

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A WORD FROM



Craig Codner, CEO  
ccodner@butlerrec.coop

## Your cooperative in 2020

This has been a year of constant change. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how we interact, our vacation plans, how we do our jobs, and so much more.

At Butler County REC, one thing that hasn't changed is our priority—to provide our members with safe, reliable electricity.

While our world has slowed down during this time, employees of Butler County REC have not. We have continued to work to maintain the level of service you expect from us.

We were fortunate that two years ago we enclosed our office area with security doors and a walk-up window for payments. This means we have been able to keep our office open without risk to employees or members.

In addition, our employees collaborated to create documents ensuring member and employee safety and business continuity during a pandemic. These included a health assessment, a return-to-work flow chart, and telecommuting guidelines, among other documents.

For our line crews, it was business as usual with regard to workload. This year they have completed 8.5 miles of the 19.5 miles of line scheduled to be constructed this year in the Construction Work Plan (CWP). The crews have also completed 80 work orders, which consisted of CWP projects, service upgrades, pole change-outs, and other maintenance issues.

We are very proud of our employees' ability to adapt quickly—from making time to create the new documents, to changing our annual meeting format, to social distancing at work, to sanitizing work surfaces, everyone has stepped up to remain safe.

Although we have not seen many of you in-person for a number of months, we are always available by phone and always ready to be of service to our members.



Left to right: Dr. Reid Faldet, Dr. Addison Faldet, and Rick Whalen



Site of the new Hometown Dental office in New Hampton.

## Butler County REC helps fund New Hampton dental practice

At Butler County REC, we are invested in the communities in which our members seek services.

Recently, through our United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) loan program, we provided funding to Hometown Dental, Inc., New Hampton, to assist in the purchase of a building and a dental practice. This is the second opportunity we have had to

support Hometown Dental, as we also helped in the purchase of their practice, led by Dr. Reid Faldet, in Charles City.

"It's extremely important to have dental practices in rural Iowa to help make the communities more viable. We're happy to help finance the expansion and purchase to assist rural health," said Rick Whalen, Butler County REC economic development director.

Dr. Addison Faldet plans to open her practice in New Hampton in late summer.

We are proud of our commitment to our communities. If you are interested in our USDA loan program, please contact us at 319-267-2726 or visit our website, butlerrec.coop, click on the Business Development tab, and Programs and Services.

# The everyday value of electricity

Most people don't think much about the electricity they use. We expect the lights to turn on when we flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or maybe when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our lifestyle, it's a great value, especially when compared to other services and expenses. Think back to the cost of a gallon of gasoline or groceries 20 years ago. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat.

Most of us have a cell phone, and we pay for television channels. Many of us consider these necessities. Maybe it's because we can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the cost of medical care increased 3 percent from 2014-2019 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). Education was not too far behind at 2.6 percent. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4 percent.

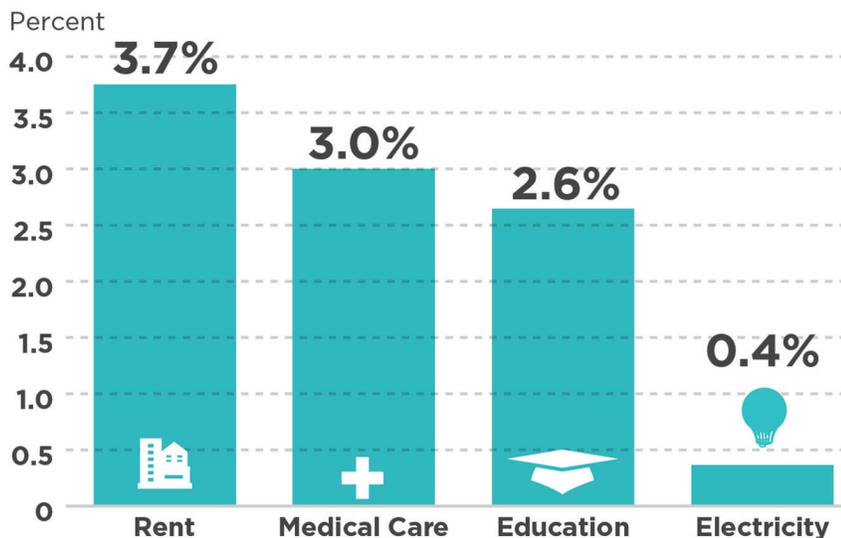
Your electric cooperative provides the reliable service you expect and deserve as a valued member of the co-op. And as your trusted energy advisor, we want to help you save energy and money.

The past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy, please give us a call. We are your electric co-op, and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value.

## ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

### Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



## Run ceiling fans to save energy

Ceiling fans don't actually cool the air in a room. Instead, they circulate the air. Anyone who is in the room while one is running will feel a sort of breeze. That makes the person feel cooler, so there's no point in running a ceiling fan in an empty room.

But for rooms that are usually occupied, a ceiling fan can make the room feel like it's almost 10 degrees cooler than a room without one. And because the fan circulates cool air, it gives the air conditioning system a break.

In fact, with a ceiling fan running, you can turn your thermostat up by about four degrees without sacrificing comfort, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

A few tips for getting the most energy savings from ceiling fans:

- In the summer, ceiling fans should rotate counter-clockwise to push cool air down. In the winter, they should rotate clockwise, to draw warm air up to the ceiling and recirculate it.
- Hang the fan seven to nine feet above the floor and about a foot below the ceiling.
- Fan blades should be at least eight inches from the ceiling and 18 inches from the walls.
- Fans with an ENERGY STAR label are about 20 percent more efficient than standard models.

# Duane Arnold Energy Center to cease operations

In 1969, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Central Iowa Power Cooperative and Iowa Electric Light and Power Company, broke ground on the construction of a 550 MW capacity nuclear power plant - the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC) near Palo, Iowa. At the time and ever since, Corn Belt Power has been a 10-percent stakeholder in the plant.

Today, Iowa's electric providers prepare for the imminent closure of the facility.

The construction on the nuclear power plant spanned several years, with commercial operation commencing in February 1975. It was the state of Iowa's largest single construction project at the time.

The plant's consistent and reliable operating strategy, along with \$1 billion in additional investments over the years, led to a series of upgrades increasing DAEC's capacity from 550 MW to 614 MW, today's generating capacity. The plant's successful operation was never on greater display than in 2008 when it survived the 500-year historic flood. Through thoughtful planning, the plant sits at 20 feet above the Cedar River, providing the protection needed from the flood. In 2008, with the river cresting at record levels, DAEC's operation

continued without faltering.

"The plant was an important generator for Corn Belt Power in the 80's, 90's and early 2000's," said Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. "For years it has been one of the best run nuclear facilities in the country. It has provided affordable and reliable power to Iowans for decades."

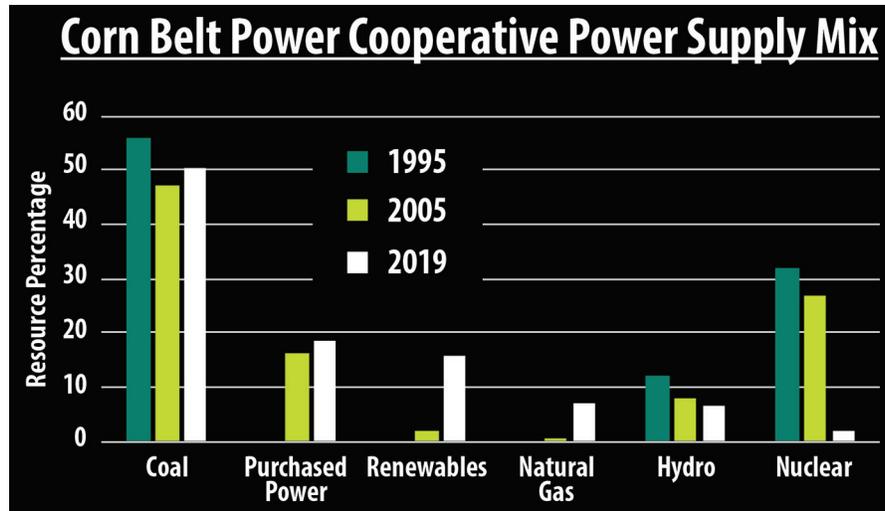
fired generation, in early 2018, NextEra Energy – the company that purchased Iowa Electric Light and Power's (Alliant) 70 percent share of DAEC in 2005 - announced a likely end to production at DAEC in 2025 when Alliant Energy's purchase power agreement (PPA) ended, despite having a license to operate through 2034.

Ultimately, NextEra Energy released Alliant Energy from the PPA early. NextEra Energy, as the majority owner, made another announcement in July 2018 that the plant would cease operations in October 2020.

"Having joined Basin Electric, we are well positioned to absorb the closure of DAEC," Kuyper said. "It's important to remember that we

now rely on a vast amount of generators to supply power to Corn Belt Power members. Gone are the days of just having three or four resources. Today we have an all-of-the-above strategy, which makes our power supply more reliable and flexible in the future."

Duane Arnold will cease operations later this year. It will take years before the area where the plant is located will return to green fields. Until that time, plant employees will still be monitoring and guarding the facility.



Before Corn Belt Power joined Basin Electric Power Cooperative as a Class A member, Duane Arnold made up a large portion of energy supplied to members. Since joining Basin Electric, Corn Belt Power's generation mix has diversified. Today, the co-op's 10-percent stake or about 62 MW makes up only 1.6-percent of power supplied to members.

With increasing regulations on nuclear plants putting pressure on the cost of operations, and enhanced competition from lower cost natural gas-

## UPDATE: FARM PROGRESS SHOW

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the 2020 Farm Progress Show, scheduled for Sept. 1-3, has been cancelled.

**Your Touchstone Energy cooperative encourages you to MOVE OVER AND SLOW DOWN when you approach a vehicle with flashers on.**

**Let's make sure everyone arrives safely!**



**MOVE OVER SLOW DOWN**



Kayla Siemens



Kolby Rice



Kaleb Salge



Ike Sinnwell

## Students at work this summer for the REC

Butler County REC is privileged again this summer to have extra help from area students. Joining us was Kayla Siemens, Allison; Kolby Rice, Parkersburg; Kaleb Salge, Greene; and Ike Sinnwell, Nashua.

Kayla has spent the last three summers with us and will be a senior in accounting at Upper Iowa University in Fayette. Her tasks include scanning documents for archiving and answering the phone in the office.

Kolby, a 2020 Aplington-Parkersburg High School graduate, will attend line school at Northwest Iowa Community College (NWICC) in the fall of 2021. He is helping the Allison crew members.

Also attending NWICC in the fall of 2021, Kaleb is currently a senior at North Butler High School in Greene and is helping out on the west side of our system.

A 2020 Nashua-Plainfield High School graduate, Ike will be attending the University of Northern Iowa this fall to major in secondary education. He is working with the Horton crew this summer.

Thank you to our summer help for pitching in! We appreciate your hard work.

## Living with Energy in Iowa winners announced

Congratulations to Christie Eckhoff of Allison and Monica Miller of Bristow!

Christie won a \$150 gift card from a local business or retailer for a home improvement project in a contest in *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine. Her name was randomly chosen from those entering the contest in the June issue. Christie chose a Menard's gift card.

Monica won a \$25 bill credit from *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine when her recipe for Turkey Egg Roll in a Bowl was published in the June issue.

Be sure to check out the magazine every month for the opportunity to win great prizes and for new recipes from electric cooperative members across Iowa—or visit [livingwithenergyiniowa.com/recipes](http://livingwithenergyiniowa.com/recipes)!



## Is your vehicle GREEN?

If you have an electric vehicle, or are considering an electric vehicle charger installation, Butler County REC would like to know.

Please contact us for information on safety for interconnection and possible rebates. Give Mike Boomgarden, member service advisor, a call at 319-239-8348.

**INtouch** is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative  
521 North Main • PO Box 98 • Allison, IA 50602  
PHONES: 319.267.2726 or 888.267.2726 • FAX: 319.267.2566  
OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
WEBSITE: [www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop) • E-MAIL: [butler@butlerrec.coop](mailto:butler@butlerrec.coop)  
Craig Codner, CEO • EDITOR: Anne Sesker, CCC

 Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/bcrec](http://www.facebook.com/bcrec)

**smart choices** 

Sign up for our e-newsletter at [www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.