



Current News

Volume 72 Number 6 June, 2026



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.

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 2026 series of district meetings will start on July 22 at the Durant Community Center for members in District 3.

The remaining meetings will be held July 28 at the DeWitt Community Center for members in District 1; July 29 at the Matthews Building at the Cedar County Fairgrounds in Tipton for members in District 2; Aug. 4 at the Lone Tree school cafeteria for members of District 4; and finally Aug. 11 at the Mediapolis High School auditorium for members in District 5.

Elections for positions on the Cooperative Board of Directors will be held at the district meetings. The incumbent directors whose terms expire are: Joel Carstensen, Charlotte, district 1; Mike Bixler, Clarence, district 2; Mike Shuger, Wilton, district 3; Robert Schneider Jr., Riverside, district 4; and Bradley Weiss, Burlington, district 5.

All incumbent directors are running unopposed.

All memberships registered at the meetings will receive a \$25 bill credit.



Joel Carstensen



Mike Bixler



Mike Shuger

Members are able to review the following district meeting items on the Cooperative's website, www.easterniowa.com. Click on the "Events & Meetings" section on the homepage to find: official 2026 district meeting notices, minutes of the 2025 district meetings, and 2026 candidate information.

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

Official district meeting registration notices will be mailed to each membership



Robert Schneider Jr.



Bradley Weiss

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*.

Cooperative will be part of four county fairs

Visiting your local county fair has always been a fun event for families and Eastern Iowa REC will be part of that fun this summer.

Eastern Iowa REC will have a presence at county fairs in Cedar, Muscatine, Johnson, and Des Moines Counties this summer.

The Cooperative will have a booth inside the Matthews Building at the Cedar County Fair, in Tipton, July 9,10; at the Muscatine County Fair, in West Liberty, July 15, 16, 17; at the Johnson County Fair, in Iowa City, July 28; and at the Des Moines County Fair, in West Burlington, July 31.

The Cooperative's display will include information about Cooperative programs and careers.

Visit your local county fair this summer and make sure to stop by the Eastern Iowa REC booth.



The Cooperative's display at this summer's county fairs will include information about Cooperative programs, careers and fun give-aways.

Keep safety code in mind when making 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.

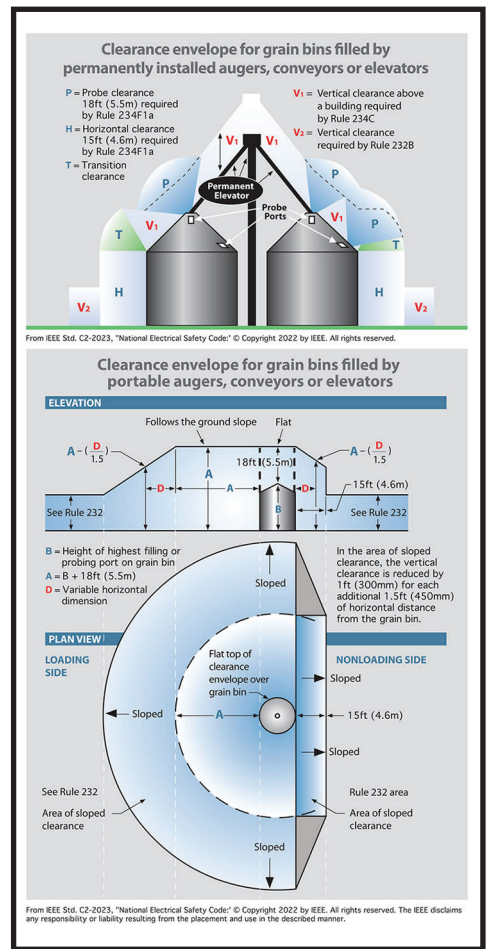
The Cooperative may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line if the bin location does not provide the clearances required by ANSI C2-2017 "National Electric Safety Code," Rule

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, 1-855-938-3616.

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.



Take this opportunity to Shine the Light on our important 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 \$3,000 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 to review the contest rules. Contest entries will be accepted until June 30. Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer.

Register online to be an exhibitor

Reservations for exhibitors are now being taken for the 2026 Eastern Iowa REC annual meeting at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds in Davenport, Sept. 10.

The exhibitor registration form can be found at www.easterniowa.com, under the Events & Meetings section on the homepage.

Consumable items are not allowed because of conflicts with fairgrounds concession contracts. Exhibit space, 10' by 10', will be reserved on a first come, first reserved basis.

Exhibitor fees are \$10 for Cooperative members and \$25 for non-members. Tables and chairs are available for an additional charge.

The registration deadline is Aug. 1.

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

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

Understanding your electrical panel: Why it matters

Your electrical panel might not be something you think about often, but it plays a critical role in how safely and reliably your home operates.

Your panel determines how much power can safely flow into your home. This capacity is measured in amperes, or amps, which represent how much electricity your home can use at one time. Think of amps like water flowing through a pipe. A larger pipe lets more water flow at once, while a smaller pipe limits how much can come through.

If too much water tries to flow through a small pipe, it can't keep up, and the same is true with electricity. If your panel is too small for your home's needs, it may struggle to power everything at once. This can lead to flickering lights or tripped breakers; both signs your system may be reaching its limits.

Many older homes were built with 60-amp or 100-amp service, which was sufficient decades ago. Today, with larger appliances, air conditioning, electric vehicles, and more electronics in our homes, those systems can easily be pushed to their limits. While many older homes still have 100-amp service, 200-amp service has become the standard for most modern residential construction. The right panel size for your home depends on the number of appliances



a hot tub, EV charger, electric heating system, or tankless water heater. These additions can place a significant demand on older electrical panels because they use a large amount of electricity.

Safety is another important factor to consider. Some older panels may not meet current safety standards and can pose a risk of overheating or damaging wiring inside the breaker box. In some cases, older homes may also need electrical upgrades, since systems installed decades ago were not designed to handle today's energy demands. An upgraded panel can also help prepare your home for the future. As more homeowners move toward electrification, having sufficient electrical capacity becomes increasingly important.

If you're unsure about your panel's condition or capacity, a licensed electrician can perform an assessment and recommend next steps.

Think of your electrical panel as the foundation of your home's electrical system. Keeping it up to date helps ensure your home can safely and reliably meet your electrical needs for years to come.

If you are planning any major electrical upgrades, or would like more information on your electrical usage, please contact our Member Services Department at 855-938-3616.

and electrical loads you use every day.

So how do you know if it's time for an upgrade?

Frequent breaker trips are one of the most common signs that your electrical system may be reaching its limits. You may also run into issues if you're planning to add new electrical loads such as

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During these warm summer months, a smart thermostat can help keep your home comfortable while reducing costs. Smart thermostats learn your routine and automatically raise the temperature when you're away and cool things down before you return, avoiding unnecessary energy use. You can also adjust settings remotely from your phone, so you're never cooling an empty house. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher while you're away or asleep can lead to significant savings. Many smart thermostats provide reports and tips, helping you fine-tune your energy use and stay cool while keeping your electric bill in check.



IS YOUR FREEZER WORKING AGAINST YOU?

Your freezer works around the clock, but if it's not running efficiently, it could be driving up your energy bill. Start by checking the temperature setting, as 0°F is recommended for both food safety and efficiency. Setting it colder than necessary won't keep food fresher, but it will use more electricity.



Too much frost buildup can also make your freezer work harder than it needs to, so defrosting when needed can help improve performance. It also helps to keep your freezer reasonably full, since frozen items retain cold temperatures better than empty space.

MAX'S TIP:

If you use a chest freezer, place it in a cool, dry area with plenty of airflow around it. Older chest freezers in garages or basements can use significantly more energy than newer ENERGY STAR® models.

-Max



Lastly, make sure the door seal is tight to prevent cold air from escaping. A worn or dirty seal can cause the freezer to run longer and waste energy. Simple maintenance habits like these can help your freezer run smarter, extend its lifespan, and save energy all summer long.

Comments from the CEO

Why vegetation management matters

There's something timeless about trees. They remind us of where we've been, and they stretch toward what's ahead. Here in our community, we take pride in the natural beauty that surrounds us—the shade on a summer afternoon, the colors that mark the changing seasons.

At the same time, we share another responsibility—one that's just as essential to our daily lives. The responsibility to keep the lights on, to power our homes and businesses, to make sure that when you flip a switch, the energy you depend on is there.

That's why Eastern Iowa REC works every day to strike a careful balance between preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect. One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming.

Now, it may not always be obvious, but keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when severe weather rolls in—strong winds, heavy ice or sudden storms can bring down branches and, with them, power lines and poles. In fact, nearly half of all power outages can be traced back to trees and vegetation coming into contact with

electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may notice crews from our trusted contractors working in neighborhoods throughout the year. These crews are highly trained and certified, following the latest industry standards to ensure the job is done safely and effectively. Their work might seem routine, but it's anything but—it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.



Kirk Trede
CEO

Electric utilities across the country are obligated to manage vegetation near power lines. Scheduled trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards. It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events.

Electricity is a powerful force, and when trees grow too close to power lines, that power can become dangerous. Branches that touch lines—or even come close—can carry electrical current. Children climbing trees in their own yards may not realize the risk. And during storms, fallen trees can create hazardous conditions not only for families but also for our lineworkers working to restore service.

Preventative maintenance—like tree trimming—is far more cost-effective than repairing widespread damage after an outage. A thoughtful, strategic vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members.

From the Boardroom, April, 2026

- Approved 2025 audit report from Clifton LarsonAllen LLP.
- Approved allocation of 2025 margins totaling \$5,259,292.
- Approved retirement of patronage totaling \$3,228,492 including \$2,138,492 in deferred patronage for years 2010-2011.

The next board meeting will be held on June 25, 2026.

Eastern Iowa REC follows EEO guidelines

Eastern Iowa REC is an Equal Employment Opportunity 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.

Current News Monthly Quiz

Quiz Winners:

May, 2026 Winners
Shelley Beeck, Lost Nation
Nancy Shannon, Long Grove
Bob Miller, Riverside
James Westphalen, Muscatine

June, 2026 Winners
Luke Sandberg, DeWitt
David Schuler, Muscatine
Penelope Oberly, Mediapolis
Marilyn Carhoff, Sperry

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

Who is the incumbent Director running for re-election in District 2?

Question 2

Name one of the county fairs the Cooperative will be at this summer?

Question 3

What is the recommended setting for your freezer?

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.

Kirk Trede
CEO

Jim Williams
Communications Director

DeWitt
500 South Fifth St.

Wapello
101 Surrey Drive.

Lone Tree
307 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.