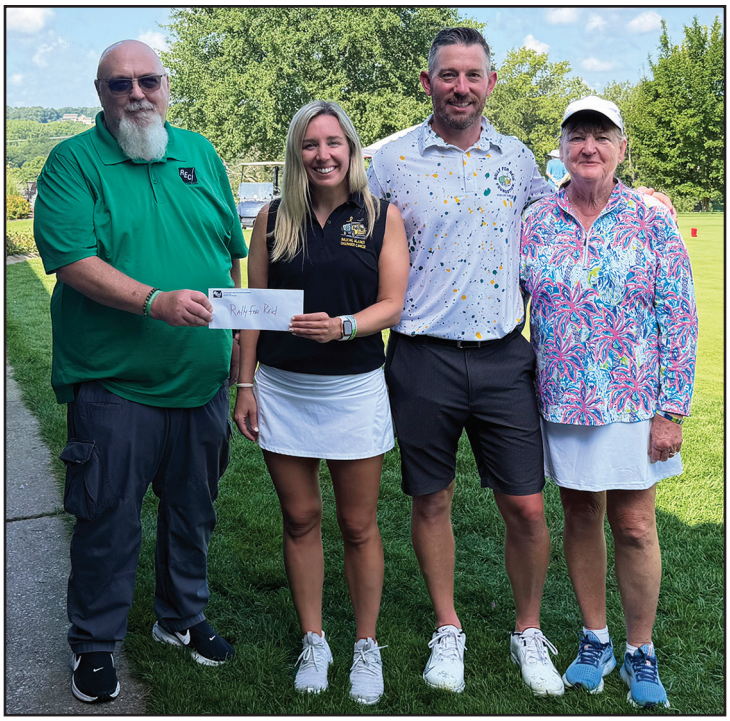
EASTERN IOWA
Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections®

Current News

Volume 72 Number 11 November, 2026
A monthly publication for the members of Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative

Shine The Light contest recognizes community volunteers



From left: Jim Williams, Cooperative communications director; Megan Gleeson; Bill Gleeson; and Kathy Wunderlich, Cooperative director.



Emily Eichelberger and Director Gary Bruns.

The Shine the Light contest, sponsored by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), celebrates local volunteers who are making a positive impact on their communities here in Iowa.

This year 83 Iowans from across the state were nominated and the IAEC selected three grand prize winners.

One Eastern Iowa REC member was selected as a contest winner and another Cooperative member was nominated. The winner received a $3,000 donation toward their charity from the IAEC. Eastern Iowa REC and our power supplier, Central Iowa Power Cooperative, each made $250 donations to the nominee's charity.

The 2026 Cooperative Shine the Light contest winner was Megan Gleeson of West Burlington for her work with the Rally For Reid Foundation.

Megan and her husband, Bill, started the Foundation in memory of their late son, Reid, who died of cancer.

To date, the Foundation has helped more than 300 families; raised nearly $250,000; and provided care packages to nearly 200 families of children battling cancer.

Read the full story at www.eastern-iowa.com/news-safety/news/news-posts/shine-light-contest-winner-0.

More SHINE see page 3.

2026-2027 IOWA HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEN TO APPLY:

- **Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled:** October 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027
- **All other households:** November 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027

WHAT TO PROVIDE:

- **Proof of Income** (for all household members age 18 and over) Depending upon your household income type, income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or last calendar year, whichever is easier or more beneficial for you.
- **Proof of Social Security Numbers for all household members** (documentation required)
- **Most recent heat bill**
- **Most recent electric bill**

WAGE EARNERS:
Please provide copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIXED INCOME:
This income may include Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran's Assistance and pensions. Please provide copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS:
Please provide a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

Note - Additional countable income and/or income verification not listed above may be required for eligibility determination

ATTENTION: RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS, NEED HELP WITH YOUR HEATING BILL?

The 2026-2027 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season.

The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel and type of housing.

If you are not sure where to apply you can Dial 2-1-1, visit https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/liheap to locate and contact your local community action agency or write to:

LIHEAP
Iowa Department of Health & Human Services
Capitol Complex
Des Moines, IA 50319

INCOME MAXIMUMS

Household Size	*Annual Gross Income*
1	$31,920
2	$43,280
3	$54,640
4	$66,000
5	$77,360
6	$88,720
7	$100,080
8	$111,440

For households with more than eight members, add $11,360 for each additional member.

Weatherization starts with the right insulation

When most people think about weatherizing their home, they picture sealing drafty windows or replacing old weatherstripping. While those improvements certainly help, one of the most effective ways to improve comfort and reduce energy use is ensuring your home has the right amount and the right type of insulation.

Insulation acts like a thermal barrier, slowing down the movement of heat. During the winter, it helps keep warm air inside your home, and during the summer it helps keep outdoor heat from entering. The result is a home that stays more comfortable year-round while placing less demand on your heating and cooling system.

However, not all insulation is the same. Different materials perform better in different situations.

Fiberglass batts are one of the most commonly used insulation products in homes. They are cost-effective and work well in open wall cavities, unfinished basements, and accessible attics during new construction or major renovation projects. Proper installation is important; gaps in insulation or compressed batts can significantly reduce their effectiveness.

Blown-in insulation is often the best choice for improving insulation in existing homes because it can fill gaps and irregular spaces without requiring extensive demolition. Whether made from cellulose or fiberglass, blown-in insulation is commonly used in attics and enclosed wall cavities where traditional batts are difficult to install.

Cellulose, made from recycled paper and treated for fire resistance, is denser and can help reduce air movement through small gaps, making it a popular choice for older homes. Blown-in fiberglass is lighter, naturally resistant to moisture, and tends to settle less over time, helping it maintain its insulating performance for many years. Many homes built more than 20 years ago can benefit from additional blown-in attic insulation, as existing insulation often settles and no longer provides today's recommended level of thermal protection.

Spray foam insulation provides both insulation and air sealing in one product. It expands to fill cracks and gaps that other insulation materials cannot reach, making it ideal for rim joists, crawl spaces, difficult-to-access areas, and homes with significant air leakage. Although it has a higher upfront cost, spray foam can deliver exceptional energy savings in the right applications.

The best insulation approach often depends on the age and construction of your home. Older homes frequently have little to no insulation in exterior walls and may have attic insulation levels well below today's recommendations. Newer homes generally include better insulation, but even homes built within the last 20 to 30 years can benefit from additional insulation if they do not meet today's recommended levels.

It is also important to remember that insulation works best when combined with proper air sealing. Small gaps around plumbing penetrations, wiring, attic access doors, recessed lighting, and ductwork can allow conditioned air to escape and outdoor air to enter. Sealing these leaks before adding insulation often provides the greatest overall improvement in comfort and efficiency.

If you're unsure whether your home could benefit from additional insulation, start with your attic. In many homes, it's the easiest and most cost-effective place to improve energy efficiency.



There are different types of insulation, including fiberglass batts, blown fiberglass, cellulose and foam. Each has its own R-value, which is listed on the packaging. *Photo credit: Mark Gilliland*

Eastern Iowa REC offers weatherization rebates for qualifying insulation, air sealing, and duct sealing projects. If you're planning energy efficiency improvements, contact Energy Advisor Max Holtz before starting your project to learn about available rebates and eligibility requirements.

Call 855-938-3616 or email max.holtz@easterniowa.com.



A contractor installs blown cellulose insulation in an attic to minimize energy waste. *Photo credit: Project Home*

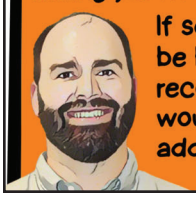
MAX EFFICIENCY: WHAT DOES R-VALUE REALLY MEAN?

If you've ever shopped for insulation, you've probably seen the term R-value. But what does it mean?

R-value measures how well insulation resists heat flow—the higher the R-value, the better the insulation. Different areas of your home need different levels, with attics typically requiring the most. In Iowa, attic insulation levels of R-49 to R-60, or about 14 to 20 inches, are often recommended for better energy efficiency.

MAX'S CHALLENGE:

Spend five minutes looking in your attic. Can you easily see the tops of your ceiling joists?



If so, your attic insulation may be below today's recommended levels and would likely benefit from additional insulation.

-Max

Keep in mind: More isn't always better. The right R-value depends on where insulation is installed and how well it's installed. Gaps and air leaks can reduce its effectiveness.



Comments from the CEO

Building the Cooperative budget presents challenges

November always seems to be a pivotal month. It brings a change of seasons with cooler temperatures, shorter days and leaves falling off the trees. We will all soon be busy with shopping, decorating for the holidays and preparing for family gatherings.

This time of year is also pivotal for the Cooperative as crews are working to finish projects ahead of the winter weather and the Cooperative's management staff looks ahead to the new year by completing the budgeting process for 2027.

From the Boardroom, September, 2026

- Approved the participation agreement for the health care plan for 2027.
- Reviewed Cooperative business insurance plan renewals.
- Reviewed the 2026 Annual Meeting.
- Elected directors to serve on the New Ventures board: Aubrey "Lee" Cartwright, Allan Duffe, Henry Bentley, Robert Schneider Jr. and Brad Weiss.
- Reviewed the composition of the Cooperative's voting districts.
- Reviewed proposed changes to Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation.

The next board meeting will be held on November 13, 2026.

Details regarding the 2027 Cooperative budget will be included in a future issue of the *Current News*.

Each year, your Cooperative's board and management team face the important responsibility of developing the annual budget that helps ensure reliable electric service while keeping costs as affordable as possible for members. It may sound straightforward, but creating the Cooperative budget is a complex process with many moving parts.



Kirk Trede
CEO

One of the biggest challenges is uncertainty. The cost of wholesale power, materials, equipment, labor, insurance and other services can change significantly from one year to the next. At the same time, the Cooperative must anticipate how much electricity members will use and how changing weather, economic conditions and new electric technologies could affect demand.

The Cooperative must also balance today's needs with tomorrow's. Maintaining and replacing poles, lines, substations, transformers and other equipment requires significant investment. New construction may be necessary to serve growth or improve reliability. These capital investments must be carefully planned so the Cooperative can maintain a safe and dependable system without placing unnecessary pressure on members' rates.

Another challenge is balancing the operating and capital budgets. The operating budget pays for the day-to-day costs of providing electric service, while the capital budget supports long-term investments in the system. Both are essential to the Cooperative's financial health.

Ultimately, developing the annual budget is about making informed choices. Cooperative leaders must consider reliability, safety, affordability, financial strength and the long-term needs of the membership.

A good budget is more than a list of numbers. It is a financial roadmap that helps the Cooperative prepare for the future while fulfilling its commitment to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to the members it serves.





Crews complete poletop rescue training

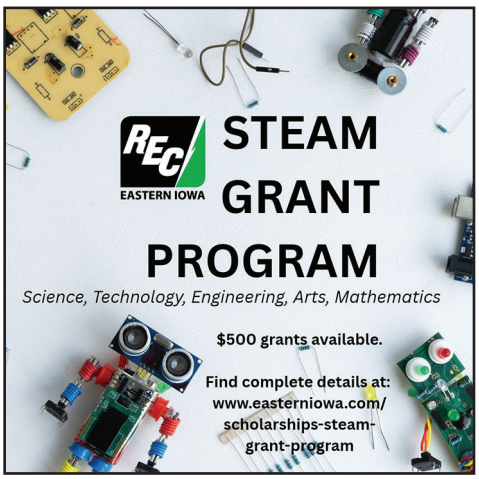
Andy Koopmann, Wilton line foreman (left), lowers the training mannequin, and Tyler Mach, apprentice lineman, rigs the training mannequin during the poletop rescue training held Sept. 22-23.

Shine the Light contest honors community service

SHINE from page 1.

The Shine the Light nominee was Emily Eichelberger of Muscatine.

Eichelberger was nominated by Sara Carlson of Muscatine for Eichelberger's work as a mental health advocate. A donation was made in Eichelberger's name to the National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Mississippi Valley chapter.



The Cooperative patronage treasure hunt

Each year, a list of names is published of former Cooperative members whose patronage or other checks were returned to us as undeliverable, and we were unable to find a valid address or whose checks were not returned but were not cashed.

If you know any of the people on the list, have them contact the Cooperative patronage department, toll free, 1-855-938-3616.

The list can be found on the Cooperative's website, www.easterniowa.com/treasure-hunt/.



Current News Monthly Quiz

Quiz Winners:

Thomas & Deborah Antram, Muscatine

Carl & Elsie Soenksen Family Farm LLC, DeWitt

Ed Aldeman, Iowa City

Louise Ellerhoff, 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
Name charity that received the grand prize Shine the Light donation?

_____

Question 2
How much are the STEAM grants?

_____

Question 3
How many inches of attic insulation are recommended for Iowa homes?

_____

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.

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