



Current News

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

Cooperative linemen are ready when it matters most

In April, we take time to pause and recognize the brave men who keep the lights on for all Eastern Iowa REC members every single day—our linemen.

When storms impact our communities and outages occur, many people experience the inconvenience, but our linemen see a call to action. Our crews are always ready when it matters most—leaving family dinners, working through the night and heading into challenging conditions to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. That readiness is not accidental. It comes from rigorous training, deep experience and a shared commitment to serving others.

What makes linemen especially remarkable is that they aren't just restoring power to a system—they're restoring power to their own communities. They live here. They raise their families here. They understand that electricity is more than a convenience; it's essential to daily life, to local businesses, to schools, farms and emergency services. Powering the places we call home is personal to lineworkers.

Electric cooperatives like Eastern Iowa REC were built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors, and our lineworkers embody that spirit every day. They are the first to respond and the last to leave, often working long hours behind the scenes.

At times, serving our neighbors means going beyond our own service territory through a process known as mutual aid. During major outage events, Cooperative crews stand ready to assist neighboring co-ops—sometimes close to home, and sometimes across state



lines—to help restore power. This spirit of mutual aid strengthens all cooperatives and ultimately benefits the members we serve.

Most recently, Cooperative linemen answered the call for help from fellow electric cooperative after an ice storm left their system with severe damage. Our linemen spent two weeks assisting Twin County Electric Power Association in west-central Mississippi after an ice storm Jan. 25 resulted in 10,000 outages and more than 1,000 broken poles.

We understand any time the lights go out can be frustrating, bringing every-

day life to a halt. We are incredibly grateful to our members for your patience and encouragement during these times. Linework is demanding, physical, and at times, it can be dangerous. Our crews approach each job with a focus on safety and teamwork. They take pride in their craft and in the trust our members place in them.

On April 13, 2026, we will celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, but one day is hardly enough. Every day, we thank lineworkers for their service and dedication, which are the backbone of our cooperative.

Save the dates for upcoming important Cooperative meetings

Planning for the 2026 Eastern Iowa REC district meetings has started.

This year the district meetings will start July 22 at the Durant Community Center for District 3. Other meetings will be held July 28 at the DeWitt Community Center for District 1, July 29 at the Cedar County Fairgrounds

Matthews Building for District 2, Aug. 4 at the Lone Tree School Cafeteria for District 4, and Aug. 11 at the Mediapolis High School auditorium for District 5. All meetings will start at 7 p.m.

Look for additional details in future issues of the *Current News* and online, www.easterniowa.com.



Nomination and application periods closed; scholarship winners to be listed in May CN

All candidates who turned in petitions with 15 signatures of members within their district will be on the ballot for the director elections to be held during the 2026 district meetings.

These meetings will be held in July and early August. Look for details in future issues of the *Current News* and online at www.easterniowa.com.

The candidate profiles will be available in the July issue of the *Current News*.

All completed 2026 Cooperative scholarship and Youth Tour applications have been forwarded to a panel of independent judges.

The winners of the 2026 scholarships and Youth Tour trip will be announced and in the May issue of the *Current News*.

Cooperative adds communication tools to the disconnection process

Eastern Iowa REC has made changes to its disconnection process. The new process is an effort to increase safety and provide additional notice to those members who are delinquent in paying their bills.

As of April 1, 2026, door postings regarding disconnection of service will only occur during the winter moratorium, Nov. 1 to April 1.

Members with past-due balances will be notified on the third day of the month, again on the seventh to tenth day of the month, a third time on the 15th day of the month, and finally on the

17th day of the month.

The automated notifications will be done using phone, email and text messaging (for those members who have opted into the texting program).

The Cooperative is also expanding the number of meters capable of remote disconnection to improve efficiency and response time.

This process aligns with the Iowa Utilities Commission parameters and supports Cooperative efforts to enhance employee safety, avoid financial strain to members, and modernize operations through clearer, earlier communication.



Evan Burghart

The Cooperative welcomes new apprentice lineman

Evan Burghart recently began his Cooperative employment. Evan started on Monday, Feb. 16, as an apprentice lineman at the DeWitt service center. We welcome Evan to the Eastern Iowa REC team.

Eastern Iowa REC follows Seven Cooperative Principles

The Seven Cooperative Principles are internationally recognized guidelines adopted by cooperatives worldwide through the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Electric cooperatives in the United States and around the world use these principles as the foundation of how they operate and

serve their member-owners.

These Principles provide a shared set of values and guidelines that help cooperatives operate democratically, fairly, and responsibly. They ensure that cooperatives focus on member ownership and control, promote economic participation, encourage education and cooperation, and support sustainable community development.

The Second Cooperative Principle is Democratic Member Control, which ensures cooperatives are controlled by those it serves and focused on local needs and concerns.

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting poli-

cies and making decisions. Members elect a board of directors from among themselves during our District Meetings each year.

Each membership has one vote, regardless of how much electricity they use. Our District and Annual Meetings allow members to vote on key issues and hear reports on financial and operational performance.

The locally-elected cooperative board develops policies and makes major decisions that reflect member interests rather than those of outside investors.

Look for information about the remaining Cooperative Principles in future issues of the *Current News*.

Bylaws are available

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/my-cooperative or you may call 1-855-938-3616 to request a copy.

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Representatives (directors/trustees) are elected among members and are accountable to them. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Here are some tips to help you spring into energy savings

Spring is a season of renewal—and a great time to refresh your energy habits, too! As temperatures begin to warm and daily routines shift, a few small changes around your home can add up to meaningful energy savings.

Eastern Iowa REC is committed to helping our members use energy wisely while keeping homes comfortable year-round.

Spring is the perfect time to schedule maintenance for your heating and cooling system. Spring and fall checkups conducted by a licensed professional can help ensure your system is running efficiently, safely and reliably before the peak seasons begin. A well-maintained unit uses less energy, lasts longer and helps prevent costly breakdowns when you need it most.

If you're looking for a simple place to start saving, look no further than ceiling fans. Fans don't actually cool or heat the air, but they help you feel more comfortable by moving it. During warmer months, make sure your ceiling fan blades are set to rotate counterclockwise. This creates a downward breeze that makes you feel cooler, allowing you to raise your thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort. In cooler months, reverse the direction of fan blades clockwise to help push warm air down from

the ceiling, improving efficiency when your heating system is running.

Speaking of thermostats, adjusting the temperature just a few degrees can make a noticeable difference on your energy bill. As spring arrives, try setting your thermostat slightly higher when cooling or slightly lower when heating. Even a two- or three-degree adjustment can reduce energy use while still keeping your home comfortable—especially



when combined with ceiling fans or open windows on mild, pleasant days.

Hot water use is another area where simple habits matter. Taking shorter showers can help reduce the amount of energy used to heat water, which makes up a significant portion of most energy bills. Cutting just a few minutes off each shower not only saves energy but also conserves water.

Finally, the time of day you use energy can also play a part in savings. When you run major appliances during off-peak hours (when energy demand is lower), you can take advantage of non-peak rates and help reduce pressure on the electric grid—that's a win-win! The Cooperative's off-peak period is daily from 9 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Eastern Iowa REC is here to help every season, every step of the way. If you have questions or want to learn more about energy efficiency offerings and programs, visit www.easterniowa.com and click on the Energy Center tab on the homepage.

Making your garage or shop more energy efficient

Garages, shops, and outbuildings are some of the hardest working spaces on your property. They can also be some of your biggest energy users. A few simple upgrades can improve comfort, safety, and efficiency.

If you have an old refrigerator or freezer in the garage, it may be costing you more than you think. Older appliances can use two to three times more electricity than newer ENERGY STAR® models. At a minimum, clean the condenser coils, make sure there is adequate airflow around the unit, and check door seals to ensure efficient performance.

Insulation and air sealing can have an immediate impact on the comfort of your building. Even if you are not fully heating or cooling the space, insulation helps stabilize temperatures and can help reduce moisture buildup. Insulate walls, ceilings and even your garage door if possible. Seal gaps around doors, windows, and where wiring or pipes penetrate the walls. Use weatherstripping, expanding foam, or caulk to close cracks that allow drafts, dust, and pests inside.

Take a close look at high-use equipment. Air compressors, dust collection systems, livestock equipment, and battery chargers can quietly add up on your electric bill, especially if they're left running or plugged in around the clock. Install timers on equipment that doesn't need continuous operation, and use smart plugs or power strips to cut power completely when tools are not in use. Make it a habit to shut off compressors and unplug chargers at the end of the day. Also, check for older motors or equipment that may be inefficient; upgrading to newer, energy-efficient models can reduce both energy use and maintenance costs.

Lastly, swap out old incandescent or fluorescent bulbs for LED fixtures. LEDs use up to 75% less energy, last significantly longer, and provide brighter, more consistent light. This type of lighting is perfect for workshops and hobby spaces. Occupancy sensors are another smart consideration, ensuring lights aren't left on longer than needed. Small changes in these hardworking spaces can lead to noticeable savings over time.



Spring in Iowa often means damp basements. A dehumidifier can improve comfort, protect stored items and help prevent mold—but using it efficiently makes a difference.

-Choose a properly sized ENERGY STAR® certified unit. Oversized models waste energy, while undersized units run constantly.

-Set humidity between 40–50%. Many newer units include a humidistat so they run only when needed.

-Clean the filter regularly and keep doors and windows closed while the unit operates.

Controlling moisture protects your home and helps your cooling system work more efficiently as warmer weather approaches. A dry basement is a more comfortable and healthier basement.



Consider using a smart plug or timer to only run your dehumidifier during off-peak hours when electricity costs less.

-Max



Comments from the CEO

Understanding factors that impact energy bills

Many people in our community are facing challenging times, and no one wants to see rising electric bills. Cooperative members count on us every day for the energy they need. We want our members to understand what goes into their bill and why bills are increasing.

There are a few key factors that affect electricity prices, as well as a few ways you can make a meaningful impact on home energy savings.

When you receive your monthly bill from Eastern Iowa REC, you're provided with a summary of how much electricity you used during the billing cycle. But you might be surprised to learn that beyond your monthly energy consumption, there are external factors that can impact the cost of electricity.

Eastern Iowa REC purchases electricity from our power generation partner, Central Iowa Power Cooperative, at a wholesale cost, then we deliver that power to our local communities. The cost of generating and transmitting electricity from our generation partner accounts for a significant portion of the cost to provide electric service to local homes and businesses—and the cost of fuels that are used to generate that electricity, such as natural gas and coal, fluctuate based on

supply and demand.

While we can't control the weather, we know weather can have a major impact on energy use. When temperatures become extremely cold or hot and the demand for electricity spikes, the price of electricity can also increase.

To cover the costs associated with providing electricity to your home or business, Cooperative members pay a monthly Facilities Charge. This flat monthly fee ensures the cost of equipment, materials, labor and daily operations are covered for all members in our service territory. To ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local grid, including power lines, substations and other essential equipment.

While many of these external factors that impact electricity costs are out of our control, we all have the power to manage our energy use at home. You can reduce energy use by taking advantage of off-peak periods (daily from 9 p.m. to 4 p.m.), when the demand for electricity is lower. Reserve energy-intensive chores for off-peak times, such as early in the morning or later in the evening, to save energy.

Eastern Iowa REC is your local energy partner, and we will continue working diligently to provide you with reliable power at an affordable cost.



Kirk Trede
CEO

From the Boardroom, February, 2026

- Approved annual reliability report.
- Approved a capital budget amendments.
- Provided update on Lone Tree Operations site evaluation.
- Reviewed 2026 Annual Meeting.

The next board meeting will be held on April 23, 2026.

Clip this item and help others

Eastern Iowa REC has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. Now, in response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your Cooperative has established RECare, a program of members helping members. RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in the weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others! You care, we care, RECare.

YES, I want to be part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

_____ I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

_____ I will contribute \$_____ per month to RECare.

_____ I understand this amount will be my monthly RECare pledge added to my bill.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

Please mail to: RECare, Eastern Iowa REC, P.O. Box 3003, Wilton, IA 52778-3003

Current News Monthly Quiz

Quiz Winners:

Tom Atkinson, Muscatine
Tina Spies, Princeton
JoAnne Manley, Oakville
Kyle Jackson, DeWitt

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

What is the date and location for the 2026 District 5 meeting?

Question 2

What is the name of the newest apprentice lineman at the DeWitt Service Center?

Question 3

What is one of Max Efficiency's tips to keep your basement dry?

Name _____

Address _____

REC Account _____

Current News



BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Ken Purdy, president; Kurt Olson, vice president; Michael Bixler, secretary; Henry Bentley, treasurer; Bradley Weiss, assistant secretary; Gary Bruns, Joel Carstensen, Aubrey "Lee" Cartwright, Allan Duffe, Tom Hotz, Gary Kester, Robert Schnieder Jr., Mike Shuger, Denise Timmerman, Kathrine Wunderlich.

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