

A WORD FROM



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In February, some of our members experienced outages due to Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission organization, issuing Emergency Energy Alerts (EEAs) and then curtailing load. These actions were a result of record-low temperatures, an increase in electricity use, fuel-supply issues, and equipment malfunctions.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience the outages caused our members. We understand the frustration that comes with being without power, particularly when your family is getting ready for work and school and it's a cold morning.

In everyone's life, there have been unexpected events that we have had to learn to work around without much planning. We have done the best we could with the knowledge that we had at the time. This was one such event for your electric cooperative. Although we try to plan for the unplanned, sometimes the plan doesn't fit the event.

We could not prepare for the polar vortex or the culmination of events that led to the outages. Remember when

Learn more about what happened during the February rolling outages

the pandemic began over a year ago? The first few weeks of quarantine and isolation were a reaction to the event. Over time, we were able to plan our next steps—because we knew better what we had been dealt. With the polar vortex, SPP's 14-state, 18-million people region was affected. Although Iowa is equipped to handle the cold, other states are not. This meant SPP had to implement unplanned outages throughout their territory to help those not able to provide power.

A rolling blackout, or scheduled power outage, is also referred to as rotational load shedding or feeder rotation. This is an intentionally engineered electrical power shutdown. Electricity is stopped for non-overlapping periods over different parts of a distribution region. This helps bring the supply and demand for electricity back into balance and prevents the possibility of longer, more widespread outages.

Butler County REC was notified that SPP declared an EEA, however, we did not receive advanced notice of the outages. There is a possibility that this type of incident, although a first-time event in SPP's 80-year history, may happen again. As a result, we are working with Corn Belt Power Cooperative, our generation and transmission cooperative, on procedures for advanced warnings for such occurrences.

It is our goal to better inform our members when an outage may be experienced. For our part, we are working on various communication avenues to let you know your power may be interrupted or has been interrupted. This also means we will need accurate

contact information for our members. If your phone number or email address changes, please be sure to visit our website to log on to SmartHub or click on the "Contact Us" button, email us, message us through Facebook, or call us so that we have your most current contact information.

In addition, we want you to be prepared for outages. Have on hand several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked—crackers, cereal, canned goods, bread—and five gallons of water per person. Be sure to also have plenty of blankets and flashlights.

When using a safe alternate heat source, exercise caution and never leave it unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors and make sure they are properly ventilated. Generators are convenient but do pose a safety risk. Be sure to contact a qualified electrician to ensure yours is connected correctly and to have a transfer switch installed to avoid back feeding.

Energy efficiency also comes into play during an outage. Please consider weatherizing and insulating your home so that it retains the heat longer. We offer rebates for these upgrades. Visit our website or contact us if you have questions.

Finally, we want to thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and patience during this extraordinary event. We are so appreciative of your support and member relationships.

Grain bin requirements

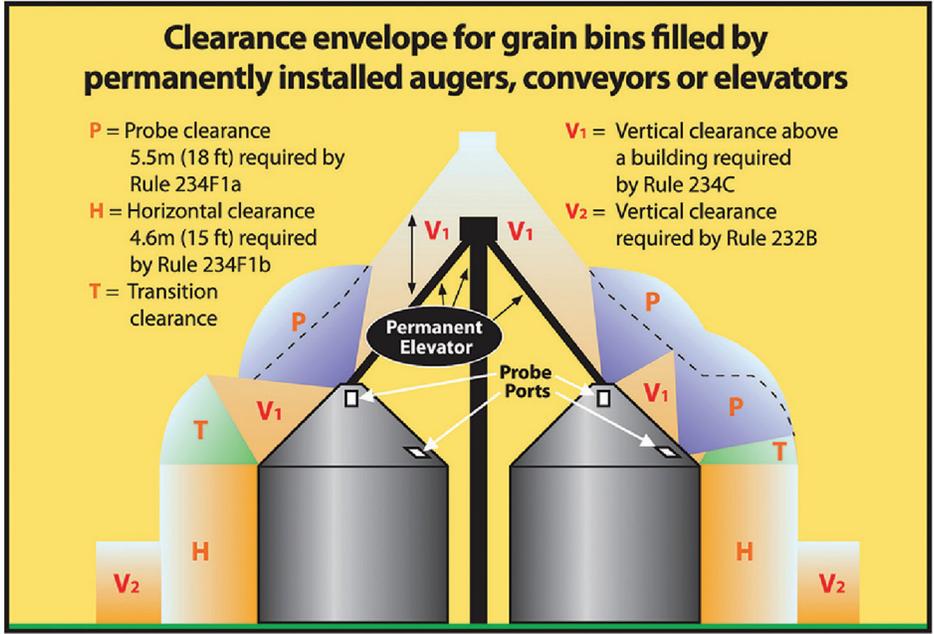
When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact your electric cooperative. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

The drawings at the right show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact your cooperative listed here.

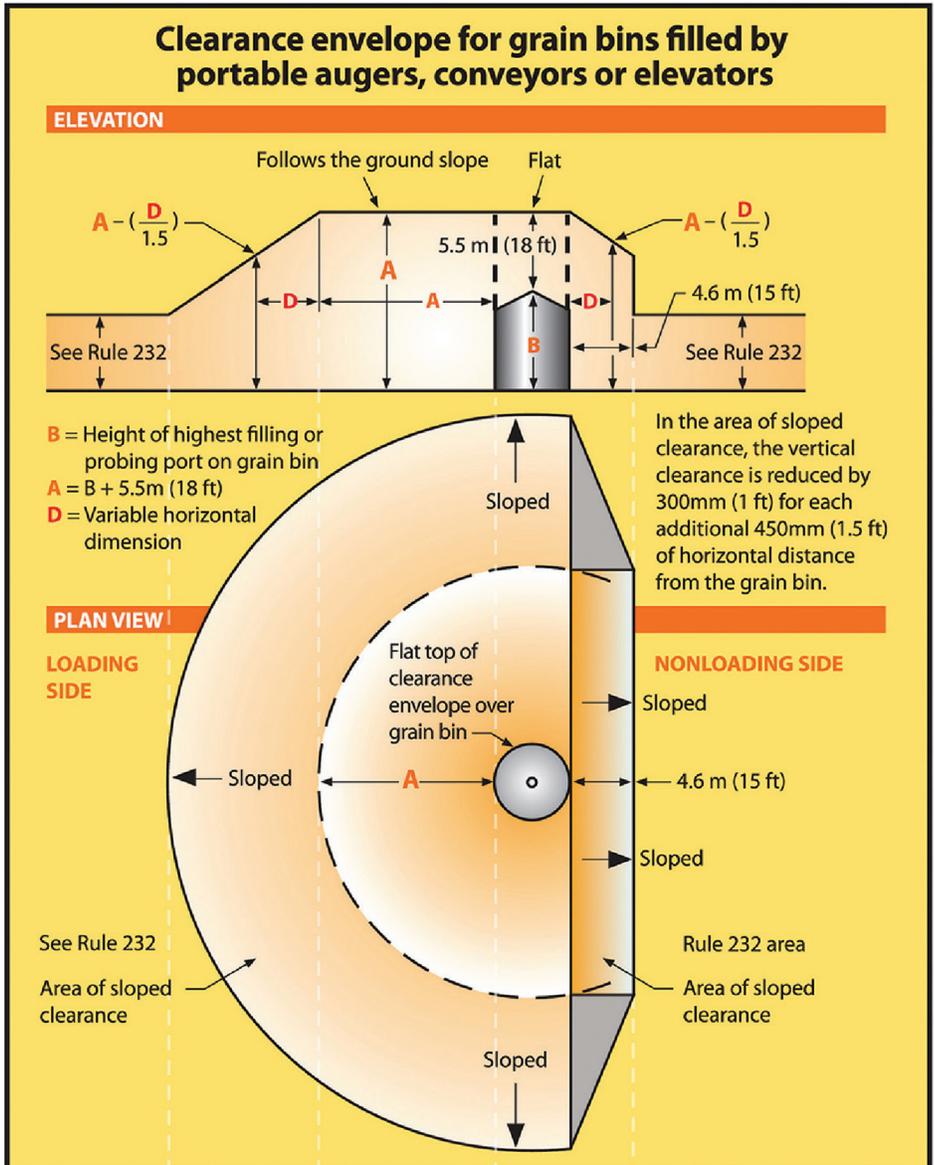
Butler County REC.....	319-267-2726
Corn Belt Power.....	515-332-2571
Franklin REC.....	641-456-2557
Prairie Energy Cooperative.....	515-532-2805

According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)C2-2017 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (The Iowa Utilities Board has adopted this language.)

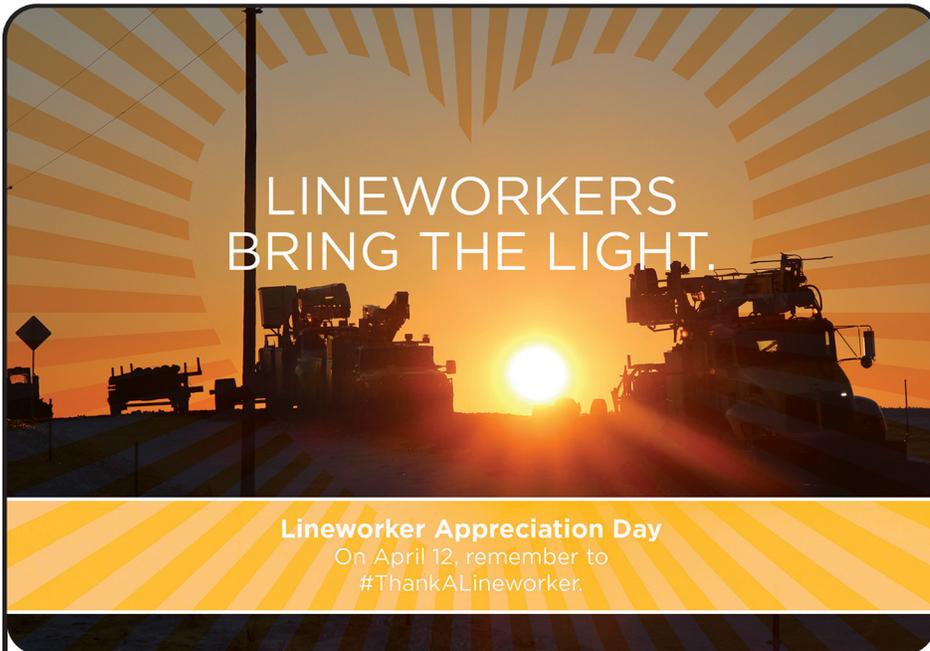
Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings refer to that publication. Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of 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 for damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



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Thank a lineworker on April 12

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training; ongoing education; dedication; and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent your cooperative, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 12, or any time you see a lineworker, thank them for their exceptional service.



Farmers: Stay safe during planting

As farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, your cooperative urges farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines.

- Always be aware of the location of power lines.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds.
- Remember that electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects.
- If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it.
- If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help.
- If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC 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 weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

RECare MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

RECare Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$_____ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will make a one-time contribution of \$_____ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Account Number _____



Return to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Tom Wubbena retires

Tom Wubbena had just graduated from high school when his neighbor, retired Butler County REC crew chief Jon Oltmann, reached out to him and suggested he apply for a summer job at the REC. In February, Tom retired after 43 years of service to our members.

After his summer position, Tom became an apprentice lineman and through on-the-job training worked his way into a crew chief position. Through the years, what he has loved most about the job has been working outside. "I love to be outside; it can be too hot or too cold but I want to work outside," he said.

Tom was surprised at how large and expensive the equipment has become throughout his 43 years. It's important to have the right tools and equipment for the job to perform safely and efficiently. Tom commented, "We've always kept up; that's the biggest thing. And safety improves every year."

With plans to turkey hunt this spring and fish this summer, Tom said the part of the job he will miss the most is "being around the guys." He and his wife Suzie are also planning to travel to Florida, Montana, and Wyoming.

Congratulations, Tom—we wish you all the best in your retirement!



Crew Chief Tom Wubbena (right) is congratulated on his retirement by Operations Manager John Endelman.



Springtime checklist

It's almost time to throw open the windows and welcome warm spring weather. It's also time to invest in a few springtime upgrades that will keep your house more comfortable and help you do your part to use energy wisely:

1. Have a licensed HVAC tech inspect your air conditioning system.
2. Clear debris from around your air conditioner.
3. Consider planting shade trees on the sunny side of your house.
4. If your house has single-pane windows, replace them with double-pane models.
5. Clean your windows to let more sunlight into your home.



Butler County REC awarded safety certificate

CEO Craig Codner (left) receives Butler County REC's certificate for top ratings for our Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) audit from Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Safety Job and Training Instructor Matt Pociask. Butler County REC was described by one of the auditors as one of the top two cooperatives in the state for safety.

My power is out. How long before...?

When your power goes out, one of your first questions might be "How long will it be off?" This often leads to "How long before my house cools down?," "How long is my food safe in the refrigerator? The freezer?," "Will my pipes freeze?" Keep the following chart on hand to answer those questions.



	<i>LENGTH OF TIME</i>
HOUSE	Begins cooling immediately; remains warm for 8-12 hours
FOOD IN FREEZER	4 hours, if door kept closed
FOOD IN REFRIGERATOR	48 hours in full freezer 24 hours in half-full freezer
PIPES	6 hours, if air temperature is 20 degrees and you have reasonable insulation 3 hours with little or no insulation

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