



Current News

Volume 71 Number 3 March, 2025

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

Deadline is April 1...

Director nomination deadline is near

Anyone seeking to run for a position on the Eastern Iowa REC Board of Directors is asked to submit an address verification form to enable the Cooperative to ensure the potential candidate is eligible to run within the district they indicate on the form.

Candidates then need to complete a petition signed by at least 15 memberships of their district by April 1, 2025.

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 under the "My Cooperative" tab, Director Elections or call 1-563-732-7305 to request the information.

All candidates who submit qualifying petitions will then be asked to fill out a biographical form and return it to by May 15, 2025.

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 sell-



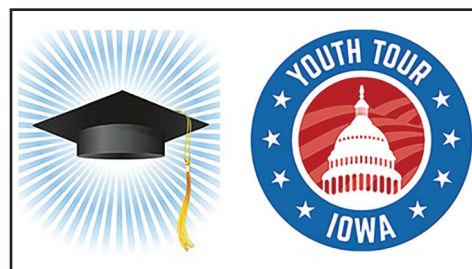
Cooperative members in District 1 gathered at the DeWitt Community Center for the 2024 meeting.

ing 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 qualifications as described will be placed on the ballot.

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

The incumbent directors whose terms expire in 2025 are: Kurt Olson, Grand Mound, district 1; Allan Duffe, Wilton, district 2; Henry Bentley, Durant, district 3; Tom Hotz, Lone Tree, district 4; and Kathy Wunderlich, Danville, district 5.



Applications are due this month

The application deadlines for two Eastern Iowa REC youth programs are this month. The deadline for the Cooperative scholarship program is March 12, 2025 and the deadline for the Youth Tour program is March 14, 2025.

The 2025 Eastern Iowa REC scholarship program includes 26 \$2,500 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.

Twenty scholarship winners will receive a \$2,500 award that can be used to help defray the costs of attending any accredited college or university.

Five \$2,500 scholarships will be awarded to students planning to pursue a trade-related degree at a community college, technical school or powerline school.

The Cooperative's scholarship program is open to all 2025 high school seniors, whose parents or guardians are members of the Cooperative. This includes children of Cooperative directors and employees.

The 2025 Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. will be June 15-21. Iowa students will join other student leaders from across the nation to learn more about cooperatives, U.S. history and government.

Eastern Iowa REC is sponsoring an opportunity for a high school sophomore or junior attending school within the Cooperative's service territory to be part of Youth Tour 2025.

Applications can be found online: www.easterniowa.com/community/scholarships/ and www.easterniowa.com/community/youth-tour/.



STEAM Grant Program

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics

\$500 grants available for schools within the Cooperative's service territory. \$100 grants available for home school programs.

Find full details online:
www.easterniowa.com/community/scholarships/



Watch ditch fires and call before you dig

Eastern Iowa REC is asking for extra sets of eyes to look for potentially dangerous situations this spring--ditch fires.

It is that time of year, when many may be burning the weeds and grass in roadside ditches. This burning can help "clean things up," but it can also cause a great deal of trouble if the fire is allowed to burn around Cooperative poles, guy wire anchors or underground cable cabinets.

Uncontrolled fires endanger lives, damage electrical facilities and cause unnecessary interruptions in electric service. Please take care when burning ditches and keep fires away from all electrical facilities.

Other potential safety hazards are signs, reflectors and other items attached to power poles. Please do not nail, staple or post any kind of material on utility poles.

This is also the time of year people begin preparations for their spring landscaping plans. You might not think twice before you push that shovel into the ground.

In many areas, homes are served by underground electric lines. If you cut into a line, not only will you probably interrupt service to your home, but you could also receive a serious shock!

Just dial 811 to start the process to ensure your project will be safely completed.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: call811.com



Eastern Iowa REC celebrates 90th anniversary

Eastern Iowa REC is celebrating 90 years in business in 2025. To commemorate this milestone, we will share a fun fact, historic photo or bit of Cooperative history each month in the *Current News*.

In today's modern, digital world, electricity is taken for granted. For people today, it is hard to imagine life without power at the flip of a switch. But when the Cooperative was founded in 1935, most of rural eastern Iowa functioned without electricity.

Eastern Iowa REC got its start on September 17, 1935 when a group of local farmers met at Swains Hall in McCausland. Thirty-eight local residents attended that first organizational meeting to start what would become Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative.

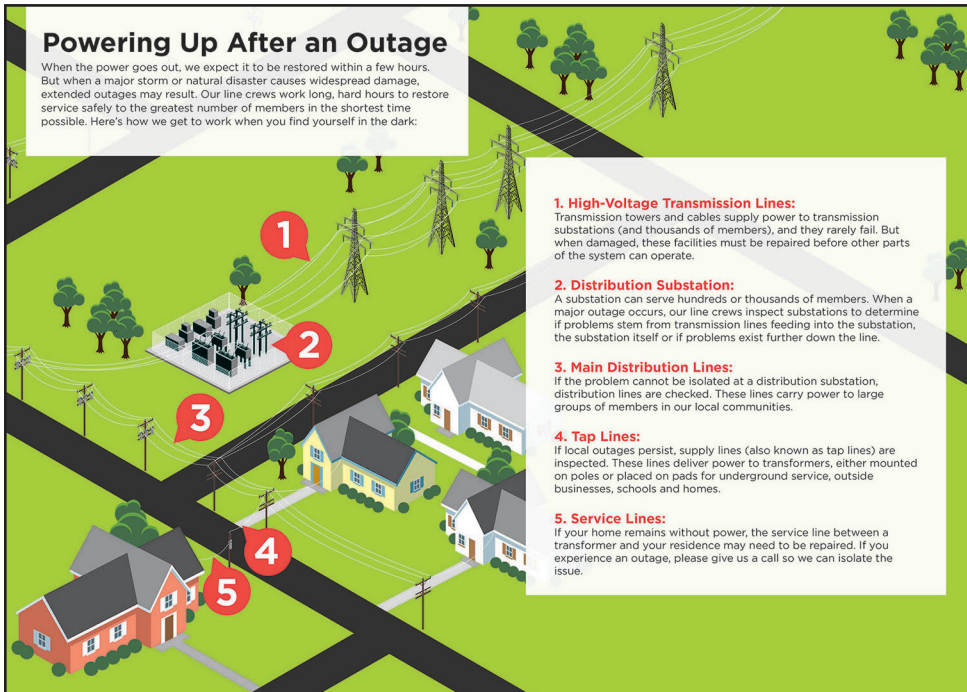
The first loan application to the newly formed Rural Electrification Administration was approved by the Cooperative's board of directors on May 11, 1936. The loan, \$260,000, would fund the construction of 265 miles of line.



Swains Hall, McCausland, IA

Powering Up After an Outage

When the power goes out, we expect it to be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm or natural disaster causes widespread damage, extended outages may result. Our line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible. Here's how we get to work when you find yourself in the dark:



1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines:

Transmission towers and cables supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members), and they rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2. Distribution Substation:

A substation can serve hundreds or thousands of members. When a major outage occurs, our line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist further down the line.

3. Main Distribution Lines:

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of members in our local communities.

4. Tap Lines:

If local outages persist, supply lines (also known as tap lines) are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5. Service Lines:

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. If you experience an outage, please give us a call so we can isolate the issue.

STAY IN THE KNOW



Stay connected by keeping your contact information up to date. Current contact information benefits you in multiple ways: faster outage reporting and response; timely alerts about planned outages and other important updates; smoother customer service interactions; improved access to member benefits & programs. Ensure your phone number, email address and mailing address are up to date. In the SmartHub app go to "Manage Account" to get started.

Understanding the factors that can impact your energy bills

As we transition from winter to spring, temperatures can fluctuate, leading to unpredictable energy use. While heating systems may still be running, longer daylight hours and milder days can provide opportunities to save energy. Understanding the factors that influence electricity costs can help you make informed decisions about your energy use and find ways to improve efficiency.

What Affects Electricity Prices?

- **Fuel Prices:** Eastern Iowa REC purchases electricity from our power generation partner, CIPCO. The cost of fuels like natural gas and coal fluctuates based on supply and demand, impacting electricity prices.
- **Extreme Weather:** Cold temperatures drive up energy demand, which can affect costs.
- **Infrastructure & Equipment:** A monthly facility charge helps maintain power lines, substations, and essential grid

infrastructure to ensure reliable service.

• **Energy Policy & Regulations:** Federal policies shape the energy landscape. As regulations evolve and renewable energy sources expand, upgrades and new technologies add costs that impact consumers.

How You Can Reduce Your Energy Use

While external factors influence electricity costs, you can take simple steps to improve efficiency at home:

- **Adjust your thermostat** to the lowest comfortable setting in winter.
- **Schedule annual HVAC maintenance** and replace filters regularly.
- **Use off-peak hours** for energy-heavy tasks like laundry and dishwashing.
- **Seal air leaks** around doors and windows to keep warm air inside.

Eastern Iowa REC is committed to providing reliable and affordable electricity. Visit www.easterniowa.com for energy-saving programs and tips.

Smart Plugs: A simple upgrade for a smarter, more efficient home

Smart plugs are an easy and affordable way to upgrade your home's efficiency and convenience. These simple devices allow you to control lamps, appliances, and electronics remotely using a smartphone app or voice commands through smart assistants like Alexa or Google Assistant.

One major benefit of smart plugs is energy savings. By scheduling devices to turn off when not in use, you can reduce phantom loads—energy consumed by electronics even when they're off—helping to lower your electricity bill. For example, you can program your entertainment center to turn off automatically at night, preventing TVs, gaming consoles, and streaming devices from drawing unnecessary power while not in use.

Smart plugs also enhance home security by making it look like someone is home, even when you're away. Scheduling lights to turn on and off at different times deters potential intruders. With easy installation—just plug them into an outlet and connect to Wi-Fi—smart plugs provide a simple, cost-effective way to make your home smarter, safer, and more energy-efficient.

To make these devices even more affordable, your cooperative offers a **\$10 rebate per smart plug, covering up to 50% of the total cost.** This means you can upgrade your home while saving both energy and money!

Contact Max Holtz, Energy Advisor, at max.holtz@easterniowa.com for more information.



Photo courtesy Brilliant Smart Home System

Mini-Splits at a Glance

Looking for an energy-efficient way to heat and cool your home? Mini-split systems can provide zoned comfort without the need for ductwork. Ideal for home additions, older houses, or spaces with varying temperature needs, mini-splits offer:

- ✓ **Energy Savings** – No duct losses, higher efficiency.
- ✓ **Easy Installation** – No major renovations needed.
- ✓ **Cleaner Air** – Built-in filtration removes allergens.
- ✓ **Quiet Operation** – Enjoy comfort without the noise.

Have a question about energy efficiency?
Email me at max.holtz@easterniowa.com.
See you next month with more tips to keep you saving all year long!

OUTSIDE FACTORS THAT IMPACT ELECTRICITY PRICES

FUEL PRICES

The cost of fuels used to generate electricity fluctuates based on supply and demand.



EXTREME WEATHER

Extreme temperatures make heating and cooling systems work harder, increasing energy use and costs.



INFRASTRUCTURE & EQUIPMENT COSTS

A flat monthly facility charge covers equipment, labor, and operations to ensure reliable power.



ENERGY POLICY & REGULATIONS

Federal energy policies shape electricity generation, distribution, and pricing, impacting overall costs.



Mini-Splits at a Glance

Looking for an energy-efficient way to heat and cool your home? Mini-split systems can provide zoned comfort without the need for ductwork. Ideal for home additions, older houses, or spaces with varying temperature needs, mini-splits offer:

- ✓ **Energy Savings** – No duct losses, higher efficiency.
- ✓ **Easy Installation** – No major renovations needed.
- ✓ **Cleaner Air** – Built-in filtration removes allergens.
- ✓ **Quiet Operation** – Enjoy comfort without the noise.

Have a question about energy efficiency?
Email me at max.holtz@easterniowa.com.
See you next month with more tips to keep you saving all year long!



MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Keep your cooling system running at max efficiency!
★ Schedule a tune-up before summer to improve performance and avoid breakdowns.

Mini-Split Owners – Save More!
Ask us about our Heat Plus Rate! ☀️ Enjoy a reduced rate October–May for even more savings. Contact us today to learn more!

–Max



Comments from the CEO

The Cooperative continues to advocate for the membership at the Capitol

As we move into March, we move a bit closer to spring, warmer temperatures and green, fresh grass. Another sure sign of spring is renewed activity in Des Moines by our state legislators.

Cooperative directors and staff members welcomed our area lawmakers back to the Capitol in January with the annual reception held during the opening week of the new legislative session. Several members of the Cooperative's board of directors and staff members visited the Capitol last month to chat with our area legislators and will return to Des Moines to take part in REC Day on the Hill on March 19. This annual event brings REC officials from across the state to Des Moines to meet with legislators.

As an organization, we have always enjoyed a good relationship with the hard-working area lawmakers. We meet with them as an individual group during the fall and make additional, periodic visits to Des Moines throughout the year. The best way to protect the interests of the Cooperative is to maintain a positive and active line of communica-

tion with our legislators.

These efforts enable us to discuss the issues, thank our legislators for their support and also gives us a solid presence in the legislative process. These efforts will continue to be a success through the grassroots efforts of local Cooperative leaders.

Your Cooperative's partnership with our area legislators is essential for fostering effective, responsive policies that meet the energy needs of the community.

By working together, we can ensure that legislators understand the unique challenges we face, such as maintaining reliable service in rural or underserved areas. Cooperation with lawmakers, at both the state and federal level, also helps advocate for favorable regulatory frameworks, funding for infrastructure improvements, and the promotion of sustainable energy initiatives.

These collaborations can influence key decisions related to grid modernization, renewable energy adoption, and affordable pricing, ultimately benefiting the Cooperatives members and supporting the long-term health of local economies.

It truly is a great partnership because we are fortunate to have legislators who are familiar with the numerous contributions the Cooperative makes to rural Iowa and rural America.



Kirk Trede
CEO

From the Boardroom, January, 2025

- Approved discount rate on patronage settlement of estates.
- Set interest rate on consumer deposits for 2025.
- Approved Cooperative's Revolving Loan Fund Committee.
- Discussed the Cooperative's Strategic Corporate Plan.

The next board meeting will be held on March 31, 2025.

The Eastern Iowa REC Statement of Nondiscrimination

Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the

Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer. The person responsible for coordinating this organization's non-discrimination compliance efforts is Kirk W. Trede, Chief Executive Officer.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html. at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Current News Monthly Quiz

Quiz Winners:

Yale Christensen,
Calamus

Marvin Honts,
Muscatine

Lydel Miedema,
Wilton

David & Rebecca Willey,
Blue Grass

Mail your answers to Current News, P.O. Box 3003, Wilton, IA 52778 or email their answers to 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

Where did the first members gather to organize the Cooperative?

Question 2

How many signatures are needed for a director nomination petition?

Question 3

How much is the rebate offered by the Cooperative for smart plugs?

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; Gary Bruns, Joel Carstensen, Aubrey "Lee" Cartwright, Allan Duffe, Tom Hotz, Gary Kester, Robert Schnieder Jr., Mike Shuger, Denise Timmerman, Bradley Weiss.

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

Billing Questions.....billing@easterniowa.com

Service Questions.....member.service@easterniowa.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.