

Attention: High school juniors

The Iowa Youth Tour is an all-expense paid trip that takes high school students to Washington, D. C. every June. Approximately 40 students participate, chosen by their local electric cooperatives from across the state of Iowa.



Butler County REC will select one student from its service area to participate in the 2021 Iowa Youth Tour. High school juniors whose parents are Butler County REC members or residents of Aplington, Fairbank, Fredericksburg, or Readlyn are invited to apply for the 2021 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., to be held June 21-26.

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 Youth Tour was not held. Therefore, many students chosen for the 2020 Youth Tour will also attend in 2021.

In addition, the top three students who apply and interview for the Youth Tour during their junior year of high school will be offered a \$500 college scholarship. For more information, contact Anne Sesker at anne@butlerrec.coop or 319-267-2726 or 888-267-2726.

*Butler County REC
is genuinely
thankful for you.*

*We truly enjoy serv-
ing you, and we hope
your Thanksgiving
is filled with love,
laughter,
and gratitude!*

 **Butler County REC**
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Shop locally to support your neighbors and community

One of the biggest casualties of the pandemic is the locally owned small business. But you can do your part this holiday season to help them stay in business. Here's how:

- **Stop ordering everything from e-commerce.** Check on Main Street for businesses that sell the same items you buy online. They may even take online and telephone orders. Buy your holiday gifts, decorations, and food from locals.
- **Go to farmer's markets.** Many of them stayed open during the pandemic, and now is the time to repay the favor. Some are allowing customers to pre-order. How great would a fresh turkey from a local farm taste during your Thanksgiving feast? What could be better than fresh, locally grown vegetables as side dishes and pies homemade by someone with a business right down the street from your home?
- **Shop for the holidays and beyond.** As long as you're shopping, think about the birthday and anniversary gifts you'll need over the next year—and buy them now. That way, you'll give some local businesses a boost when they need it the most. Plus, you'll be prepared when it's time to wrap those gifts later.
- **Invest in gift cards.** Buying gift cards now to spend once the economy improves infuses your favorite small business with cash at a time when it might be cash-strapped. You would spend the money anyway; why not do it in advance?
- **Order carry-out.** Start buying your morning coffee from a local café instead of from a national chain store. Pick up carry-out from a locally owned diner a little more often than you ordinarily would.
- **Write a review.** Get on Yelp and on the website of your favorite businesses and give positive feedback. Online reviews go a long way toward attracting customers.



Five electrical safety features to be thankful for

Let's take a moment to be thankful for some of the devices that help make our daily tasks safer and more convenient.

For your safety: Built-in devices

1. GFCIs: Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are inexpensive electrical devices installed where electrical circuits may come into contact with water.
2. AFCIs: Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are found within your electrical panel or wall receptacles. An arc fault is a dangerous electrical problem caused by damaged, overheated, or stressed electrical wiring or devices.
3. Circuit breakers: These boxes prevent electrical injuries and fires. Each box is filled with circuit breakers designed to shut off, stopping the flow of electricity.

Use them safely: Convenience items

1. Device chargers: Treat charging components with care and use them correctly.
 - Personal electronic devices should not be placed under pillows or used on or underneath bedding.
 - Do not leave cords plugged in when not charging a device. If a child or pet put the cord in their mouth, they could be burned or shocked.
 - Do not leave cords around when not in use. A toddler might try to insert the wrong end into an electrical outlet resulting in a burn or shock.
 - Do not use charging devices near water or in damp conditions.
2. Extension cords and multi-outlet power strips: Use only as a temporary fix.
 - Plug them directly into an outlet.
 - If you are using a strip or extension cord outside, make sure it is rated for outdoor use.
 - Never use a cord that feels hot or is damaged.
 - Make sure cords and strips are approved by a reputable independent testing laboratory like Underwriters Laboratory.
 - Make sure the cord and appliance wattage ratings match.



Inspect your cords, and replace them if they are damaged.



**Our office will be closed
Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27,
for the Thanksgiving holiday.
If you have an emergency or an outage,
don't hesitate to call us.
Our phones are answered 24/7.**

Scholarships Available



Corn Belt Power Cooperative partners with **Northwest Iowa Community College** in Sheldon, Iowa, to offer four \$500 scholarships. Recipients may be either first- or second-year students at Northwest Iowa Community College studying in the programs of Electrical Technology, Powerline, or Powerline Technology. Students must maintain a 2.5 minimum GPA. Applications must be filed with Northwest Iowa Community College Foundation by March 1, 2021. For an application or more information, contact Sheila Van Engen, foundation secretary, 800-352-4907 ext. 246 or svanengen@nwicc.edu.

Corn Belt Power also partners with **Iowa Lakes Community College** to offer one \$500 scholarship. To qualify, the recipient must be enrolled in the Wind Energy and Turbine Technology program, a first- or second-year student at Iowa Lakes Community College, maintain 2.5 minimum GPA, and be an Iowa resident. For an application or more information, contact Alison Mason, Institutional Advancement manager, 712-362-0491 ext. 4491 or amason@iowalakes.edu. Applications are due by March 1, 2021.



Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives

The power of human connections[®]

Giving back to our community

Over the years, you've probably heard or read about our concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart.

While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission—to be a catalyst for good.

You're probably aware of our Youth Tour program, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action.

We also have a strong commitment to safety—not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. Our newsletter and social media channels frequently include safety information.

In addition, your cooperative invests in the economic development of our communities through our United States Department of Agriculture loan and grant programs.

You'll also see our employees serving on local boards, coaching youth sports, and volunteering at charitable events. Because when you work at a co-op, you understand the importance of a strong community.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on; but our passion is our community. We live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you—whether to provide energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or to discuss payment plan options—please reach out to us.



Brighten your holidays

It's time to deck the halls with LED holiday lights and decorations! Receive \$2 for each LED-lighted item you purchase (not to exceed purchase price).

Contact us for more information and a rebate form.

Don't bake up high energy bills

Avoid high energy bills and long cook times by following a few oven-efficiency guidelines this holiday season:

- Prepare and chop all ingredients before you turn on your oven.
- Consider using a smaller appliance to reheat or cook small portions.
- Preheat the oven to the exact temperature required. Preheating is not necessary for foods that cook for several hours.
- Leave the oven door shut as much as possible.
- When picking out cookware, brass, glass, and ceramic versions conduct heat more efficiently than other materials, reducing cooking times.
- Regularly clean and maintain your kitchen appliances and cookware.
- More is less. If possible, prepare extra portions of your meal and cook them together. Reheating leftovers uses much less energy than cooking from scratch!

Be a Smart Cookie Holiday Baking Tips

If you're planning to cook feasts or create treats this holiday season, follow these basic safety tips:

Test Smoke Detectors

Make sure they're working properly



Watch Your Sleeves

This is not a good time for loose sleeves

Put a Lid on it

Have lids handy in case of a grease fire



Old Things Don't Become New

Don't use appliances in disrepair

How the Cookie Crumbles

Consider having a fire extinguisher on hand



Where There's Heat There Could Be Fire

Keep flammables such as pot holders away from the stove

Not Child's Play

Keep children and pets away from cooking areas



Keeping Time

Use a timer when the oven or stove is on

Stay With it

Don't leave the room if you are broiling, frying or simmering food



Pay Attention

Take a nap after the feast

Considering solar?

Butler County REC members thinking about investing in solar panels for your home or small business are encouraged to talk to us at the beginning of the process.

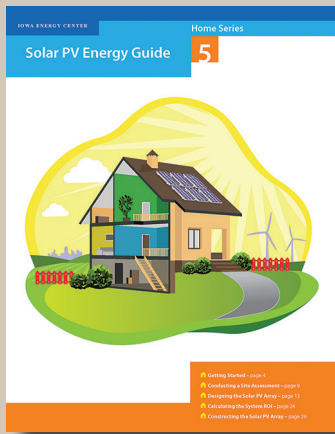
We can help you understand:

- Rate structures
- Compensation for excess generation
- Interconnection requirements
- Other vital aspects of operating a solar system

We are a member of Iowa Choice Renewables and can help you make the best decision about your energy needs.

To get started, call Butler County REC and ask for Matt Mahoney, energy services manager.

Be sure to check our website at butlerrec.coop, too. Soon we will have updated solar information to make the process even easier!



Ask us for a copy of the Solar PV Energy Guide from the Iowa Energy Center.



Preparing for the big hunt? Remember electrical safety, too

As you prepare for hunting season, think about electrical safety along with general hunting safety.

Butler County REC reminds hunting enthusiasts of these electrical safety tips:

- Familiarize yourself with the area before heading out to hunt. Take note of power lines and equipment, especially when hunting in densely wooded areas.
- Observe all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when scouting out a location for your tree stand.
- Do not use power poles to support a tree stand.
- Do not locate a tree stand near a power line or pole.
- Be in the habit of looking up and out for power lines, and do not come within 10 feet of an overhead line or pole when setting up or taking down a stand.
- Never climb a utility pole.

In addition, do not shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers, or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: those who get within 50 feet of the downed line could be shocked or electrocuted.

Please report any damage to a line or other related equipment to us so that we can address it. Although we perform routine maintenance, damage may not be noticed for weeks or months unless an outage occurs due to the vast amount of lines that cover our service area.

Of course, always take the time to observe general hunting safety measures as well. Stay safe out there!



Approximately 1,000 deaths occur each year in the United States as a result of electrical injuries.

Safe Electricity.org

Source: The National Institutes of Health.

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