, and more!

September 1 - 3 • Boone, Iowa

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 

Visit us at Farm Progress Show

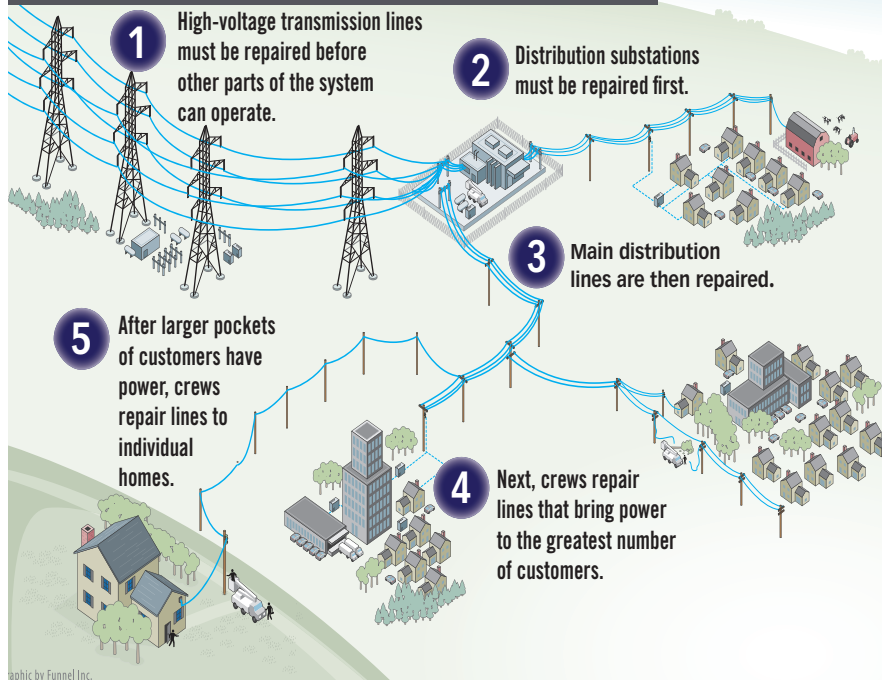
The Farm Progress Show, our nation's leading outdoor farm show, will be in Boone Sept. 1–3, and we want to see you there.

Stop by to learn how to be safe around electricity, improve energy efficiency, and much more. Members are encouraged to register for prizes, ask questions of co-op staff, and watch a high-voltage safety demonstration!

Hosted in Iowa every two years, this major agricultural event gives visitors the opportunity to see the latest equipment, seed, crop chemicals, field demonstrations, livestock handling, equine events, rural life programs, entertainment, arts and crafts, and more.

The 2020 show will be held at the Central Iowa Expo at 1827 217th Street in Boone, Iowa. Learn more at www.farmprogressshow.com. We look forward to seeing you!

How line crews restore power



Understanding power outages

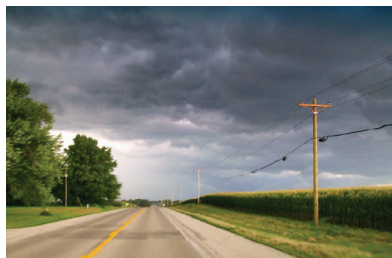
While your electric cooperative does everything it can to reduce the possibility of outages to your home or business, they do occur. There are a variety of reasons power outages can occur, including severe storms, tree limbs coming into contact with power lines, vehicles crashing into utility poles, and animals causing short circuits while climbing electrical equipment.

The number one focus of your cooperative is public safety. This means crews will clear lines and equipment that could pose safety hazards to the public. Next, they will turn their attention to power generation facilities that generate the actual electricity that powers your home or business. After that come the transmission line and substation equipment repairs. Then, we will focus on distribution lines and tap lines that provide power to homes or businesses, and then connections to individual members.

What can YOU do to keep your family safe? We suggest you:

- Call us immediately.
- Use safe alternative food preparations. A barbecue grill is an excellent way to prepare food. Always grill outside.
- Have a storm kit (with items like flashlights, battery-operated radio, batteries, and first-aid supplies) prepared.
- Turn off electrical appliances and unplug major electronics. Power sometimes comes back in surges, which can damage electronics. Leave one light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes and then turn on other appliances and equipment—one at a time.

For more information, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Feel a shock? Swim away from the dock

We want to help keep the fun in water recreation activities so we are sharing the message, “If you feel a shock, swim away from the dock,” to educate people on how to stay safe from a hidden hazard called electric shock drowning (ESD).

Outdated wiring and a lack of proper safety equipment on boats and docks can cause situations where electricity “leaks” into the water. It’s a particularly dangerous hazard because it’s impossible to tell by sight if the water is energized. According to the Electric Shock Drowning Prevention Association, most ESD deaths have occurred in public and private marinas and docks.

Safe Electricity recommends that individuals do not swim around docks with electrical equipment or boats plugged into shore power. If you are in the water and feel electric current, shout to let others know, try to stay upright, tuck your legs up to make yourself smaller and swim away from anything that could be energized. Do not head to boat or dock ladders to get out.

If you see someone who you suspect is getting shocked, do not immediately jump in to save them. Throw them a float, turn off the shore power connection at the meter base, and/or unplug shore power cords. Try to eliminate the source of electricity as quickly as possible; then call for help.

Board allocates \$993,580.67 in margins

One of the benefits of being a member of Butler County REC is that you share in the excess margins in the form of patronage dividends. Your cooperative exists to serve you, not to make a profit.

After reviewing the operating revenues for 2019, your board of directors approved to set aside \$993,580.67 in excess margins. These margins will be used to help keep your electric cooperative financially sound and the quality of service as high as possible. The funds are also used to retire debt and build equity in our distribution system.

Your portion

Your portion, or allocation, of the 2019 margins was listed in the

box directly below your name on the June 2020 electric bill for May's usage. If you had more than one account in 2019, the total unretired patronage for all of your accounts was included.

The amount you earn in a given year is based upon the amount of electricity you use. The sum of your bills for the year is multiplied by a percentage to determine your allocation.

Your payment

Butler County REC is currently on a 19-year payback schedule. If we remain on this schedule, this allocation will likely be paid in 2038. The latest payback of patronage was in February 2020, when \$1,023,699.39 was returned to those who were members in 2001 and Corn Belt Power Coop-



erative's portion of 2018.

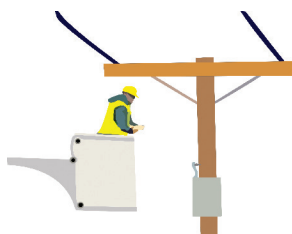
Your address

Be sure to contact us if you move out of our service territory and no longer receive electrical service from Butler County REC.

It is important to keep your address current with us so that we can return your allocation when the time comes.

Do You Know... How many miles of line our crews maintain?

Your Butler County REC line crews maintain 1,825 miles of line—the distance from our headquarters in Allison to Los Angeles, California!



Don't let summer heat spoil family fun

Even as restaurants start to reopen and take-out food is available everywhere, home is where the cookouts happen.

Moving dinner outdoors is a great way to save energy in the summer.

Firing up a charcoal grill uses zero electricity. Other ways to keep energy bills down at dinnertime:

Get creative with cold side dishes. Learn how to make gazpacho, colorful salads that mix fruit with raw veggies, and dips featuring avocados, garbanzo beans, or tomato bases.

Grill veggies outdoors rather than steaming them on the stove. Asparagus; corn-on-cob; and skewers of mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, and zucchini all taste better in the summer when they're grilled.

Make potato salad or pasta salad in large batches. That way, you only have to boil the ingredients on the stovetop once for a supply that can last over several dinners.

Skip the baking. Order fresh bread and desserts from a nearby bakery to show your support for local businesses and keep your oven closed for the season.



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