

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

March 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



You're invited!

The board and employees of Butler County REC invite you to attend your annual meeting on Saturday, March 26, at the North Butler Elementary School at 513 Birch St. in Allison.

You can count on a delicious lunch and great entertainment, plus you'll have the opportunity to meet with your directors and staff.

At the annual meeting you will vote for three board directors. Election details will be in the official annual meeting notice in the bill you receive in March.

Included with your annual meeting notice you will find a Registration Certificate. Please bring this with you to the meeting for our employees to scan. Those bringing their certificates will have their names entered into a drawing to receive one of two \$25 gift cards to Casey's General Store. In addition, you will turn in the top half of your certificate to receive your annual meeting gift of a picnic blanket.



Annual Meeting: Saturday, March 26

10:30 a.m. – Doors open at North Butler Elementary School, Allison

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Lunch in the cafeteria and displays in the gymnasium

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Wichita country band performs in the auditorium

1 p.m. – Business meeting in the auditorium, including reports, election of directors, and drawing for cash prizes

We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting!

ECA to remain the same for 2022

After careful analysis of Butler County REC's year-end financial information, your board of directors elected to maintain the 2021 energy cost adjustment (ECA) amount of \$.00114.

This amount is reflected on your bill as "ENERGY COST ADJ" and is a pass-through from our wholesale power supplier, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. Corn Belt Power maintained the same rate for Butler County REC for 2022, so we are maintaining the rate for our members.

Call us at 888.267.2726 if you have questions.



Meetings are key for new metering system success

Planning for a new metering system installation requires numerous meetings so that Butler County REC employees have an understanding of how each of their parts integrates with implementation to make this project as seamless as possible for our members. Installation of new meters is set to begin in July.

Above, left to right: John Groen, GIS coordinator; Derek Buss, meter technician; Alan Mayer, IT analyst; John Endelman, operations manager; Mandy Brouwer, billing clerk; and Sandi Miller, office and human resources manager.

It's safe planting season

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. It is important to be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm—use caution and think twice before acting around electricity. Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, **DO NOT GET OUT**. Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact), you are now a “pathway to ground” and you could be electrocuted if you step out. Stay where you are and call us to de-energize the power. If you must get out, hop away with both feet touching the ground at the same time.
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.
- When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.
- Even if there is no contact, an electrical current can jump or arc so keep equipment at least 10 feet from surrounding power lines at all times.
- Remember, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes, and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- Visually inspect overhead lines. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call us to remedy the situation.
- Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.
- When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- Train anyone working with or for you to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance.

FARMERS: Get as much rest as possible and take breaks during planting season.

SPRING INTO SAFETY

Spring is in the air and that means more than just a change of season for farmers. During the busy planting season, follow these eight safety tips:



TRANSPORT SAFELY

Ensure equipment is compliant with agriculture road and travel safety rules



SHARE SAFETY TIPS

Teach anyone working or doing business on your farm about electrical hazards



ENCOURAGE YOUNG WORKERS

Be sure to match age and ability level with each chore



BE CLEAR

Explain where the “back 80” or Smith field is; not everyone may know how to get there



WRITE IT DOWN

Keep directions (with proper road and farm ground names) at home, in the shop and in cabs



LOOK AROUND

Inspect your space and look for hazards before you start planting



EVALUATE PROCEDURES

Consider new safety precautions you can implement, such as lockout/tagout



MEET AND DISCUSS

Conduct morning safety meetings to brief everyone on the day and talk about potential hazards

Sources: Rural Mutual Insurance Co., farmprogress.com

Safe Electricity.org®

Tune up your air conditioner

Hot weather is still a couple of months away, but it's not too early to think about whether your central air conditioning system can make it through one more summer.

Spring is the perfect time to call a qualified service technician to give your central air conditioning system a once-over. You should have your a/c checked every single year, as soon as the weather begins to warm up.

The tech will make sure it's running efficiently—which will save you money in the long run—and that it's not in need of any repairs that could leave your family sweltering indoors when the weather is at its peak mid-summer.



Be prepared and storm safe this spring

At any moment, 1,800 thunderstorms occur worldwide, according to the National Weather Service. That is 16 million storms a year. In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 60 to 65 fatalities and 1,500 injuries in the U.S. alone.

Beyond the items in your preparedness kit, it is a good idea to understand how dangerous storms can be and how to interpret weather alerts.

WATCH VS. WARNING Have you ever considered the difference between a severe weather watch or warning?

A watch means there is a significant chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado. Watch and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures, such as unplugging electronics and checking the contents of your emergency preparedness kit.

A warning means that a severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. The moment you receive a warning, take shelter in the safest part of your home.

THUNDERSTORMS Thunderstorms are some of the most common yet destructive weather events on Earth.

Do not ignore the potential hazards of thunderstorms. Keep flashlights or battery-operated lights well supplied with batteries or charge them regularly. Keep a supply of nonperishable food and drinking water on hand. Turn off and unplug electronic equipment. If a power outage occurs, never use a portable generator in your home, enclosed structure, or garage. Do not step into flooded basement or area since the water could be electrified.

TORNADOES Be aware of weather conditions during thunderstorms that could breed tornadoes. Know the best place to shelter both indoors and out, and always protect your head.

Do not underestimate the potential power of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. Take steps to protect yourselves and your property before a storm hits.

For more information about storm preparedness and electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

WATCH

A watch means there is a **great chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado.**

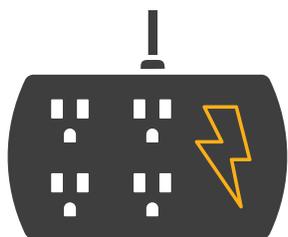
"Watch" and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures.

WARNING

A warning means that a **severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen** on radar.

The moment you get a warning, **take shelter in the safest part of your home.**

SafeElectricity.org®



SURGE PROTECTION

Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.

Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- Easy to use (just plug them in)
- Protect electronics plugged into the device
- Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event



REMEMBER:

Not all power strips offer surge protection. Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.



What's cookin'?

Have a recipe everyone loves? *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine is always looking for recipes. If your recipe is chosen, you will earn a \$25 power bill credit! Read the magazine to learn how to submit your recipe.

Looking for a new recipe?

Visit ieclmagazine.com and click on Recipes, Recipe Archive to search.

Try a new recipe tonight!

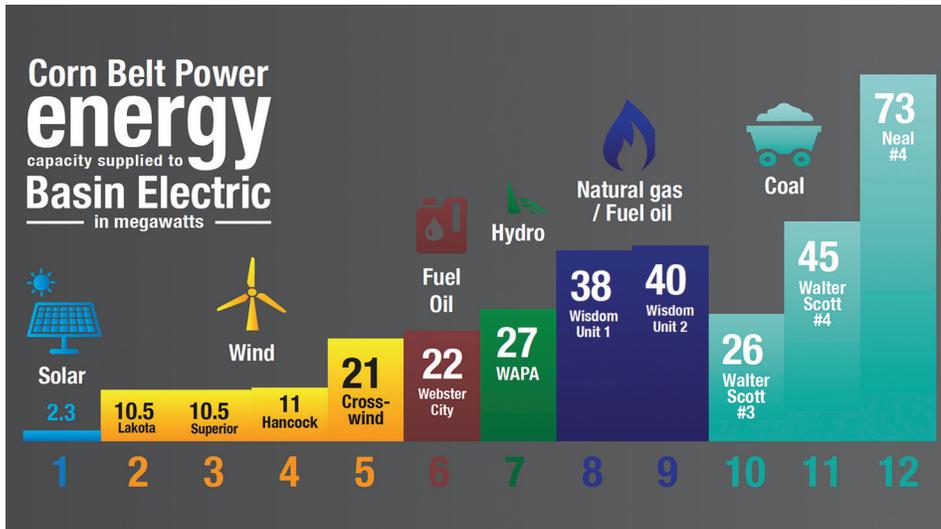
New pricing for Marathon electric water heaters Effective March 1, 2022

Model	Retail Cost	Member Rebate	Member Cost*
50 gallon - tall or short	\$1,367.93	\$767.93	\$600
85 gallon	\$1,864.20	\$1,214.20	\$650
105 gallon	\$2,091.70	\$1,241.70	\$850

*For replacing an electric water heater. Plus tax applied to the retail cost.

- New homes or replacing gas water heater: 50-gal, \$200, plus tax; 85-gal, \$250, plus tax; 105-gal, \$550, plus tax.
- Rebates cannot exceed the purchase price of the unit.

Contact our Energy Efficiency Department for more information



A balanced approach

Having a balanced and diverse energy portfolio is similar to having a diversified personal financial plan. The same is true with sources of power generation. To achieve the best in safety, reliability, and environmental responsibility, we rely on multiple sources rather than just one type of generation.

The graph at left shows Corn Belt Power Cooperative's, Butler County REC's generation and transmission cooperative, 2020 energy capacity supplied to Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Corn Belt's power supplier.

BCREC employees invested in their communities

Butler County REC employees live their organizational values and that is evident in their dedication to the value of Commitment to Community.

In 2021, employees volunteered 1,150.50 hours to schools, churches, fairs, and fire departments, among other organizations.

Gary Doehrmann, accountant, logged the most hours with 304. Gary volunteers extensively for the Waverly Fire Department, in addition to his church. John Endelman, operations manager, volunteered 167.50 hours for second place. John is a member of the North Butler school board, is involved in the Little Bearcats ball club, and is on the Butler County fair board.

Gary chose Shriner's Hospital for Children to receive a \$25 donation in his honor, and John chose Retrieving Freedom, LLC, Waverly to receive a \$25 donation.

Thank you to those Butler County REC employees for their commitment to their communities!



Gary Doehrmann



John Endelman



Directors earn recertification

Congratulations to Butler County REC directors Share Brandt (above left), asst. secretary/treasurer, and Leland Boyd (above right), treasurer, pictured with Duane Rieckenberg, board president, for earning their Director Gold Renewal Certificates from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

The renewal requirements include three credits of continuing education over a two-year period.

INtouch is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative
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