



TrinityRail Maintenance Services update

Work continues on the infrastructure for TrinityRail Maintenance Services at our Butler Logistics Park west of Shell Rock. In these photos, our crews, along with Corn Belt Power Cooperative crews, worked to string line for the permanent electrical service. In addition, fencing was installed surrounding the new substation that will serve the business. TrinityRail Maintenance Services anticipates beginning operations in September.

Lighting rebates available

If you are considering upgrading the lighting in your home or structure to LED lighting, remember that Butler County REC offers rebates:



- **LED bulbs:** 50% of cost, up to \$2/bulb
- **LED fixtures:** 50% of cost, up to \$6/fixture

These rebates are for retrofit only, not new homes or structures.

In addition, we also offer commercial lighting rebates. If you have a shop on your property or own a business on REC lines, please call Matt or Mike to learn how we can help with rebates: 319-267-2726.

Your next water heater

Thinking about your next water heater? We have the answer.

The Marathon water heater is durable, lightweight, and offers a limited lifetime tank warranty for the original purchaser.

Butler County REC offers Rheem Marathon water heaters at reduced prices to members.

Look no further than your cooperative for your next water heater. Call us today at 319-267-2726.

Marathon
WATER HEATERS



Model	Retail Cost	Member Rebate *	Member Cost**
50 gallon - tall or short	\$1,025	\$626	\$399
85 gallon - heavy duty	\$1,396	\$997	\$399
105 gallon - heavy duty	\$1,566	\$1,017	\$549

*Load control receiver (LCR) will be installed on the unit. Rebated cost dependent on installation of LCR. We will resume installations once it is safe to enter members' homes following the pandemic.

**Plus tax applied to the retail cost.

New homes or replacing gas water heater: 50- and 85-gallon units—members pay tax only; 105-gallon unit—members pay \$250, plus retail tax. Rebates cannot exceed the purchase price of the unit. Contact our Energy Efficiency Department for more information.



Manage your controlled burn

It's called a controlled burn for a reason. If you don't plan your controlled burn and keep it in check, it can quickly spread.

If you are considering implementing a controlled burn (also known as a prescribed fire) to address vegetation or weed management, be sure to follow several precautions to stay safe:

1. Plan your burn.
2. Check with your city hall; notify your local fire department; let your neighbors know your plans.
3. Obtain all necessary permits.
4. Check the weather conditions, such as wind direction, speed, and humidity (relative humidity should be 40 percent or higher).
5. Clear all vegetation and weeds at least four feet around the base of any nearby power poles.
6. Wet the base of poles with water before beginning your burn.

Proper planning can decrease the chances of burning a utility pole.

Fire damage to a power pole is usually evident by blackening and scorch marks, but even slight discoloration can cause serious problems. Sometimes the poles burn from the inside out, and the damage is not immediately apparent.

If you don't take the time to plan ahead, your controlled burn could get expensive. The person who causes damage to a utility pole is responsible for the fees associated with replacing it.

To inquire about controlled burns near power lines and poles, contact your electric cooperative.

FARM SAFETY

EQUIPMENT REACH

Make sure EVERYONE is trained on safe practices around electricity. Utilize these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.

- Know the dimensions of any far-reaching equipment, such as chemical sprayers, tillage equipment, other extensions or augers.
- Machinery extension dimensions include length when extended horizontally and upright for transport.
- Always use the lowest (shortest) setting for extensions when moving loads.
- These power-line safety principles also apply to arms, booms, truck beds, ladders and other items or mechanisms that extend, lift, or are far reaching.

If your equipment does hit a power line, pole, or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



Safe
Electricity.org

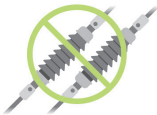


ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



Take notice of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.



Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.



Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.



Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.



Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.



Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.

Make your voice heard

Did you know that if you don't vote, you're not only missing the opportunity to support a candidate that shares your views and concerns, but you're allowing others to chart a course that impacts your future? That's why we're encouraging all members to recognize National Voter Registration Day on September 22, 2020.

Your vision, your vote

All elections are critical. While a presidential election impacts our nation, local elections have a direct impact on your community and on your quality of life.

At every level, elections represent who we are as a community, and more importantly, where we want to go. Your vision for the community is tied to your vote.

This includes cooperative board elections. Your board members provide strategic guidance on the direction of the co-op and how it serves the community. Local board members embody the voice and identity of the community.

Staying in sync with the community

The co-op board's role is governance. While day-to-day decisions are made by our employees, bigger decisions are made by the board.

We depend on you and your neighbors to vote in board elections so that we can stay on course and ensure that we are in sync with the members that we serve.

A strong voter turnout shows investment in the community and ensures that a diverse number of views are represented. The whole community benefits when more people participate in the process.

The act of voting demonstrates your support for the community and helps officials chart a course for the future. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Research candidates, learn about issues that are on the ballot, and get out and vote!

To learn more about National Voter Registration Day, visit nationalvoterregistrationday.org.



September 22, 2020

Converting your home to a smart one: Is it worth it?

A "smart home," or even a semi-smart one, can help make our chores less time consuming and more fun.

Smart houses boast a number of interconnected devices and home appliances, and performance is often more efficient than the owner-operated type. This can save money.

Smart home automation allows you to program a variety of items. If all your devices are interconnected, you can orchestrate them from one place, such as on your tablet or cell phone. And if you have voice-assisted technology, you can just use your words.

There are ways to increase a home's "smartness." Examples include installing smart thermostats; gadgets that track energy use such as individual smart plugs or whole-house monitoring trackers; and smart lighting that includes motion sensors, many with phone app controls.

Smart appliances and devices can save money because in many cases they allow you to use less energy. They're also convenient, fun to use, and can give you peace of mind. In short, some may be worth it in the long run.



Options for converting

- **Smart thermostats** usually cost in the \$200 to \$300 range. With an estimated energy cost savings of around 10 percent, this smart device could pay for itself in just a year or two.
- **Smart plugs** allow you to plug in an appliance and track its energy use. They cost around \$30 to \$50 and let you remotely control an appliance or gadget.
- **Smart lighting** allows you to take advantage of higher tech motion sensors and dimmers, which means using less energy to light your home.
- **Smart bulbs** help save money because they are internet-capable LED bulbs, allowing lighting to be controlled remotely. This enables you to turn them off from your phone, if you are away and realize they are on.

Your power is out. Now what?

Losing power can be frustrating. But knowing what to do can take away some of the frustration. First, even if our office is closed, call us. Our after-hours answering service, Security and Response Services (SRS), will answer. SRS is a 24-hour dispatching service provided by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, N.D.

How the process works

To report a power outage after hours, always call the same phone number you would during our business hours: 319-267-2726 or 888-267-2726. You will need to have either the phone number on your REC account or your meter number on hand. When your call is answered, you will hear an automated message thanking you for calling Butler County REC. You will then hear the following:

- **If you are calling to report an electrical outage, press 1.** You will be asked to enter the phone number on your account or meter number to report the outage and if your neighbors are out of power. You may also be asked if you have checked your breakers. SRS will then ask you to stay on the phone while your records are checked. Please note that:

If you have multiple meters and entered your phone number to report the outage, SRS's automated service will ask you to enter the meter number associated with the outage.

At any time during this process, you can press 0 to speak to an agent. You can then use your physical address, account number, map location number, or meter number to report the outage.

Whether you have one or multiple meters, SRS may need additional information. If this is the situation, you will be asked to respond by pressing a number that provides SRS with the information or to be transferred to an agent.

- **If you want to make a payment, press 2.** You will be automatically transferred to our free, 24-hour, secure Pay-by-Phone service. You will need either the primary phone number listed on your Butler County REC account or your Butler County REC account number. Also, you will need the last four digits of the Social Security number listed on your Butler County REC account.
- **For all other calls, press 0.** If you press 0, your call will be answered by an agent and remember, you can then report your outage using your physical address, account number, map location number, or meter number.

Please contact our office if you have any questions or want to verify your phone number or the meter number on your account.

Where can you find your meter number?



Account #		116.49
Map Location		-116.49
Service Desc.		0.00
Previous Bill Amount		0.00
Payment Received		162.35
Bill Adj-Deposit-Penalty		
Balance Forward		162.35
Current Charges	09/06/2017	162.35
Amount Due		164.79
Past Due After	09/28/2017	Pay
FARM/RESIDENTIAL		
NEW READING	08/31/17	35659
PRIOR READING	08/01/17	903
USAGE MULTIPLIER	1	23.75
USAGE	800 KWH @ \$.13930 111.44
FACILITY CHARGE	103 KWH @ \$.10500 10.82

Every account has a nine-digit meter number, which can be found on your electric bill and on the meter serving your property.



During a power outage, follow these safety procedures:

- Use flashlights, not candles, which can start a fire if you drop one.
- Keep your refrigerator door closed. Your food will stay cold for four hours; a closed freezer will stay cold up to two days.
- Dress in layers indoors when it's cold outside and your heater has stopped.
- Never heat your house with the oven or a charcoal grill. See if a family member or friend can take you in temporarily.
- Unplug appliances and electronics in case of a sudden power surge.

INtouch is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative
521 North Main • PO Box 98 • Allison, IA 50602
PHONES: 319.267.2726 or 888.267.2726 • FAX: 319.267.2566
OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
WEBSITE: www.butlerrec.coop • E-MAIL: butler@butlerrec.coop
Craig Codner, CEO • EDITOR: Anne Sesker, CCC

Follow us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/bcrec

smart choices

Sign up for our e-newsletter at www.butlerrec.coop