



# Current News

Volume 69 Number 1 January, 2023

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

*Start application process today...*

## Scholarships to be awarded to 21 seniors in 2023

Each year, the group of independent judges who select the Eastern Iowa REC scholarship winners are faced with a tough task. They must sort through the many outstanding applications to pick the winners.

The Cooperative's scholarship program includes 21 \$1,000 scholarships.

The "Bob Wiemerslage Memorial Scholarship" is awarded to a student whose parents or guardian is a member of the Cooperative and who plans to major in accounting. Wiemerslage was the Cooperative's Division Manager of Accounting until his passing in 2019.

The deadline for applying for the scholarship program is March 10, 2023.

Fifteen scholarship winners will



receive a \$1,000 award, three in each district, that can be used to help defray

the costs of attending any accredited college or university.

Five \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to students planning to pursue a trade-related degree at a community college, technical school or power line school.

The Cooperative's scholarship program is open to all 2023 high school seniors, whose parents or guardians are members of the Cooperative. This includes children of Cooperative directors and employees.

For complete scholarship program details and to obtain an application form for a 2023 scholarship, download the application from the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com), under the "News & Events" tab.

## Director nomination process starts with application

For those thinking about serving on the board, the first step is to complete the nomination process.

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.

Nomination packets, along with 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 memberships 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. The elections will be held during the 2023 district meetings.

The incumbent directors whose terms expire in 2023 are: Joel Carstensen, district 1; Mike Bixler, district 2; Mike Shuger, district 3; Dan Heater, district 4; and Ron Stover, district 5.

## Apply today for Youth Tour 2023

A group of high school students sponsored by Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives, including one from Eastern Iowa REC, will be traveling to Washington, D.C., June 17-23 for the 2023 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The Iowa students will join other student leaders from across the nation to learn more about cooperatives, U.S. history and government.

Iowa's electric cooperatives were the first ones to send students to Washington, D.C., back in 1958; over the decades, hundreds of Iowa student leaders have learned about their role as an American citizen through this program.

Eastern Iowa REC is sponsoring an opportunity for the son or daughter of a Cooperative member in their sopho-

more or junior year of high school to be part of Youth Tour 2023.

Applications and more information about the 2023 Youth Tour can be downloaded from the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com), under the "News & Events" tab.

Students will be asked to complete an application, have a consent form signed by their parents or legal guardian and answer a series of essay questions.

The student's name and address will be redacted and then the anonymous applications will be reviewed by a group of Cooperative employees who will select the winner.

Winners will be selected based on their answers to the essay questions, participation in extra curricular activi-

ties and community service.

All 2023 Youth Tour applications are due by March 17, 2023.



# Annual Cooperative treasure hunt list posted on website

Eastern Iowa REC mails many checks to former Cooperative members each year, and each year a number of these checks are returned because people have not kept the organization updated with their current address.

The Cooperative makes an attempt each

year to deliver these checks by publishing the names of those whose checks were returned in the *Current News*.

This year's list of former Eastern Iowa REC members the Cooperative can't locate to pay outstanding patronage refunds, deposits or those with uncashed

checks can be found on the Cooperative's website [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com).

Look for it on the Community page under the About tab. If you know any of the people on the list, have them contact the Cooperative patronage department, toll free, 1-800-728-1242.

## Market Place ads can now be found at [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com)

With the new *Current News* design and format change, the Market Place ads have been moved to the Eastern Iowa REC website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com). You can find the Market Place link at the top left side of the homepage.

Cooperative members can still place ads at no cost, but the size limit has increased to 300 characters and pictures can now be included.

Members must use the form on the website to place their ads. Members cannot place

ads by mail, phone call or email.

Ads will run for 30 days and a reminder email will be sent five days before the ad is to expire with the option to renew the ad. Ads will appear on the website as soon as they are reviewed by Cooperative personnel.

## Multiple bill payment options are available to members

Eastern Iowa REC members have a variety of options when it comes to paying their monthly energy bills. These include:

- Mail payments using the return envelope provided with the bill. All mailed payments should be sent to Eastern Iowa REC, P.O. Box 3003, Wilton, IA 52778. Use a check or money order when paying by mail. Do not send cash.
- SmartHub Online Bill Payment program.
- Pay-By-Phone program. Call 844-749-3058.

- Use MoneyGram to pay with cash at any MoneyGram location across the country.
- Budget Payment plan.
- Payment kiosks at each service center.

The payment kiosks are available in the vestibules at all Eastern Iowa REC service centers.

The kiosks allow members to pay their bills using a check, cash, debit card or credit card.

Payments made through the kiosks are automatically processed into the

Cooperative's billing system. These kiosks are available daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

## Assistance is again available for winter home heating bills

Help is again available for Iowa residents who may struggle to meet winter home heating costs.

You can apply immediately for the 2023-2023 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) if you are 60 or older or disabled. All other households can apply beginning Nov. 1.

This program is funded through the Iowa Department of Human Rights, and has been established to help qualifying families meet home heating costs. Qualifying Iowa residents can submit applications until April 30, 2023.

Low-income Iowa homeowners and renters can obtain assistance to help pay for a portion of their primary heating costs through LIHEAP.

The assistance is based on household income, size, type of fuel used to heat the home and type of housing.

For information concerning household income maximums, see the chart. For more information about LIHEAP, contact your local community action agency or write to: LIHEAP, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319.

If you are not sure where to apply, Dial 2-1-1, or visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply> to contact your local community action agency.

Anyone applying for assistance will need social security numbers for all household members, proof of income for the past three months for all household members over the age of 19 and a current heating and electric bill.

INCOME MAXIMUMS	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$27,180
2	\$36,620
3	\$46,060
4	\$55,500
5	\$64,940
6	\$74,380
7	\$83,820
8	\$93,260

For each additional household member, add \$9,440  
 If you are not sure where to apply, Dial 2-1-1, or visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply> to contact your local community action agency, or write to:  
 LIHEAP  
 Iowa Department of Human Rights  
 Capitol Complex  
 Des Moines, IA 50319



### Energy Efficiency

#### Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy

## Comments from the CEO

# Board of Director nomination process has begun

In one of the most notable inaugural speeches given, John F. Kennedy spoke his famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." His inspiring words urged Americans to take actions that benefited the greater good. In essence, Kennedy was saying our country thrives when we all contribute our talents to the common good.

On a smaller scale, I think the same can be said about our co-op, specifically with regard to our board members. Eastern Iowa REC's board members are community-minded individuals with a variety of skill sets. We rely on the Board of Directors to help us make informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments. Our directors live right here in the Cooperative's service area, and we consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their perspective on important community issues.

### From the Boardroom

Because of the new printing schedule for the *Current News* this issue was printed before the December, 2022 meeting. Information from that meeting will be included in the February, 2023 issue of the *Current News*.

*The next board meeting will be held on January 26, 2023.*

We recognize it takes many people with different skills to create a well-rounded board that can represent the full spectrum of our community. That's why when we're seeking new directors, we want folks with diverse perspectives, experience, expertise and views. We're seeking local members of our community who can apply their unique talents to benefit all our friends and neighbors. But above all else, we're looking for folks who love our community and want to see it thrive now and in the future.

Serving on Eastern Iowa REC's board means you're making a difference locally, using your individual talents and perspective to guide big decisions about the Cooperative that in turn benefit the larger community. While day-to-day decisions are made by Cooperative staff, major decisions are made by the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the organization and the community it serves.

The energy industry is undergoing a major transition. Technology advancements and increased consumer preference for more renewable

energy is driving change. Eastern Iowa REC is facing big decisions, and board members have an opportunity to help chart a course for our future. To serve the community best, we need input from a wide range of people that represent the broad spectrum of views within community.

The Cooperative board elections are held each summer at the District Meetings. Information about the 2023 elections and nomination materials can be found on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com), under the "My Coop" tab on the homepage.

While you don't need to be an expert in electricity or business to run, you do need to have a passion for the community and a willingness to actively serve and learn. We're looking for individuals who can represent the full gamut of the members we serve. Our board meets on a regular basis, but directors can expect to spend up to 30 days a year attending state and national meetings, and participating in specialized training opportunities to help board members gain a deeper understanding of the electric utility industry and the cooperative business model.

Anyone interested in running for a position on the Cooperative's Board of Directors should start the nomination process today.



**Kirk Trede**  
CEO

## Energy efficiency incentives available

Eastern Iowa REC offers energy efficiency incentives for residential, agricultural and commercial members. An investment in more efficient products saves both the member and the Cooperative money by helping us manage resources to better meet demands.

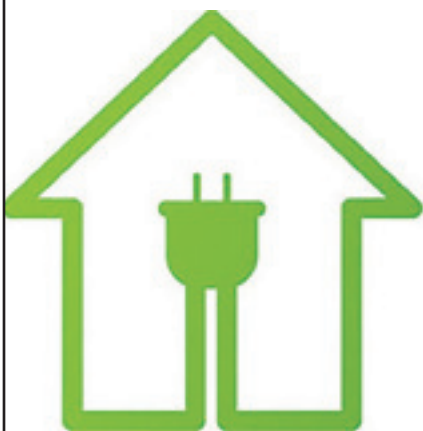
Complete information on the rebate program and all rebate forms can be found on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com/rebates-efficiency/](http://www.easterniowa.com/rebates-efficiency/) or contact an Eastern Iowa REC energy advisor. Call 1-800-728-1242 or email [member.service@easterniowa.com](mailto:member.service@easterniowa.com).



## Track energy use with SmartHub

Did you know your energy usage could be available from your desktop or mobile device? Through the SmartHub app, you can monitor your daily consumption 24/7 and see how it is trending over time. You can even download your data by clicking on the "View Usage" link in the Quick Links list.

Download the SmartHub app for free! It's available in the Apple App Store or Google Play Marketplace. Visit the Eastern Iowa REC website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com) for more information.



SAVINGS  
WITH  
STAYING  
POWER

# Four tips for winter safety

By Abby Berry, NRECA

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

1. Don't overload outlets. Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

2. Never leave space heaters unattended. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.



3. Inspect heating pads and electric blankets. These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

4. Use portable generators safely. Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

## Current News Monthly Quiz

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. Quiz entries must be received by Jan. 11.

The December quiz winners will be listed in the next issue of the *Current News*.

### Question 1

What is the application deadline for the 2023 Cooperative scholarship program?

### Question 2

When are the Cooperative payment kiosks open?

### Question 3

According to the National Fire Protection Association, home fires cause how much in property damage annually?

Name

Address

REC Account Number

## Safety Tip

Heating equipment accounts for 13% of home fires. Place a space heater on a hard surface and make sure clothing, papers and other combustible items are at least 3 feet away from the heater.



Safe  
Electricity.org

## Current News



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

Kirk Trede  
CEO

Jim Williams  
Communications Director

DeWitt  
500 South Fifth St.

Wapello  
101 Surrey Drive.

Lone Tree  
309 W. Commercial St.

Wilton  
1705 West Third St.

Call toll free, 1-800-728-1242.

General Information.....[info@easterniowa.com](mailto:info@easterniowa.com)

Billing Questions.....[billing@easterniowa.com](mailto:billing@easterniowa.com)

Service Questions.....[member.service@easterniowa.com](mailto:member.service@easterniowa.com)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*