



# Current News

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A monthly publication for the members of Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative

## Board officers elected and new directors join board



Following the 88th Eastern Iowa REC annual meeting Sept. 7, the board met in a re-organizational session and elected the five board officers. Two new directors, elected during this summer's district meetings, Robert Schneider Jr., Riverside, District 4, and Bradley Weiss, Burlington, District 5, began their three-year terms of office. The officers and current board include, front from left: Michael Moes, Assistant Secretary Henry Bentley, Secretary Kurt Olson, President Kathy Wunderlich, Vice President Ken Purdy, Treasurer Michael Bixler, and Glenn McCulloh. Back from left: Allan Duffe, Robert Schneider Jr., Tom Hotz, Bradley Weiss, Joel Carstensen, Gary Kester, Bill Petersen, and Mike Shuger.

## Director nomination process starts Jan. 2

During the Eastern Iowa REC district meetings, held each summer, elections are held for positions on the Cooperative's board of directors. For those thinking about serving on the board, the first step is to complete the nomination process which starts next month.

Potential director candidates are asked to submit an address verification form. This will enable the Cooperative to ensure the potential candidate is eligible to run within the district they indicate on the form.

More ELECTIONS see page 2.

# Happy Holidays!



Spark joy and light this holiday season. From our co-op family to yours, we wish you safe and warm season with friends and loved ones.



# Director nomination material available Jan. 2

## ELECTIONS from Page 1.

Information regarding the district boundary map, qualifications to seek election, director compensation, director duties, responsibilities, Standards of Conduct and characteristics of a director can be found on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com) under the My Coop tab, Director Elections, or call 1-800-728-1242 to request the information.

The next step is for the candidate to complete a petition signed by at least 15 members of their district by April 3.

All candidates who submit qualifying petitions will then be asked to fill out a brief biographical form and return it to the Cooperative by May 15.

This information will be used for the candidate profiles which will be published on the Cooperative's website. All profiles will be published verbatim, as submitted.

The nomination process puts no limit

on the number of candidates in a given district.

To serve on the board:

- A candidate must hold an active membership and be a bonafide resident in the district he or she is to represent.

- A candidate cannot be in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative.

- No close relative of a candidate, as defined by board policy, can be employed by the Cooperative.

This nomination process in no way screens or filters potential candidates for seats on the Cooperative's board. Anyone who successfully completes the nomination papers and meets the qualifications as described will be placed on the ballot.

All candidates should note the time requirements of a director are more than the 12 monthly meetings. Directors should be prepared to devote an average of 25-30 days to Cooperative business-related activities each year.

All candidates, who complete the nomination process, will be profiled on the Cooperative website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com), prior to the district meetings.

At this time, one board seat is up for election in each of the five Cooperative districts.

The elections will be held during the 2024 district meetings.

The incumbent directors whose terms expire in 2024 are: Glenn McCulloh, DeWitt, district 1; Michael Moes, Tipton, district 2; Bill Petersen, Muscatine, district 3; Ken Purdy, Columbus Jct., district 4; and Gary Kester, Burlington, district 5.

Director nomination packets will be available beginning Jan. 2, 2024. The forms are available online at [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com) or call 1-800-728-1242 to request a packet.

Again, the deadline to return completed nomination petitions is April 3, 2024.

## Only use kiosks for payments at service centers

Eastern Iowa REC members who are making bill payments at Cooperative service centers should only use the payment kiosks located at each service center.

Do not slide payments under the office doors. There are no member relations representatives located at the service centers in DeWitt, Lone Tree and Wapello. Payments physically left at service centers may not be processed in a timely fashion.

Cooperative bill payments can be made at the kiosks by check, cash, debit card, VISA, Mastercard or Discover. Money orders are not accepted at the kiosks. Kiosks are available from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.



## Cooperative bylaws can be obtained online

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, copies of the bylaws of Eastern Iowa REC are available to anyone interested, either members of the Cooperative or the general public, at the reception counter of the headquarters office at Wilton, Iowa, and at Cooperative service centers in Wapello, DeWitt, and Lone Tree, Iowa. The Bylaws are available online at [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com) under the My Coop tab or you may call 1-800-728-1242 to request a copy.



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## Comments from the CEO

# Reliable power for today and tomorrow is our focus

Ringing in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the CEO of Eastern Iowa REC for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at Eastern Iowa REC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across our 12-county

service territory.

You may not realize it, but your Cooperative doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO), and from there, we distribute it to homes, farms, and businesses throughout our communities. CIPCO's current energy resource mix is made up of 39.2% wind, 26.9% coal, 18.9% is purchased from the energy markets and the remaining 15% comes from solar, hydro and landfill gas, natural gas and other purchases.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, your Cooperative is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the Cooperative and meters throughout our system. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can help personnel analyze the cause and scope

of an outage. AMI helps Eastern Iowa REC save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall.

The Cooperative has purchased a drone and an employee has completed the FAA licensing process so the organization can use the drone for the inspection of lines and vegetation which will allow us to reduce labor and equipment costs while bolstering reliability. Through the use of a small drone, we can accurately monitor the health and growth of trees and identify potential problems. As technology advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Iowa and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, Eastern Iowa REC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.



Kirk Trede  
CEO

### From the Boardroom, October, 2023

- Received the CFC Equity and Key Ratio trend analysis.
- Approved process for a USDA Rural Economic Development Loan for a project in Clinton County.

The next board meeting will be held on December 20, 2023.

## How using more electricity can save money, improve the quality of life

By Paul Wesslund, NRECA

Of all the world's changes during the past 30 years, few are as significant as how we use energy.

In the 1990s, new drilling techniques brought a boom in natural gas production. That increase in supply cut prices so much that natural gas started replacing coal power plants, which used to generate half of the country's electricity. Concern for the environment grew and now renewable energy produces more of our electricity than coal.

Major changes to the ways we use energy have also come into our homes. If you go to the movies and forget to turn off your kitchen lights, you can switch them off from an app on your phone. If you're returning from a vacation, you can adjust your thermostat from anywhere so the temperature of your home is comfortable when you get back.

Every vehicle manufacturer is racing to build electric models. Last year, Ford even started producing an electric version of their best-selling pickup truck. And the



**The concept of beneficial electrification refers to the transition from fossil fuel-powered versions to electric versions. Beneficial electrification refers to a variety of applications, from electric stove tops to electric school buses. Photo Source: Pexels**

F-150 isn't just being promoted as better for the environment. The ads show it running power tools on a remote job site. That approach to showing the benefits of an electric vehicle highlights a whole new way of thinking about energy.

For example, instead of just going out and buying a new pickup truck, you or a business could think about the advantages of electric options. A traditional gasoline-powered model would be best for long trips, but how many miles a day does the truck really travel? What would it be like to plug it in overnight and never have to visit a gas station again? What if it could also power home appliances during a power outage?

There's a name for that kind of thinking—beneficial electrification. Although that phrase doesn't easily roll off the tongue, the idea is catching on because it's **More ELECTRICITY** see page 4.

# 2023 Shine The Light nominees recognized for volunteer work



Two Eastern Iowa REC members were nominated for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's Shine The Light contest highlighting Iowans who are making a positive difference in their communities. Eastern Iowa REC and our power supplier, Central Iowa Power Cooperative, each made \$250 donations to the nominee's charity. The Cooperative's 2023 Shine The Light nominees were Bobbie Lieser of Tipton (above left) for her work as a local youth group leader who leads mission trips to Big Creek Mission in Kentucky. Lieser was nominated by Alice Whitlatch of Tipton. Don Roth, division manager of member relations, presented Lieser with the donation checks. The Cooperative's second nominees were Bev Nielsen and Twyla Peters of Columbus Jct. for their work in helping promote and develop the Historic Swinging Bridge Park in Columbus Jct. The pair was nominated by Cooperative Director Ken Purdy, who presented Peters with the donation checks (above right).

## Beneficial Electrification can save money and improve the quality of our lives

**ELECTRICITY** from page 2.

basically a way to get things done better and cheaper.

The benefits of electrification are money savings, less impact on the environment, improved quality of life and smoother operation of the nation's increasingly internet-connected electric grid.

One of the clearest effects of switching from fossil fuel to electricity is on environmental impact. Natural gas, coal and oil all produce greenhouse gases. Electricity uses some fossil fuels to generate power, but it is increasingly made with renewable energy. So switching from an internal combustion engine to an electric vehicle, for example, will reduce the burning of fossil fuels.

Utilities are exploring ways to use the growing number of electric vehicles to create a more resilient electric grid. Using smart-grid analytics, all those electric cars sitting in garages and charging overnight could supply power back into the electric system during outages or during times when the demand for electricity is high.

Consumers can consider beneficial  
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electrification for the home as well, to see how electric options might improve quality of life. Replacing lawnmowers, leaf blowers and other yard tools with battery-powered versions would reduce noise and could get all the gas and oil cans out of your garage.

You might love your gas stove and heating system, but do you like it enough to pay for two forms of energy, with both gas and electric bills coming due even when you're on vacation? Add to that, the continual improvements in electric heat pumps that will both heat and cool your home with an incredible 300% efficiency.

And if you're concerned about power outages, battery backup systems are getting increasingly powerful and efficient. Compared to a gasoline generator, a battery wouldn't need to be "started up" and wouldn't emit poisonous carbon monoxide.

You may not be ready to make the switch to all electric. These shifts can take time as technology advances and costs become more competitive. But the notion of beneficial electrification offers a new way to evaluate the tools we depend on for everyday life.

### Current News Monthly Quiz

#### Quiz Winners:

Ronald Fick, Rosalie Dunnegan,  
Durant DeWitt

David Young, Scott Starkweather,  
Tipton Letts

Mail your answers to Current News, P.O. Box 3003, Wilton, IA 52778 or email answers to [info@easterniowa.com](mailto:info@easterniowa.com). Be sure to include your name, address and Eastern Iowa REC account number on all quiz answer entries.

Four winners will be drawn from all submissions with the correct answers. The winners will receive a \$25 bill credit.

#### Question 1

Who is the new president of the Cooperative's Board of Directors?

#### Question 2

When are the 2024 director nomination petitions due?

#### Question 3

Name one of the Cooperative's "Shine The Light" contest nominees.

Name

Address

REC Account

### Current News



BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Kathrine Wunderlich, president; Ken Purdy, vice president; Kurt Olson, secretary; Michael Bixler, treasurer; Henry Bentley, assistant secretary; Joel Carstensen, Allan Duffe, Tom Hotz, Gary Kester, Glenn McCulloh, Michael Moes, Bill Petersen, Robert Schneider Jr., Mike Shuger, Bradley Weiss.

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