



# Current News

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

## State Attorney General visits the Cooperative

Iowa State Attorney General Brenna Bird visited Eastern Iowa REC's Wilton service center March 31 as part of her 99-county tour of the state.

Bird, Wilton Police Chief Dave Clark and Muscatine County Sheriff Quinn Riess met with Cooperative staff, employees and directors and toured the facility.



CEO Kirk Trede directs Attorney General Brenna Bird's attention to the display screens in front of Dee Land, dispatcher/GIS, during Bird's tour of the Wilton service center March 31.



Eastern Iowa REC staff members, employees and directors posed with Attorney General Brenna Bird and her guests during their visit March 31. Pictured, from the left, are: Ken Purdy, director; Aaron Healy, member service supervisor; Dennis Hill, division manager of engineering; Dave Clark, Wilton police chief; Quinn Riess, Muscatine County sheriff; Tom Hotz, director; Kirk Trede, CEO; Brenna Bird, attorney general; Michelle Walker, division manager of administrative services; Will Thoma, Wilton area supervisor; Mark Elder, division manager of operations; Lance Kephart, manager of information technology; Don Roth, division manager of member relations; and Kurt Olson, director.

## 2023 scholarship winners announced

Twenty-one scholarships have been awarded by Eastern Iowa REC to area students.

The four-year college/university schol-

### Howard wins the 2023 Youth Tour contest

Congratulations to Aden Howard who was selected to represent Eastern Iowa REC on the 2023 Youth Tour.

Howard, son of Sam and Jessica Howard of Sabula, will be a senior at Northeast Community High School next fall.

"My grandma is one of my biggest supporters. I value her opinion and appreciate all of the advice she gives me and she encouraged me to apply," Howard said. "Fifty years ago, my grandma was accepted as the recipient of the Eastern Iowa REC Youth Tour and half a century later, I am following in her footsteps."

The National Rural Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour program has been bringing high school students to Washington, D.C. for more than 50 years.

During the week-long stay in Washington, the students learn about electric cooperatives, American history, U.S. government and develop a greater understanding of their role as an

arship winners for 2023 are: Clare Hackman, Hayden Holdgrafer, Fayeth Henningsen, Alayna Dann, Avery Holstein, Kyleia Salyars, Aubrey Haney,

American citizen, visit with their legislators and explore the sights and sounds around the nation's capital.

For more information on the Youth Tour follow Youth Tour on Facebook.



Aden Howard

Colton Pilgrim, Morgan Ware, Christopher Day, Tess DeGrazia, Jersey Lessenger, Jack Myers, Averi Sipes and **More WINNERS see page 2.**

### Register online to be an exhibitor

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).

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.



**Nominate a local volunteer and they could win \$2,500 for their charity!**

Contest entries accepted during June at [IowaShineTheLight.com](http://IowaShineTheLight.com)

## Shining the Light on Community Volunteers in June

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 at this website starting on June 1. Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer.

## 21 scholarships awarded this year

**WINNERS from page 1.**

Torrie Walker.

The trade school scholarship winners for 2023 are: Kaden Beidler, Cole VanderHeiden, Lane Felske, Andrew Hotz and Camille Schulz.

The "Bob Wiemerslage Memorial Scholarship" is awarded to a student planning to major in accounting. Wiemerslage was the Cooperative's division manager of accounting until December, 2019. Jara Rathje is the 2023 recipient of the \$1,000 Wiemerslage scholarship.

Complete details on the 2023 Cooperative scholarship winners can be found at [www.easterniowa.com/news-events/scholarships](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/scholarships).

Page 2 - Current News - May, 2023



## Severe storm leaves thousands without power

Lineworkers from the Wilton service center begin to repair damage in Cedar County caused by the March 31 severe storm. See page 4 for complete details.

## Beware of low voltage dangers

Following a power outage, there are sometimes instances where you will experience low voltage when the power is restored.

If your lights dim, your television picture shrinks, or your appliances are humming but not running, you may be experiencing low voltage. Unplug the equipment, turn off the circuit breaker,

or remove the fuse for all appliances that use motors, and report the problem to Eastern Iowa REC, 1-800-728-1242. This is the best way to protect your appliances and equipment from damage.

For more information visit the Eastern Iowa REC website, [www.easterniowa.com/news-events/low-voltage-power-dangers](http://www.easterniowa.com/news-events/low-voltage-power-dangers).

## Report outages and get outage updates through SmartHub®

SmartHub® can be used to report power outages. You can report a power outage through both the SmartHub website at [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com) or by using the SmartHub Mobile App.

When using the SmartHub website, after logging in to your SmartHub account there is a button in the top right corner of the screen that says "Report an Issue/Inquiry".

Click this button and choose "Power Outage". Your account number will appear. If you have more than one account, be sure to have the correct account selected, then choose an outage description. If none of the descriptions fit your outage situation, choose the most fitting one and please add additional comments. Click "Continue".

A green checkmark will appear to let you know your outage has been submitted. You may then exit SmartHub®, or there are two options in the bottom right corner to either report another outage or

view the status of your outage.

To report an outage using the SmartHub Mobile App start by clicking "Report an Issue/Inquiry" on the home screen. Next, click on the line that says "Power Outage" then click "Continue". It will ask you to select an outage description and comments may be added. Click "Send", a message will appear to let you know an outage has been submitted.

Power outages may still be reported by phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling 1-800-728-1242.

Access SmartHub by visiting the Eastern Iowa REC website, [www.easterniowa.com](http://www.easterniowa.com), or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iPhone or iPad) or Google Play Marketplace (Android phone or tablet).

If you have questions, please contact an Eastern Iowa REC member service representative, toll free, 1-800-728-1242 or via email at [billing@easterniowa.com](mailto:billing@easterniowa.com).



## Comments from the CEO

# Power restoration work was a combined team effort

Spring typically brings the threat of severe weather and that threat became a reality March 31 when a storm system roared across the Cooperative service territory and generated several tornadoes. This storm left nearly 7,000 members without power.

While we saw outages throughout the service territory, the majority of the damage was in Cedar and Clinton counties. Crews worked into the night on Friday, March 31, and a long day on Saturday, April 1, before completing the outage restoration work mid-day on Sunday, April 2.

Restoring power to that many members in less than 48 hours was only possible due to the hard work of Cooperative lineworkers and other Cooperative employees. The Cooperative was also grateful for the mutual aid assistance provided by lineworkers from East-Central Iowa REC and Butler County REC. Their help was a prime example of one of the Seven Cooperative Principles: cooperation among cooperatives.

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The organization congratulates the group of 2023 Eastern Iowa REC scholar-

### From the Boardroom, March, 2023

- Approved a resolution recognizing April 10 as Lineworker Appreciation Day.
  - Reviewed 2023 Annual Meeting.
- The next board meeting will be held on May 24, 2023.

ship winners. Each year, the group of independent judges who select our scholarship winners comment on the outstanding quality of the applicants. This year's group represents another selection of fine young people from our service territory. The winners are profiled on the Cooperative's website, [www.easterniowa.com/scholarships](http://www.easterniowa.com/scholarships).

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Next month, the *Current News*, will include information about the 2023 district meetings which will be held in July and August. An important part of these meetings are the elections held for positions on the Cooperative's board of directors. The profiles of those Cooperative members seeking election to the board will also be posted on the Cooperative's website in the June. Please take time to attend your district meeting and participate in the director election process.

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Electricity helps make our lives easier, but its potential for shock and hazards is real and often underestimated. Each year we recognize May as National Electrical Safety Month. This year, the severe storms we have experienced this spring reminds us of the need to keep safety in mind the



year round.

After a storm, treat all downed power lines as if they are live. Stay away from downed lines and keep others away. If you spot downed or damaged power lines, contact the Cooperative immediately by calling 1-800-728-1242.

During power outages, a generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep appliances working, but they must be used in a safe manner. When using a generator, follow these safety tips:

- Read and follow operating instructions to properly ground the generator.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis.

## Board resolution has been posted to Cooperative website

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 added rate-making standards on demand-response and demand flexibility practices, and electric vehicle charging programs to the Public Utilities Regulatory Policy Act (PURPA), which the Cooperative must follow.

PURPA was enacted on November 9,

1978 as part of the National Energy Act. It was originally passed with the intention of conserving electric energy, increasing efficiency in facilities and resources used by utility companies and making retail rates for electric consumers more fair.

The Cooperative board of directors approved a resolution regarding these

practices during its October 25, 2022 meeting. This resolution is available on the Eastern Iowa REC website, [www.easterniowa.com/my-coop/](http://www.easterniowa.com/my-coop/).

Anyone with questions regarding this resolution should contact Don Roth, division manager of member relations, 1-800-728-1242 or [don.roth@easterniowa.com](mailto:don.roth@easterniowa.com).

## The Energy Adjustment Clause has decreased

The Energy Adjustment Clause (EAC) is the mechanism used to reflect increases or decreases in the cost of wholesale power. This allows Eastern Iowa REC to adjust bills when the cost of wholesale power falls outside the predetermined energy rates.

The EAC is used to account for monthly variations in the price of power. It appears as a line item on your monthly bill.

It is positive or negative based on the cost of power charged to Eastern Iowa REC from Central Iowa Power Cooper-

ative (CIPCO), our power supplier. Your Cooperative has an EAC in place for all of its rates.

When the EAC is negative, your bill amount is reduced. If the EAC is positive, your bill increases.

CIPCO had issued three wholesale rate increases in 2022 which were reflected in increases to the EAC. Higher market prices for power, increased fuel costs and higher peak power demands led to these increases.

Based on forward looking fuel and market price estimates, CIPCO imple-

mented an energy charge reduction effective February 1, 2023. The Cooperative in turn, reduced the EAC rate to reflect this change.

As a result of the decrease to the EAC, a typical residential member using 1,000 kWh per month will see an decrease of roughly \$5.80 per month reflected on their bills.

If you have any questions regarding your bill, please contact the Cooperative member relations department, toll free, 1-800-728-1242, or by email: [billing@easterniowa.com](mailto:billing@easterniowa.com).

# March goes out with a severe storm

March definitely went out like a lion in 2023. A storm cell that spawned several tornadoes rolled across the Eastern Iowa



Chad Rogers, apprentice lineworker, was joined by a four-legged assistant as he moved a downed powerline out of the roadway in Clinton County following the March 31 severe storm.

REC service territory March 31 triggering outages that began around 5:30 p.m.

At the peak of the crisis, nearly 7,000 Eastern Iowa REC members were without power. That number was reduced to around 1,700 by 6 a.m. April 1. The outage number dropped below 500 at 10:30 a.m. that day. The final outages were cleared up around mid-day April 2.

The storm moved southwest to northeast with the first outages coming in Johnson County south of Iowa City. Cedar and Clinton counties were particularly hit hard, but the Cooperative experienced outages in nearly every county within the service territory.

Damage from high winds, which blew tree limbs and debris through lines and broke poles, was the major cause of the outages. More than 60 poles were damaged by the storm.

The Cooperative received mutual aid assistance from East-Central Iowa REC, based in Urbana, IA, and Butler County REC, based in Allison, IA. We thank those crews for answering our call for help and we thank the Eastern Iowa REC membership for their patience as personnel worked to restore power.



A Butler County REC crew prepares to repair a section of line in Cedar County northeast of the Clarence substation.



Personnel from East-Central Iowa REC prepare to replace a pole just east of the Clarence substation following the March 31 severe storm.

## Current News Monthly Quiz

### Quiz Winners:

Jill Gerot,  
Riverside  
Herbert Wilhelm,  
Lost Nation

Richard Kreinbring,  
Bennett  
Janette Schulz,  
Burlington

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 2023 Youth Tour winner?

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### Question 2

What does PURPA stand for?

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### Question 3

At the peak, power was interrupted to how many members following the March 31 storm?

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Name

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Address

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REC Account

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## 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.

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