

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

February 2023

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Nominating committee selects board candidates

The nominating committee of Butler County REC, duly appointed by the board of directors and consisting of Mark Wust, Tom Bjelica, and Matthew Miller, met Jan. 5, 2023. They nominated the cooperative members listed below for the office of director for the ensuing term of three years each. The election will take place at the business-only annual meeting to be held Saturday, April 1, at the North Butler Elementary School in Allison.

To represent the west half of Floyd County

- Gerald Schmitt (incumbent), Rockford

To represent the east half of Floyd County

- Grant Greenzweig, Charles City
- Sean Fox, Charles City

To represent the northwest quarter of Butler County

- Tim Schrage (incumbent), Allison
- John Ebensberger, Greene

Candidate information and mail-in ballots will be mailed to members at the beginning of March. In addition, candidate information will also be available online at butlerrec.coop.

Mail-in ballots will be due at the cooperative office no later than 3:30 p.m. Friday, March 31, 2023.



Left to right: Tom Bjelica, Mark Wust, Matthew Miller

Shell Rock Soy Processing named 'Outstanding Business of the Year'

The Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) honored Shell Rock Soy Processing (SRSP) as the "Outstanding Business of the Year" at the Iowa Venture Award luncheon held in conjunction with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives annual meeting. Butler County REC nominated Shell Rock Soy Processing for the award.

The company purchased nearly 100 acres in the Butler Logistics Park near Shell Rock to be the site of a startup soybean processing facility. The facility will crush 40 million bushels of soybeans annually, producing 800,000 tons of soybean meal for livestock markets and more than 400 million pounds of soybean oil. SRSP will unload more than 3,000 truckloads of soybeans per month. They will employ 50-60 people when fully operational.

Many partners, including Butler County REC and Corn Belt Power Cooperative, supported the development of the Butler Logistics Park, SRSP, and other businesses within the complex. Butler County REC also constructed a new substation to meet SRSP's needs.

According to IADG President/CEO Bruce Nuzum, "IADG and its partners are proud to recognize Shell Rock Soy Processing for locating its state-of-the-art soy crush facility in Butler County and thank them for their contributions to the community, state of Iowa, and beyond."

IADG is the business and community development leader for Iowa's rural electric cooperatives, municipal utilities, and independent telecommunication companies.



Left to right: Craig Codner, Butler County REC; Gary Poppe, Butler County REC board; Bruce Nuzum, IADG; John Endelman, Butler County REC; Debi Durham, Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa Finance Authority; Duane Rieckenberg, Butler County REC board; Corey Jorgenson, SRSP; Jeff Kolb, Butler-Grundy Development Alliance; Katie LaBree, Butler County REC.

Mid-winter: Perfect time for new habits

It's too late for New Year's resolutions and too early for spring cleaning, but mid-winter is the perfect time to break bad habits when it comes to using electricity around the house.

For example, are you still using the extension cords you unpacked when you decorated your house for the December holidays? If so, put them back in their boxes; extension cords are designed for temporary use only. And if you're hiding them under rugs, they might become frayed and damaged, which is a fire hazard.

It's never the wrong time of year to seal leaks around windows, doors, and penetrations in walls where wires and cables enter the house. Use caulk and weather-stripping, and engage your children in this energy-efficiency exercise. It will teach them how to conserve energy and use it wisely.

Finally, consider making energy-efficient home improvements around the house before remodeling season emerges with spring weather and contractors are hard to hire. Have a programmable thermostat installed; replace any old, single-pane windows you still have in your house; and add insulation to the attic.

Contact us at 888-267-2726 or www.butlerrec.coop for more information. We are your source for energy efficiency, safety, and more.



Should I close off unused rooms during winter?

It seems that if you close the door to an unused room, you can avoid paying to heat it, right?

The opposite is true. When you close off an interior room, or if you close the air vents in that room, your heating system has to work harder and can even break down as a result.

The reason? Your home's heating system is designed to keep the whole house comfortable by distributing heat evenly throughout. That can cause a pressure imbalance, which can damage your ducts or your heating system.



STUDENTS: Scholarship and Youth Tour deadlines are approaching!

- **Technical/Trade Industry Scholarship:** March 6, 2023
- **Iowa Lakes Community College Scholarship:** March 1, 2023
- **Northwest Iowa Community College Scholarship:** March 1, 2023
- **Youth Tour:** March 6, 2023

Be sure to check our website at www.butlerrec.coop for information and applications.



5 Ways to Save During Winter

Winter weather typically means increased energy use at home. Keep your bills in check with these tips to save energy—and money!

Mind the thermostat. If you have a traditional heating and cooling system, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. Consider a smart or programmable thermostat for additional savings.

Get cozy. Add layers of clothing for additional warmth, and snuggle up under your favorite heavyweight blanket.

Don't block the heat. If your air vents or heating elements (like radiators) are blocked by furniture or rugs, your home isn't being adequately heated.

Take advantage of sunlight. Open window coverings during the day to let natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to block the chilly night air.

Block air leaks. Seal windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping to improve indoor comfort and decrease the amount of energy used to heat your home.

Save with rebates!

Considering energy-efficient upgrades to your home? Building a new home? Butler County REC offers members a variety of incentives for appliances, electric heating and cooling systems, insulation, water heaters, and so much more.



For more information visit www.butlerrec.coop.



Powering Lives. Empowering Communities.

Our mission is to serve. Our priority is you.

Be prepared: Tips to make your home more secure

These days, soaking in daily (or hourly) news can make the world feel like a scary place. At the other end of the spectrum, our close-knit communities can feel safe, which can lead to complacency. Many of us can recall growing up in a home where the doors were never locked, and it felt like everybody knew everybody.

In either case, assessing your home's overall security is a good idea.

While we have home security systems, smart doorbells, and smart locks available to us, here are five additional safety tips to help make your home more secure:

1. Assess entry points. Take a tour of the outside of your home and think like a burglar. Consider which windows and doors would be easy to break or climb through. Look through the windows and see if expensive items are on display. Make sure each window and door is locked. Draw curtains or close blinds when you are not home.

2. Lock second-floor windows and doors.

“Second-story burglars” prefer to break into a home on an upper story because they know that most homeowners do not tend to lock upstairs windows and doors. Be sure to lock them before you leave, including deck doors. Also, lock up any ladders you keep outside.

3. Lock the door to the garage.

Although it is easy to lock when you are inside your house but more of a pain to unlock when returning home, always lock the door between your garage and your home. Many people do not lock this door when they are away since the garage door is shut. However, a garage door is relatively easy to open. Home invaders can pry it open or use a factory-setting opener.



4. Update your garage code.

Randomly change your garage code instead of changing it on a predictable schedule (such as daylight saving time).

5. Do not forget sliding doors.

A bar inserted at the base of a sliding door is an inexpensive safeguard. This ensures that sliding glass doors cannot be opened or jimmied without breaking the glass. This will frustrate invaders and the sound of breaking glass can buy you time to call for help.

Taking the time to think like a burglar and checking your home's entry points can help keep you and your family safe.

BCREC employees' spirit of giving

Each November at the Butler County REC monthly employee/safety meeting, the cooperative's Consumer Relations team holds a raffle with items donated by employees. Those participating in the raffle drawing buy a ticket for a chance to choose a donated item. The funds are then given to an organization in our service territory.

In November of 2022, employees donated \$1,250, which included a match from Corn Belt Power Cooperative, to Helping Hands Closet in Sumner. One of the Helping Hands volunteers was nominated for the 2022 Shine the Light contest.

In addition, each year employees donate nonperishable food and hats, mittens, and scarves to those in need. The food is given to a food pantry in our service territory and the winter clothes are distributed to a shelter providing services to residents in our communities.



The tree in the Butler County REC lobby with hats and mittens donated by employees.



\$1,151,463.21 returned to members

The Butler County REC board of directors has authorized the distribution of \$1,151,463.21 in patronage to current and former members of the cooperative.

Before distributing patronage, your board of directors considers the financial condition of the cooperative, and then determines the portion of margins (patronage) to be refunded.

The 2023 distribution includes a portion of 2004 and 2005, in addition to a portion from Corn Belt Power Cooperative, our wholesale power supplier. The amount received is based on how much electricity you purchased during those years.

Current members received a credit on their power bill mailed in February 2023, and checks have been mailed to qualifying former members.

Patronage distribution from member-owned not-for-profit utilities, like Butler County REC, are similar to dividends investor-owned utilities pay to the shareholders. The difference is that the cooperative's "shareholders" are the people that we serve and the "dividends" are distributed to those people—you, our members.

Is your electric bill automatically paid?

You have enough to remember. That's one reason Butler County REC offers you the ability to have your bill paid automatically each month, whether through a bank draft process or a credit card.



Remember that although your payment is deducted from your account or card on the 28th of each month (or next business day if the 28th is a holiday or weekend), the files are sent to the financial institutions before the 28th. This means that if you need to pause your automatic payment for a month, we will need to hear from you at least three business days prior to the 28th of the month.

If you are not already enrolled in automatic bill pay and are interested in one less thing to remember each month, consider signing up. You will find information and instructions on our website at butlerrec.coop. Other payment options are included as well.

Contact us at 888-267-2726 if you have questions.

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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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