



Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections®

Current News

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

Meet the Directors running for re-election during 2026 series of district meetings

The following are profiles of Eastern Iowa REC members seeking election to a position on the Cooperative's Board of Directors. Each potential candidate was asked to complete a petition with the signatures of 15 members from their district and a questionnaire which was used to create these profiles. The nomination paperwork was available at all Cooperative service centers and on the Cooperative website beginning Jan 2.

All the incumbent directors are running unopposed.

Joel Carstensen of Charlotte is the incumbent director seeking re-election in District 1. Carstensen has been a Cooperative member since 1980 and has served on the since 2008.

Carstensen and his wife, Peggy, have four children: Ryan and Charity Carstensen; Sharon Carstensen; Tom and Krista Carstensen; Anne and Nick Barden; and six grandchildren.

Education/Career/Job History: "Graduated high school in 1974. After a stint at ISU, I farmed for 49 years raising hogs, operated a custom baling business while raising corn and soybeans. Since retiring I'm helping do what's needed on the farm."

Other Positions Held: "I was elected to the EIL & Power Board in 2008. I served on the executive committee and am currently serving on the policy committee."

Other Activities/Interests: "Enjoying family is my top interest along with working on my golf and bowling games. Other activities include disc golf and cruising in the Viper with the kids who all have an interest in cars."

Why are you seeking re-election to the Cooperative's board of directors? "I would like to use the knowledge gained over the last 18 years to help move the Cooperative in the direction to improve our service and benefit for our members."

What strengths would you bring to the board of directors if elected? "I bring 50+ years of business experience with 18 years of experience and learning in the cooperative business model."



Joel Carstensen

How would you describe the role of a Cooperative director? "Our role as director is hiring/retaining the CEO and making sure the Cooperative is in good financial position. We set goals and oversee the progress of those goals. In order to stay up on current and new topics concerning the Cooperative we take classes."

What do you see as the most important issues facing the Cooperative? "The most important is having adequate amounts of affordable electricity for our members provided safely and as reliably as possible."

What do you feel is the greatest benefit of a cooperative business? "All members of the cooperative get benefit from having a voice in the governance along with ownership of the cooperative and receiving their portion of the margins (patronage)."

Mike Bixler of Clarence is the District 2 incumbent director seeking re-election to the board. Bixler has been a director since 2020 and has been a Cooperative member since 1985. Bixler and his wife, Debra, have three daughters and six grandchildren.

Education/Career/Job History: "High school. 6th generation farmer. N.C. High School girls B.B. state champ 2000, runner-up 1996. 2A Coach of the Year 2000. Cedar County Supervisor."

Other Positions Held: "Past president of UCC Cemetery Board and past president of church council and participate as scripture reader. President Cedar Co. Historical Society."

Other Activities/Interests: "Grandchildren activities, Hawks, Cubs."

Why are you seeking re-election to the Cooperative's board of directors? "I have been proud to give my district a voice with 6 yrs. experience. I am comfortable expressing my opinions that I think benefit my district."

What strengths would you bring to the board of directors if elected? "I am now your Treas. for the board in a few years hope to be President. As county supervisor & BOD I have legislators on speed dial & they take my calls and respect what I have to offer."

How would you describe the role of a Cooperative director? "Very simply its establishing strategic direction—ensuring financial stability—providing over-

More CANDIDATES see page 2.



Mike Bixler



Mike Shuger

CANDIDATES from page 1.

sight for the CEO.”

What do you see as the most important issues facing the Cooperative? “Protecting the grid—expansion of AI—staying competitive while trying to expand.”

What do you feel is the greatest benefit of a cooperative business? “We are member owned, not for profit—with surplus revenue returned to members—with democratic control through voting.”

Mike Shuger of Wilton is the District 3 incumbent director seeking re-election to the board. He has served two stints on the board. He first served from 1993-1996 and was elected again to the board in 2002. Shuger has been an Eastern Iowa REC member since 1974. He lives near Wilton with his wife of 51 years, Janice. The couple has one son, Jared, and one daughter, Sara, and grandchildren, Hannah, Roman and Nolan.

Education/Career/Job History: “Wilton High School 1967-1971, American Institute of Business 1971-1972, broker/owner Wilton Realty Co. 1981-2021.”

Other Positions Held: “President of Eastern Iowa REC, President of Wilton Chamber of Commerce, President Wilton Industrial Development Corp., President Muscatine Board of Realtors, M.L.S.”

Other Activities/Interests: “I like to travel with my wife to see our kids and grandkids.”

Why are you seeking election to the Cooperative’s board of directors? “I want to continue to make decisions that will uphold our mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members.”

What strengths would you bring to the board of directors if elected? “With 26 years as a member of the board, I will continue to help make decisions that are in the best interest of all REC members.”

How would you describe the role of a Cooperative director? “We need to stay on top of finance issues, political issues and power supply issues.”

What do you see as the most important issues facing the Cooperative? “We need to continue to provide quality electrical service at the most reasonable price possible.”

What do you feel is the greatest benefit of a cooperative business? “This cooperative is controlled by our members. District meetings elect board member with a 1 member, 1 vote principle.”

Robert Schneider Jr. of Riverside is the District 4 incumbent director running for re-election to the board. Schneider has been a member of the Cooperative since 2005 and has served on the board since 2023.

Schneider’s family includes his wife, Lois, and children Allen, Jared, Shawn, Tyler, Nathan, Kristin, Bell, Kelli and Kyla. The couple has 19 grandchildren.

Education/Career/Job History: “Graduated from Highland High School, 4 years in the Air Force Telecommunications group. I was with Wellman Coop Telephone for 13 years and then 34 years with Sharon Telephone Company. Started BS Communications over 40 years ago and still offer support for telecommunications for Hotel Motel customers.”

Other Positions Held: “Served six years on the Mid Prairie School Board, eight years on Highland Community School District. Served on Grant Wood



Robert Schneider Jr.



Bradley Weiss

AEA Board for 14 years. Riverside City Council for 8 years. Served as a trustee for St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Riverside.”

Other Activities/Interests: “Woodworking and trying to attend activities of our grandchildren.”

Why are you seeking re-election to the Cooperative’s board of directors? “I am coming to the end of my first term and have learned a lot with the education opportunities available to the directors. I would like to be able to use that to benefit the future decisions of the Coop.”

What strengths would you bring to the board of directors if elected? “My experience on other boards has given me opportunities to consider how a decision will affect the outcome that the board is looking for. Willing to share my thoughts when needed.”

How would you describe the role of a Cooperative director? “A director is accountable to the members and willing to do the training and to educate themselves to make the decisions which benefit the members and the Coop.”

What do you see as the most important issues facing the Cooperative? “The concern about the grid and the reliability of the grid. Solar and wind generation are here but reliability is not perfected with this technology. Generation by nuclear power or gas-powered generation needs to be addressed to keep the grid stable and reliable.”

What do you feel is the greatest benefit of a cooperative business? “Democratic control which allows the members to be involved in selecting their representative. Members are allocated a return on their annual electric

More CANDIDATES see page 3.

CANDIDATES from page 2.
bill for being members in the cooperative.”

Bradley Weiss of Burlington is the incumbent director seeking re-election for a three-year term as a director representing District 5. Weiss has been a member of the Cooperative since 1985 and has served on the board since 2023. He has been married to his wife, Juli, for 39 years. The couple has one daughter, Rachel.

“I am seeking re-election to continue serving our cooperative’s membership. Over the past three years, I have focused on responsible governance, maintaining

safe, reliable service, and supporting long-term planning to meet the needs of our community.”

“To better serve in this role, I earned the Credential Cooperative Director accreditation by completing five intensive, day long course’s covering cooperative governance, financial oversight, strategic planning, and the principles that guide membership owned utilities.”

“In my professional career, I have worked in Supply Chain management roles where I’ve developed strong skills in leadership, problem-solving, and financial responsibility. I bring that same approach to my work on the

board.”

“I’m proud to live in the Eastern Iowa Light and Power service area with my family. We value being part of this community and staying involved in local activities and organizations. Serving on the board is one way I give back to a community that has given so much to me and my family.”

“I am running for an additional three-year term and would be honored to continue serving our members. I look forward to building on the progress we’ve made and helping ensure Eastern Iowa Light and Power remains reliable, efficient, safe, and focused on its members.”

Don’t miss Eastern Iowa REC fair appearances

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

At each fair this summer, Cooperative personnel will be on hand to talk about Cooperative programs and careers. Fair visitors will also find fun give-aways at the Cooperative booth, including plastic hard hats for the children.

Visit your local county fair this summer and make sure to stop by the Eastern Iowa REC booth. We look forward to seeing everyone at their local county fair this summer.



The Cooperative’s display at this summer’s county fairs will include information about Cooperative programs, careers and fun give-aways including the plastic hard hats for the children.

Joint memberships are available to all members

Elections for directors are held at the district meetings each summer. Your name must appear on the Eastern Iowa REC membership and you must be present at the meet-

ing in order to participate in the election process.

If only one spouse’s name appears on a membership, the other spouse cannot vote in the election. A joint membership will record both names of spouses, allowing both to participate if they wish. Joint memberships are also available for non-married couples who reside at the same address.

A joint membership will allow each to vote. Each membership is allowed one vote, so each voting party may cast ½ a vote. If

one or the other is unable to attend the district meeting, the joint membership will ensure that the person who does attend is able to cast the full vote in the election.

Any non-person account, such as a church or business, must have the designated voter listed on the account present at the district meeting to vote.

Contact a member service representative, toll free, 1-855-938-3616 or email billing@easterniowa.com to obtain a joint membership form.



Don't Miss Us!

Cedar County Fair- July 9 and 10
Muscatine County Fair- July 15, 16, 17
Johnson County Fair- July 28
Des Moines County Fair- July 31



smart hub

PAPERLESS BILLING

Visit www.easterniowa.com for details.
Get instant access to your bill and declutter your life. Experience the convenience of paying your bill online.



The 2026 District Meetings start later this month

The 2026 series of district meetings will start on July 22 at the Durant Community Center, 606 5th Ave., Durant, for members in District 3.

The remaining meetings will be held July 28 at the DeWitt Community Center, 512 10th St., DeWitt, for members in District 1; July 29 inside the Matthews Building at the Cedar County Fairgrounds, 220th St., Tipton, for members of District 2; Aug. 4 at the Lone Tree school cafeteria, 303 S. Devoe St., Lone Tree, for members in District 4; and finally Aug. 11 at the Mediapolis High School auditorium, 725 N. Northfield St., Mediapolis, for members in District 5.

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

Elections for positions on the Cooperative Board of Directors will be held at the district meetings.

Candidate profiles for the 2026 director elections begin on page 1.

Members are able to review district meeting items on the Cooperative's website, www.easterniowa.com. Click on the Events link 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 nomination 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 prior to the meeting. Please bring the bottom portion of that notice to the meeting as they certify a member's eligibility to vote and are used for the prize drawings at each meeting.

These prizes include: an electric MECO tabletop grill, heated camping

chair, smart bird feeder with camera, Cuisinart Deluxe electric can opener, and mini electric chainsaw.

All members who register at their district meeting will receive a \$25 bill credit.



A heated camping chair and four other prizes will be awarded in drawings held at each district meeting.

Iowa's electric cooperatives will be at the State Fair!

Iowa electric cooperatives are pleased to once again sponsor the 4-H Exhibits Building at the 2026 Iowa State Fair.

If you're planning a visit to the Iowa State Fair from August 13-23, make sure to stop by and see us in the air condi-

tioned 4-H Exhibits Building in the southwest corner of the fairgrounds.

Electric co-op staff from across the state will be on hand to assist with new interactive elements for adults and kids, including a large statewide map of elec-

tric co-ops and coloring pages for kids.

Eastern Iowa REC will also be represented at the fair this year at the Iowa Lineman's Rodeo. Organized jointly by Iowa Utility Association and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, journeyman and apprentice teams compete in four challenging events designed to highlight the precision, speed, and safety essential to the profession.

Cooperative Apprentice Linemen Lenny Fortenbacher and Andrew Mueller will be competing in the events, while Journeymen Linemen Mark Henning and Austin Anderson will be serving among the judges for the competition.

The Lineman's Rodeo will be held on Aug. 21 starting at 8 a.m. at the Elwell Family Park in the northwest corner of the fairgrounds.

Admission to the Lineman's Rodeo is included with your State Fair ticket.

We look forward to connecting with our co-op members at the Iowa State Fair this summer. Please stop by our booth, enjoy the action at the Lineman's Rodeo, and say hello!



Apprentice linemen Lenny Fortenbacher (above) and Andrew Mueller (right) will compete in the Lineman's Rodeo at the 2026 Iowa State Fair.



Register online to be an exhibitor at 2026 Annual Meeting

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

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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.



Same Energy. Different Impact.

The demand for electricity is typically highest in the late afternoon during peak energy hours. You can help lower demand by shifting when energy-intensive activities happen.



Shift appliance use to off-peak hours.

- Run the dishwasher before you go to bed.
- Use the oven earlier or later (during off-peak hours.)
- Space out use of major appliances.



Use a programmable or smart thermostat.

- Automatically adjust the temp setting during peak hours.
- Schedule home cooling cycles for efficiency.



Opt for low-energy alternatives during peak hours.

- Use small appliances like slow cookers or air fryers—or fire up the grill—instead of the oven.
- Air-dry clothes instead of using the dryer.
- Use ceiling fans for additional cooling.

How you can help during peak demand

By Miranda Boutelle,
Efficiency Services Group

Your electric cooperative works hard to ensure safe, reliable power to homes and businesses 24/7. To make sure everyone has the power they need, generation must match consumption and have the capacity to adjust to changing demands for energy.

Peak demand is the period in a given range of time—day, month or year—when electricity use is highest. It's caused by many people using energy-consuming equipment at the same time. It differs based on geography, weather and time of year. For example, demand is typically highest on hot summer afternoons and cold winter mornings. Most utilities also experience daily peaks when people are getting ready in the mornings and returning home in the evenings.

When everyone uses more energy at the same time, it puts more stress on the electric grid and requires more expensive electricity to meet the need. Electricity pricing is based on supply and demand. The price of electricity is higher when the demand is higher, which costs the utility more.

To lower energy use and strain on the grid during peak times, there are habits we can adopt in our homes. Let's look at two examples.

Joe and John arrive home from work at 5:30 p.m. They both turn on the oven to make dinner.

While John waits for the oven to preheat, he throws in a load of laundry. He finishes dinner, cleans up and starts the dishwasher. Then, he moves the clothes to the dryer. Joe finishes dinner, loads the dishwasher and sets it to start at 10 p.m. He puts a load of laundry in the washing machine and later that evening switches it over to the dryer.

Although they use the same appliances and amount of energy, John uses it all at once, running multiple appliances during peak hours, creating higher demand and more strain on the electric grid while using more



Apply your dishwasher's delay-start feature to use electricity during off-peak hours. Photo Credit: Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources

expensive energy.

To lower your demand, spread electricity use throughout the day and avoid peak times as much as possible. This will reduce the utility's cost of supplying electricity to your home.

Large appliances—including washers, dryers, ovens, water heaters and air conditioners—have the biggest impact. Using them during off-peak hours or one at a time can help.

Automate as much as possible. Most electric vehicle chargers can be set to charge during scheduled hours with built-in timers or apps. Most modern dishwashers have delay-start features.

You can also automate air conditioning. Some utilities offer programs that precool homes during off-peak hours to reduce demand during peak times. Simple, free adjustments, such as closing your curtains on hot afternoons and evenings, can help, too.

Spreading out your energy use helps your utility keep costs down and benefits your local energy grid.

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

You can track energy use with SmartHub

Did you know your energy usage could be available from your desktop or mobile device? Through the SmartHub app, you can monitor your daily consumption 24/7 and see how it is trending over time. You can even download your data by clicking on the "View Usage" link in the Quick Links list.

Download the SmartHub app for free! It's available in the Apple App Store or Google Play Marketplace. Visit the Eastern Iowa REC website, www.easterniowa.com for more information.

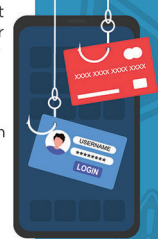


ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Running multiple major appliances at the same time—like your dishwasher, laundry machines and oven—can spike energy demand and strain the electric grid, especially during peak hours (typically late afternoon to early evening). Instead of stacking appliance use, spread it out throughout the day or shift chores to off-peak hours when energy demand is lower. This not only helps improve overall efficiency but can also reduce your energy costs. A simple habit change, like doing laundry in the morning and running the dishwasher overnight, can make a meaningful difference for both your wallet and energy reliability.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Scammers are increasingly using "smishing" — fake text messages designed to look like they're from legitimate businesses, including your electric utility. These texts may claim your bill is overdue, your service will be disconnected or you're owed a refund. They often include a link that directs you to a fake payment site or asks for personal information. Never click suspicious links or respond to unexpected texts, even if the message appears urgent. Instead, log in to your utility account through the official website or mobile app to verify any claims. We will never ask for sensitive information like passwords or banking details through text messages.



STEAM Grants support area schools

Eastern Iowa REC's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) Grant Program provides \$500 grants to teachers for projects in each of those academic areas.

The Cooperative understands school budgets are tight and this program strives to provide extra funding which will allow teachers to pursue the projects needed to educate the young minds in our local communities.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the Cooperative provided grants to four eastern Iowa schools. The program will continue in the 2026-2027 school year. Any teachers interested in the program should submit an application found on the Cooperative's website, www.easterniowa.com, under the Community tab.

Tim Bean, a Wilton Junior/Senior High math instructor, received a STEAM grant for the his in-school Rubik's cube solving program.

"We have integrated these cubes into our 7th grade computer science curriculum, our algebra 2 curriculum, our entire Talented And Gifted program, and also have an after-school program," Bean said. "It has been amazing seeing students take on the challenge of learning to solve cubes and seeing students get excited about solving cubes in school. Recently, I had a student tell me that coming to school to do cubes has been the most excited he has ever been for school."

At the Cardinal Elementary School in Maquoketa, the STEAM Grant was used to expand the school's makerspace. Jenna Spain, TAG/Title 1 teacher, used the funds to buy a Chompsaw, which allows students to

make precise, safe cuts on various materials and 3D printer filaments to enable students to design and print three-dimensional objects.

"These supplies empower students to bring complex ideas to life, deepen their understanding of STEM concepts, and foster hands-on problem solving in a collaborative makerspace environment," Spain explained.

Pam Joslyn, technology and innovation teacher at Muscatine's Susan Clark Junior High, received a grant to aid in the school's Reinvent Muscatine project.

"The grant was used to enhance our capabilities with tools that enable students to quickly iterate their designs and create functional prototypes for real-world problem solving," Joslyn said. "This project empowers students to engage in the complete engineering design process—from problem identification and data collection to prototype development and community presentations."

At Northeast Middle School in Goose Lake, Lisa LeConte, TAG teacher, received a grant to upgrade the school's 3D printers which were used to build 3D printed cars with gears.

"Our STEM 360 course traveled to Platteville, WI to compete in a car building contest where Northeast swept the awards 1st-10th at a multi-school event," Jennifer Huling, NE 6-12 principal, said. "This experience supports the development of industry aligned skills like CAD and gives our students opportunities to learn through the multiple iterations of the design process."

In total the Cooperative's STEAM grants benefited nearly 600 students during the 2025-26 school year.



Blake Petersen, a Northeast High School senior, is shown at the "track" running his original 3D printed car, which won first place at a contest in Platteville, WI April 30.

Payment kiosks are available at all service centers

Eastern Iowa REC members who are making bill payments at Cooperative service centers can use the payment kiosks located in the vestibules at each service center.

The kiosks allow members to pay their bills using a check, cash, debit card or credit card.

Payments made through the kiosks are automatically processed into the Cooperative's billing system. These kiosks are available daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

It is important to have your account number available when using the payment kiosks. Member account numbers can be found on the upper right side of your energy bill.



Wilton students are using Rubik's cubes to learn about using algorithms. Their teacher, Tim Bean, noted on a standard 3x3 puzzle cube there are 43 quintillion (43,000,000,000,000,000) possible combinations and only one of these is correct. Without algorithms, solving a 3x3 puzzle would be nearly impossible; that would be a 1 in 43,000,000,000,000,000 chance of getting the correct combination.



Ventilation Matters: Balancing efficiency & indoor air quality

When most people think about energy efficiency, they focus on keeping outdoor air out of their home. Sealing air leaks and adding insulation are some of the most effective ways to reduce energy use and improve comfort. But there is another piece of the puzzle that often gets overlooked: ventilation.

A well-sealed home is more energy efficient because it reduces the amount of conditioned air that escapes. However, if a home is too tight without proper ventila-

tion, indoor air pollutants, excess moisture, and odors can become trapped inside. The key is finding the right balance between efficiency and healthy indoor air quality.

Everyday activities such as cooking, showering and cleaning introduce moisture and contaminants into your home's air. Without adequate ventilation, excess humidity can contribute to condensation, mold growth, and poor indoor air quality. During the summer months, it can make your home feel uncomfortable and force your air conditioner to work harder.

One of the easiest ways to improve ventilation is by using exhaust fans properly. Bathroom fans should be run during showers and for at least 15 to 20 minutes afterward to help remove moisture. Range hoods should be used while cooking to capture heat, steam, grease, and airborne particles before they spread throughout the home.

If your home feels stuffy or has persistent humidity issues, it may be worth evaluating your ventilation system. Some



newer homes include whole-house ventilation systems that bring in fresh outdoor air while exhausting stale indoor air. These systems can help maintain indoor air quality without sacrificing energy efficiency.

It is also important to remember that ventilation equipment needs maintenance. Clean exhaust fan grilles, replace HVAC filters regularly, and ensure vents are free from obstructions. Proper airflow allows these systems to operate more effectively and efficiently.

By combining proper air sealing, insulation, and ventilation, you can create a home that is comfortable, efficient, and healthier for your family year-round.



Before You Leave: Simple ways to save energy while you're away

There are many things you need to do before going on vacation: pack your bags, create the perfect playlist, and make sure someone checks the mail. But before you head out the door, making a few simple adjustments around your home can help reduce energy use, lower your electric bill, and give you peace of mind while you're away.

1. Adjust Your Thermostat

There is no reason to keep your home at normal comfort settings when no one is there. Consider raising your thermostat a few degrees while you're away. A programmable or smart thermostat can make these adjustments automatically and return to your preferred settings before you arrive home.

2. Shut Down Unnecessary Electronics

Many electronics continue to use small amounts of electricity even when they're turned off. TVs, gaming systems, computers, chargers, and other devices can contribute to these "phantom loads." Unplug devices or use a smart power strip to help eliminate unnecessary energy use while you're gone.

3. Adjust Your Water Heater

If you'll be gone for several days, consider adjusting your water heater or turning on vacation mode if available. If your water heater does not have a vacation setting, lowering the temperature can help reduce energy consumption without completely shutting the unit down.

4. Check Your Refrigerator and Freezer

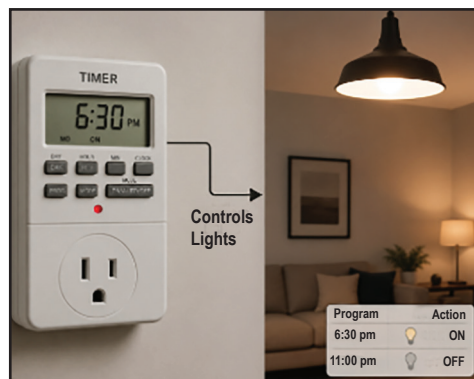
Make sure refrigerator and freezer doors are fully closed and sealed before leaving. Discard any perishable foods that may spoil while you're away. If you will be gone for an extended period and have a second refrigerator that is mostly empty, consider unplugging it to save energy.

5. Use Timers for Lights

If you want your home to appear occupied, use timers or smart plugs to control a few lights. This can provide added security while using far less energy than leaving lights on continuously.

A few minutes of preparation before your trip can help reduce wasted energy,

lower costs, and ensure that your home is ready for when you return.



MAX EFFICIENCY

CEILING FANS: KEEP COOL WITHOUT TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT

Using your ceiling fans correctly can help you stay comfortable this summer while reducing the workload on your cooling system.



MAX'S TIP:

Fans cool people, not rooms. Turn ceiling fans off when rooms are unoccupied to avoid wasting electricity. -Max



During the summer, be sure your ceiling fans are rotating counterclockwise. This pushes air downward, creating a cooling breeze that helps you feel more comfortable without lowering your thermostat setting.

Comments from the CEO

Keep peak hours in mind this summer

The 2026 series of District Meetings start later this month and I thank you in advance for taking part in these important events. These meetings provide a chance to connect with your Cooperative, stay informed, and have your voice heard. As a member-owner, you play an important role in guiding the future of the co-op, and these meetings are an opportunity to learn about our progress, ask questions, and meet with members of the Board of directors and Cooperative management staff.

As we settle into the heat of summer, our homes naturally use more electricity. Air conditioners run longer, refrigerators work harder, and everyday activities—from cooking dinner to doing laundry—often occur during the warmest hours of the day. Not surprisingly, that's also when electricity demand across our communities reaches its highest levels.

At Eastern Iowa REC, our top priority is providing safe, reliable, and affordable power whenever you need it. However, during peak energy hours—typically between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.—the demand for electricity increases significantly as homes and businesses use more power at the same time. On the hottest days of the year, that demand can place added strain on the electric grid.

The good news is that small changes in your daily routine can make a meaningful difference.

Think of the electric grid like a highway system. During rush hour, traffic builds, congestion increases, and travel becomes less efficient. When drivers adjust their schedules, even slightly, it helps reduce bottlenecks and keeps traffic moving smoothly. The same principle applies to electricity use.

By shifting some high-energy activities to off-peak hours—such as running the dishwasher later in the evening, doing laundry after peak times, or preparing meals earlier in the day—you help spread out energy demand. This reduces stress on the grid during critical periods and helps improve overall system efficiency.

From the Boardroom, May, 2026

- Approved a capital budget amendment.
- Provided a Lone Tree Operations site update.

The next board meeting will be held on July 30, 2026.

Here are a few simple ways to reduce energy use during peak hours:

- Use a programmable or smart thermostat to automatically adjust your home's temperature during periods of high demand. Even raising the thermostat by a few degrees can lower energy consumption while maintaining comfort.

- Consider using a slow cooker, air fryer, microwave, or outdoor grill instead of the oven. These alternatives generate less indoor heat, reducing the workload on your air conditioner.

- Delay laundry and dishwashing until later in the evening when demand is lower. Air-drying clothes when possible can also save energy and reduce heat inside your home.

- Take advantage of ceiling fans to help circulate air and create a cooling effect. Fans can make a room feel several degrees cooler, allowing you to increase your thermostat setting without sacrificing comfort.

By shifting energy use to off-peak times, the Cooperative can save money by reducing demand and saving on wholesale power costs. Members can save by shifting electric use to the off-peak period, 9 p.m.—4 p.m. when the kWh rate is lower.

While these actions may seem small individually, their collective impact is significant. When members work together to manage energy use during peak periods, it helps reduce strain on the grid, supports reliable service, and contributes to more stable energy costs for everyone.

That's the cooperative difference. As a member-owner of Eastern Iowa REC, you are more than a customer—you are part of a community working together to strengthen the electric system that serves us all. Every effort, no matter how small, helps build a more resilient and efficient energy future.

This summer, we encourage you to take a closer look at your daily energy habits. A few simple adjustments can help keep your home comfortable, improve energy efficiency, and ensure our grid remains strong and reliable—even when temperatures soar.



Kirk Trede
CEO

Current News Monthly Quiz

Quiz Winners:

Kurt Dohse, DeWitt
Karl Christoff, Donahue
Jill Gaul, Tipton
Ryan VanderHeiden, Wheatland

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

Name one of the county fairs where the Cooperative will have a booth.

Question 2

Name a school that received a STEAM grant.

Question 3

What are the hours of the payment kiosks?

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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