

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

April 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Annual message to members

From Duane Rieckenberg, board president, and Craig Codner, CEO

When our members consider all that has changed since 1936, the year Butler County REC was founded to supply power to rural homes, we want you to remember one constant—the cooperative's commitment to you, our members. That commitment is the basis for all of our decisions.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Your board of directors elected to return \$1,213,691.29 in patronage to members and allocate \$1,692,154.42 to keep the cooperative financially sound. We are proud to return excess margins to our members to demonstrate part of the cooperative difference.

In addition, we were able to implement a negative Energy Cost Adjustment (ECA) for our members, another indication of financial stability.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT

Our commitment to the communities we serve, and beyond, includes our USDA loan programs. In 2021, we loaned funds to Butler-Grundy Development Alliance, Allison, for a land purchase; Farm Bureau, Clarksville, for a building purchase; and Sarge's Distillery, LLC, Fredericksburg, for a startup business.

Butler Logistics Park continues to grow and we look forward to continuing to participate in the park's success. Shell Rock Soy Processing is in the midst of building their facility, while others look toward expansion.

SYSTEM COMMITMENT

Building and maintaining our system is important to provide power

continuity for our members.

Through the Construction Work Plan, line crews rebuilt 11.23 miles of line. In addition, they built or rebuilt 4.84 miles of line through work orders, installed 1.12 miles

of underground line, completed 190 work orders, and set 494 poles.

In 2021, your board approved a new metering system to be installed in 2022 that will make it easier for you to track your usage; receive usage information every 15 minutes in SmartHub, rather than the current 24 hours; and provide you more accurate and reliable information. In addition, our line crews will be able to isolate and respond more quickly to outages. We are excited for the possibilities with the new system.

EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

The employees of Butler County REC not only say that safety is our top priority, we live it. We received top ratings for our Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program audit from the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) and were named one of the top two cooperatives in the state for safety. In addition, our employees had another year of no-lost time accidents.

Two employees are enjoying retirement after a lengthy career with Butler County REC. Tom Wubbena, crew chief, retired after 43 years of service to our members, and Mike



Duane Rieckenberg,
board president



Craig Codner, CEO

Boomgarden, energy services advisor, after 31 years.

We welcomed two new employees in 2021. Bryce Bruns, apprentice lineman, and Tyler Opperman, energy services advisor, joined our cooperative family.

Three employees also celebrated 25 years of service. Craig Codner, CEO; John Groen, GIS coordinator; and Lori Roose, accounting clerk, were honored at the IAEC annual meeting.

Volunteering time and donating funds are important to the employees and your board. Eight employees donated 760 hours to their communities and funding and items were donated to almost 60 organizations, including \$1,400 to our Charity of the Year—Royal Family KIDS Camp, Sumner. Our Charity of the Year funding included employee donations of \$550. Employees also donated hats, mittens, and scarves to Cedar Valley Friends of the Family, Waverly, and food to the Waverly food pantry.

Message cont'd on back page



Lineworkers go above and beyond.

Lineworker Appreciation Day: Monday, April 11

They are our heroes in hard hats--leaving family gatherings, working in the freezing cold and sweltering heat, and going to work in the middle of the night. THANK YOU, LINEWORKERS, for restoring power in all types of circumstances. We appreciate you!



Beware of warm-weather scammers

Springtime is scam season. If you need work done around your house, visit the website of the Iowa agency responsible for licensing contractors (<https://bit.ly/3tEsDXt>) or join a contractor referral network that recommends only contractors who are licensed, insured, bonded, and experienced.

A few other tips:

- Be wary of contractors with out-of-state license plates or detachable, magnetic company signs on their trucks.
- Do not pay in cash, and do not pay up front.
- Get bids from three reputable companies before you start.
- Don't fall for: "I just finished a job at your neighbor's house and I'll give you a good price if you hire me today because I'm already in the neighborhood" or "I have leftover materials from a job and I'll sell/install them here for a discount."

Hiring contractors can be expensive. Don't waste your money on one who's not licensed and legitimate.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative encourages you to **MOVE OVER AND SLOW DOWN** when you approach a vehicle with flashers on.

Let's make sure everyone arrives safely!



MOVE OVER SLOW DOWN

RECare MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

Butler County REC has traditionally extended a helping hand to those needing it. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members.



RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

RECare Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$_____ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will make a one-time contribution of \$_____ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

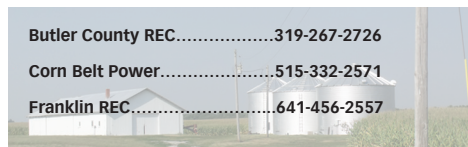
Account Number _____

Return to Butler County REC, 521 N. Main St., PO Box 98, Allison, IA 50602

Grain bin requirements

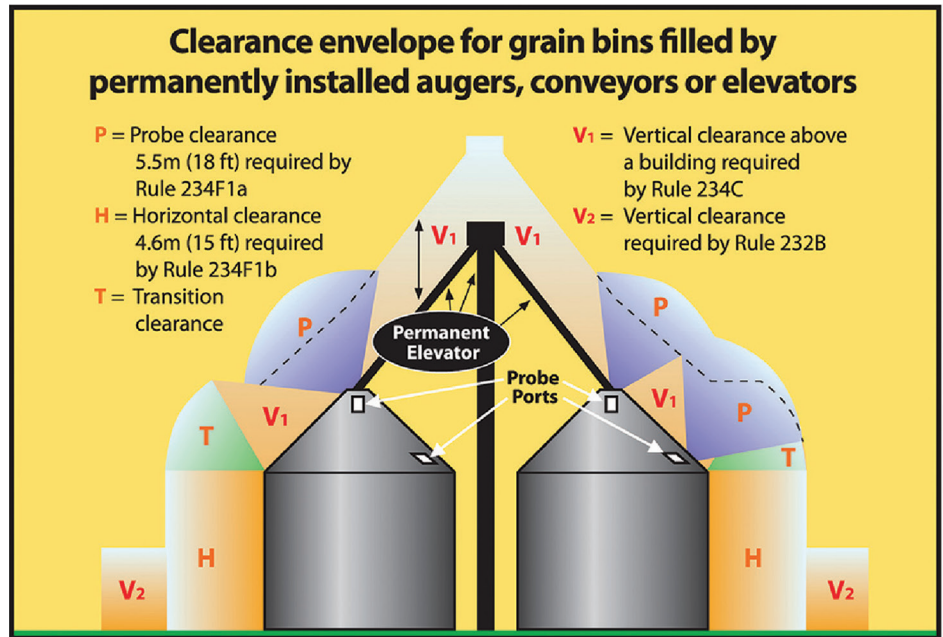
When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact your electric cooperative. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

The drawings at the right show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact your cooperative listed here.

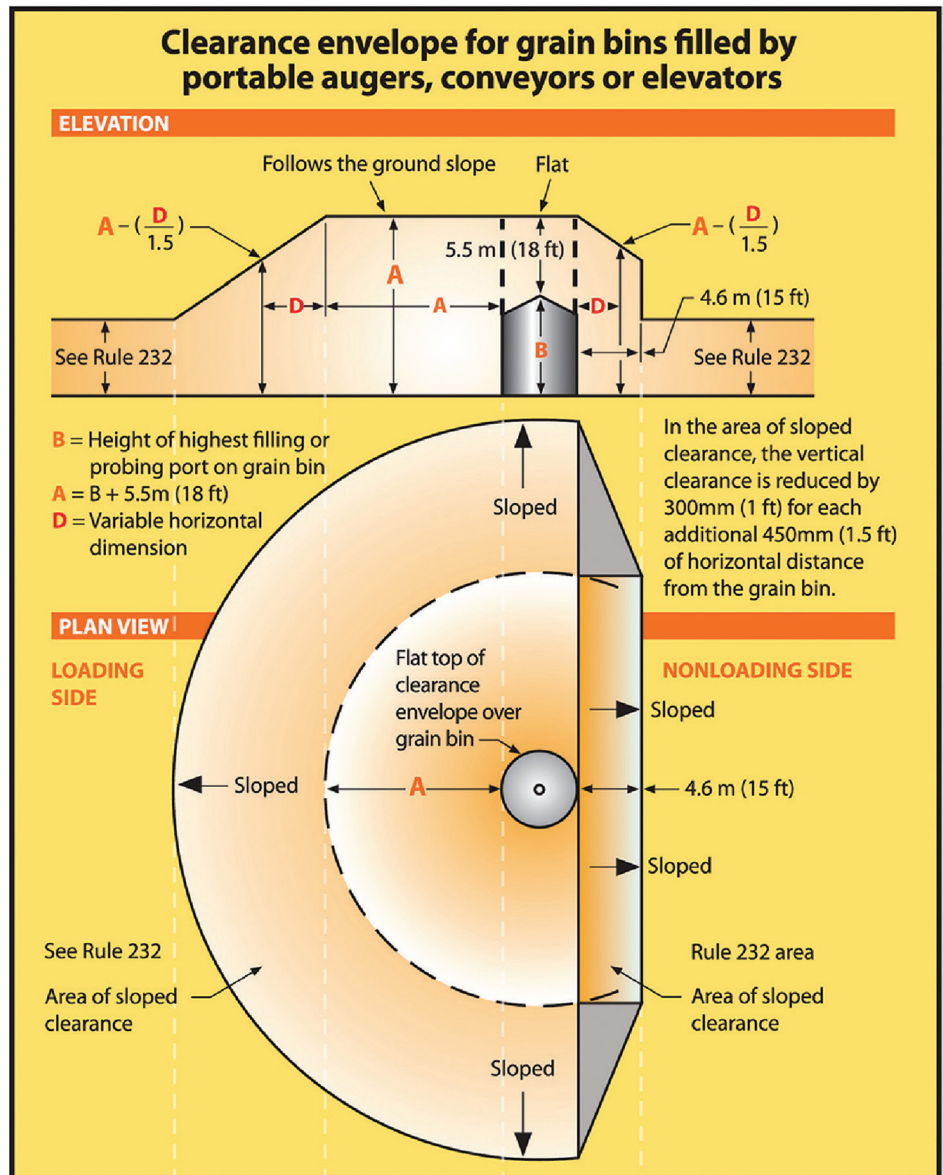


According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2017 "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 September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (The Iowa Utilities Board has adopted this language.)

Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 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 for damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



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BOARD COMMITMENT

As a cooperative member, your voice translates into action. We encourage you to become involved in your cooperative—vote for your board of directors or consider being a nominee for upcoming elections in your area.

Nine of your fellow community members are seated on the Butler County REC board, and it is important that the directors are educated on a number of topics. To aid in that edu-

cation, directors participate in leadership development courses and receive certification through our national organization, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Each of your board members holds certifications from NRECA. Last year, Allyn Harms, Clarksville, received his Director Gold credential, requiring previous certifications and additional credits. Steve Boevers, Readlyn, also earned his board leadership certificate this past year.

Longevity on the board is important, as well. Director Gerald Schmitt has served eight terms on the board

and also received his 25-year service award at the IAEC annual meeting.

In 2022, we are excited to announce that we will be holding member appreciation events. Watch for more information in your InTouch newsletter and on Facebook and our website for the gatherings to take place later this year.

The board and employees of Butler County REC are committed to serving the membership, as evidenced by how decisions are made—always with you in mind. We look forward to continuing this tradition in 2022 and beyond.

Mulder awarded \$1,000 Basin scholarship

Congratulations to Elena Mulder, a senior at Aplington-Parkersburg High School, Parkersburg, for being chosen as Butler County REC's \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship recipient!

Mulder plans to attend Iowa State University, Ames, to major in child, family, and adult services; minor in religious studies; and earn a leadership certificate. Her hope is to pursue a career in counseling, with a long-term goal of owning her own practice or working in a clinic or school.

Upon receiving the award, Mulder said, "Thank you so much for providing this substantial amount of money through a scholarship to aid my college education this upcoming fall at Iowa State University. I am so grateful for having this opportunity to apply and also represent your business in this way!"

Elena has been very active in school events, church, and community organizations. She is the daughter of Carla and Gaylen Mulder.



Best of luck, Elena!

Directors continue education

Highly competent and committed directors who are experienced and educated are valued members on any board. At Butler County REC, we're pleased that board members Tim Schrage, secretary; Steve Boevers; and Gerald Schmitt have demonstrated their commitment by continuing their education beyond the typical requirements of board members.

Schrage of Allison and Schmitt of Rockford earned their Director Gold Renewal Certificates from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), while Boevers of Readlyn earned his Board Leadership Certificate.



(L to R) Tim Schrage, Steve Boevers, and Gerald Schmitt

Congratulations and thank you for your dedication to our members!

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 Gardiner, CCC

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