



# Current News

Volume 69 Number 6 June, 2023

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

## The district meetings start next month

Each summer, Eastern Iowa REC members have the opportunity to take a direct role in the operation of their Cooperative by attending and participating in their district meeting.

The Cooperative will again be using a drive-in format for the 2023 District Meetings. The events will be held at area school parking lots and the meetings will be broadcast via an FM radio transmitter. Members attending will sit in their vehicles and listen to the proceedings.

**Each meeting will begin at 7 p.m. Members will not be able to register for the meetings until after 6:30 p.m.**

The 2023 series of district meetings will start at the Tipton Middle School parking lot, 725 West 7th St., Tipton, July 26 for members in District 2.

The remaining meetings will be held July 31 at the Central DeWitt High School parking lot, 519 East 11th Street, DeWitt, for members in District 1; Aug. 3 at the Mediapolis High School parking lot, 725 North Northfield St., Mediapolis, for members in District 5; Aug. 7 at the Durant High School parking lot, 408 7th St., Durant, for members in District 3; and finally Aug. 8 at the Lone Tree school parking lot, 303 Devoe St. South, Lone Tree, for members in District 4.

All members attending their district meeting will pull up to a registration tent at each site. Members will stay in their vehicles through the registration process.

The bottom portion of the registration letter, which will be sent to every Cooperative member, will be used for the official registration count and the



Eastern Iowa REC personnel registered members at the District 5 meeting in Mediapolis July 20, 2022.

prize drawings.

Also at the registration tent, ballots will be distributed at meetings where there is a contested election. The 2022 annual report and other meeting documents will also be distributed. When there is a contested election, each member will then pull forward to turn in their completed ballot to Cooperative members serving as tellers who will count the ballots.

Members will then be directed to park and tune to a specific channel using their vehicle radio to listen to the meeting proceedings. Members who wish to ask questions or make comments during the meetings will be asked to honk their horn and blink the lights of their vehicle and a staff member will come to their vehicle to relay their comment or question.

Members will be able to review the

following district meeting items on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com). Click on the "Meetings" link at the top left of the homepage to find: official 2023 district meeting notices, minutes of the 2022 district meetings, and 2023 candidate information.

Qualifications to serve as a director, voting district maps and director nomination and election process information can be found under the "My Coop" tab on the website.

Official district meeting registration notices will be mailed to each membership prior to the meeting. Please bring the bottom portion of that notice to the meeting as they certify a member's eligibility to vote.

More district meeting details will be included in the July *Current News*.

## Safety training session held at Wilton Service Center

Eastern Iowa REC hosted a safety training for area first responders May 3. The session highlighted proper protocols for responding to emergencies involving utility facilities.

Scott Meinecke, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) director of safety & loss control, led the session and discussed dealing with vehicle accidents involving downed power lines or underground transformer boxes; structure fires and the importance of having utility personnel disconnect the power. **More TRAINING see page 2.**



Scott Meinecke, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives director of safety & loss control, led a training session for area first responders on electrical safety scene security May 3.

# Elections to be held at the 2023 District Meetings

The Eastern Iowa REC District Meetings allow each member to play an active role in the operation of the Cooperative. By attending your district meeting, you can fulfill your role as the owner of an electric cooperative serving more than 18,600 members in rural eastern Iowa by electing a fellow Cooperative member to a position on the Board of Directors.

The terms of five Cooperative directors are up and elections for these positions

will be held during the 2023 District Meetings. The term of office is three years.

The terms of Directors Joel Carstensen, District 1; Mike Bixler, District 2; Mike Shuger, District 3; Dan Heater, District 4; and Ron Stover, District 5, expire this year.

Incumbent directors in Districts 1 and 2 are running unopposed this year. In Districts 4 and 5, incumbent Directors Heater and Stover are not seeking re-election.

Gary Bruns of Wilton and Director

Shuger of Wilton will be up for election in District 3. In District 4, Terry Philips of Riverside and Robert Schneider Jr. of Riverside will be up for election. Bradley Weiss of Burlington is the only candidate running in District 5.

Full candidate profiles can be found at [www.easterniowa.com/news-events/candidates](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/candidates). Candidate videos can be found by clicking on the "Meetings" link at the top left of the homepage at [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com).



Joel Carstensen



Mike Bixler



Mike Shuger



Gary Bruns



Terry Philips



Robert Schneider Jr.



Bradley Weiss



## Flood complicates work for line crews

A life jacket was added to the safety equipment Koltyn Hodgell-Niles needed last month as crews disconnected services along the Mississippi River near Montpelier due to the flooding. Crews were forced to use boats to reach some facilities due to the high water levels.

## Shining the Light on community volunteers

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Iowa's electric co-ops are excited to participate in the statewide Shine the Light contest to celebrate local volunteers. Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, the contest will accept nominations in June and select three winners who will each receive a \$2,500 donation to their local charity or nonprofit.

Members and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers during the month of June. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member. Minors may be nominated

with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

Go to [www.IowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.IowaShineTheLight.com) to review the contest rules. Contest entries will be accepted until June 30. Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer.



## Training held for area first responders

**TRAINING from page 1.** at the scene; fires involving utility poles; EV fires; and fires involving solar installations.

About 30 representatives from the Nichols, Durant, Wilton and Atalissa volunteer fire departments, along with personnel from the Muscatine and Louisa County Emergency Management

Agencies participated in the meeting.

After the discussion in the training room, the group moved to the warehouse where the IAEC live line demonstration trailer was used to show the group what happens when tree limbs or other items make contact with power lines.

## Summer temperatures could result in peak load

Eastern Iowa REC has peak hours. These are the times when many people are using electricity at the same time. It costs utilities more to generate electricity when the demand soars. That means the cost of your electricity may also rise.

Using less electricity during peak periods can save you and your Cooperative money. Here's how you can help during the peak hours, which generally are on the hottest summer days from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.:

✓ Shift household activities away from the Page 2 - Current News - June, 2023

peak periods. Run your dishwasher when you go to bed, for instance.

✓ Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. If you're buying a new appliance, make sure you get a highly efficient one.

✓ Be aware of your energy consumption, and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round.

The Cooperative can help. Rebates are provided for energy efficient central air conditioning units and other electric equipment.

Use the energy you need, but use it wise-

ly! You'll help your Cooperative avoid building expensive new power plants, and that, in turn, will help keep your electric rates stable.



## Comments from the CEO

# Make plans to participate in the board election process

The official first day of summer arrives later this month, but we have already started preparations for the series of summer district meetings. These meetings are where Cooperative members elect fellow members to positions on the Board of Directors, hear reports on the state of the Cooperative and discuss operations with Cooperative staff and management. The 2023 district meetings will follow the same drive-in format as last year.

We have secured the use of school parking lots in DeWitt, Tipton, Durant, Lone Tree and Mediapolis and will have those attending the meetings remain in their cars. Using an FM transmitter, members will be able to listen to the meeting proceedings on their car radios.

One of the most important parts of

the district meeting is the election for positions on the Board of Directors. Elections will be held at each of the 2023 district meetings. Profiles for the Eastern Iowa REC members who are running for election can be found on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com/news-events/candidates](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/candidates).

All Cooperative members are encouraged to attend and participate in their respective district meeting.

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Providing reliable power to you is and will always be top priority for Eastern Iowa REC. These days, power reliability seems to be making news, now more than ever. As the energy industry continues to transition and more segments of the economy are becoming electrified, such as vehicles, machinery and even lawn equipment, additional pressures are being placed on our nation's electric grid.

The spring storm season got an early start this year with the March 31 storm that generated tornadoes around the area. Now the summer storm season is upon us, so it's a

good time to tell you about a few measures we're taking to ensure you continue receiving the reliable power you depend on and deserve.

The Cooperative recognizes the value trees bring to the landscape and the charm they add to our communities. While trees provide shade and add beauty to our area, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages.

That's why we strive to keep the Cooperative's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas. A ROW area is the land the Cooperative uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. This ROW enables Eastern Iowa REC to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines. The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our area.

Vegetation management is just one tool the Cooperative uses to ensure power reliability and minimize the risk of outages. As advancements become more accessible and costs drop, we anticipate using additional technologies to ensure a consistent energy supply while managing the environment.



From the Boardroom, April, 2023	
• Approved allocation of 2022 margins totaling \$2,709,185.	
• Approved retirement of patronage totaling \$2,718,039 including \$2,078,303 in deferred patronage for years 2008-2009.	
• Approved electric rate for Cooperative-owned Level II chargers. The rate will be \$0.466 on peak and \$0.202 off peak.	
• Approved the 2022 audit report submitted by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP.	
• Reviewed 2023 Annual Meeting.	
<i>The next board meeting will be held on June 28, 2023.</i>	

## Register online to be an exhibitor at the 2023 annual meeting

Reservations for exhibitors are now being taken for the 2023 Eastern Iowa REC annual meeting at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds in Davenport, Sept. 7.

The exhibitor registration form can be found online at [www.easterniowa.com/news-events/exhibitors](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/exhibitors).

[www.easterniowa.com/news-events/exhibitors](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/exhibitors).

Items that are not food or beverages may be exhibited. Consumable items are not allowed because of conflicts with fairgrounds concession contracts.

Exhibit space will be reserved on a first come, first reserved basis. Each

exhibitor will be allowed a space eight by 10 feet in size.

Exhibitor fees are \$20 for Cooperative members and \$45 for non-members. Tables and chairs are available for an additional charge.

The registration deadline is July 1.

## Cooperative follows all the of EOAA guidelines

Eastern Iowa REC is an Equal Opportunity-Affirmative Action employer.

It shall be the policy of the Cooperative that all applicants for employment shall be considered and hired on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

The employment practices shall ensure equal treatment of all employees without discrimination in rates of pay or other opportunities for advancement

because of the employee's race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

Eastern Iowa REC shall not discriminate against applicants for employment who are mentally or physically disabled, disabled veterans, or Vietnam era veterans, recently separated veterans, or veterans who served on active duty during a war, or campaign, or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized provided they are otherwise qualified for the job.

The employment practices shall continue to ensure equal treatment of all employees, without discrimination towards the disabled, disabled veterans, or Vietnam era veterans recently separated veterans, or veterans who served on active duty during a war, or campaign, or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized in promotions, transfers, training, rates of pay, terminations, and accessibility for jobs.

# If you feel a shock, swim away from the dock

Erin Hollinshead, executive director of Safe Electricity explains, "If electric current is present in fresh water and someone swims into that energized water, the result can be electric shock drowning. That's why it's so important to know what to do if a swimmer feels anything akin to electric current, such as tingling on the skin or a pulsing sensation in the water. They must swim away from anything that could be energized, like a dock with electrical service, or a boat that's plugged into shore power. If possible, swim to the shore instead."



# Keep safety code in mind when making your grain bin plans

On the farm, as with any business, safety is important. Maintaining proper clearance around electric lines is a key safety element. When moving or building a grain bin, plan for specific clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the State of Iowa.

Eastern Iowa REC and Central Iowa Power Cooperative can help create a safe environment for everyone working and living near grain handling equipment.

The diagrams printed with this article show the specific clearances required by the ANSI and the State of Iowa. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact a Cooperative energy advisor.

Overhead power lines should be at least 18 feet above the tops of newly erected grain bins, according to the National Electric Safety Code. These clearances were established to allow for movement of large equipment in the area. The code also specifies distances power lines must be from the loading and non-loading sides of a bin.

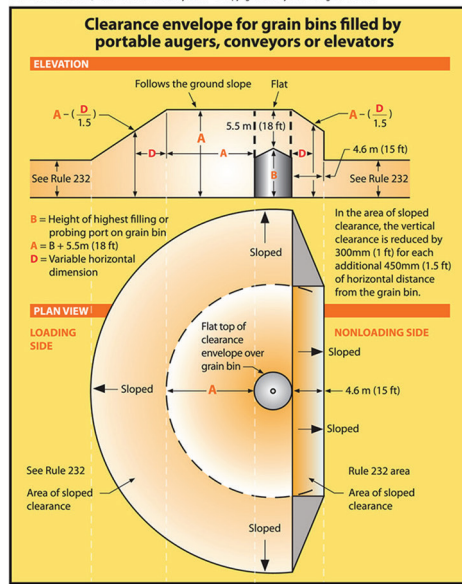
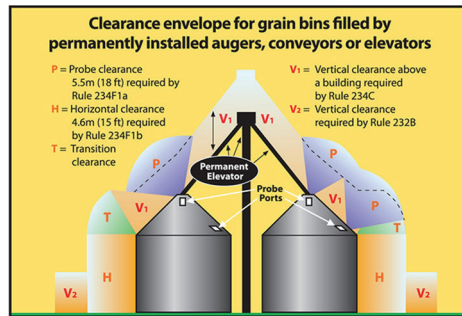
The Cooperative may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line if the bin location does not provide the clearances required by ANSI C2-2017 "National Electric Safety Code," Rule 234f as adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board.

Electric cooperatives are required by the IUB to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants and city and county zoning officials.

If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please contact an Eastern Iowa REC member service specialist before any new grain bin plans are finalized. Call, toll free, 1-800-728-1242.

*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 for 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 damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.*



## Current News Monthly Quiz

### Quiz Winners:

Brenda Ochiltree,  
Wilton  
Rob Zurmuehlen,  
Burlington

Carolyn Smith,  
Iowa City  
Don Jilovec,  
Mt. Vernon

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

What time do the district meeting start?

### Question 2

When are the peak hours for the Cooperative?

### Question 3

Name one of the volunteer fire departments represented at the safety meeting on May 3?

Name

Address

REC Account

## 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

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