

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

October 2024

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

2024 member appreciation events held

This year we held three member appreciation events—Floyd County, Chickasaw County, and Butler County. Each member attending received a \$15 Butler County REC/Touchstone Energy gift card and was served a meal of grilled hamburgers, beans, chips, hand-scooped ice cream, homemade cookies, water, and lemonade.

We also offered bucket truck rides, which were a hit with so many of you. In addition, we had literature about our energy-efficiency incentives, SmartHub, EnergyWise Renewables, and a number of other programs that we offer, including information on demand charges.

It was nice to see so many of you talking and catching up. We had a great time and hope you did, too. Thank you to everyone attending our events this summer and for the kind words!

Congratulations to our 2024 member appreciation event winners:

- **Bill Credit:** Miranda Aberg, Clarksville; Jamie Landers, Bristow; Ron McGill, Fredericksburg; Morris Parcher, Rockford; Paul Sedgwick, Charles City; Jon Van Dyke, Greene
- **Scooter/Helmet:** Heidi (Josh) Biekert, Plainfield; Piper (Nathan) Stauffer, Greene; Reagan (Aaron) Tidemanson, Greene
- **Ryobi Leaf Blower/Trimmer:** Jim Wubben, Dumont





2024 nominees announced

The fourth annual Shine the Light contest, sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, includes seven individuals nominated by Butler County REC members for their volunteer commitments. Those nominated were:

Stephanie Duhrkopf, Sumner, nominated by Jeff Reynolds, for her work with Sumner Daycare and Learning Center, Inc., Sumner

Vickie Miller, Clarksville, nominated by Paula Hoodjer, for her work with numerous organizations, but in particular, the Clarksville Food Pantry, Clarksville

Caroline Mohlis, Tripoli, nominated by Joanna VanDeBerg and Sandra Tagtow, for her work with Helping Hands Clothing Closet, Sumner

Nancy Morris, nominated by Rose Nordaas, for her work with the Plum Creek Art Center and Fredericksburg Food Bank, Fredericksburg

Patricia Schultz, Sumner, nominated by Mark Miller, for her work with Sumner Quilts of Valor, Sumner

Stacey Snyder, Sumner, nominated by Larry Pavelec, for her work with numerous organizations, but in particular, the Bremer County Conservation Board, Tripoli

Deb White, Clarksville, nominated by Lynn Bolin, for her work with the Open Door Youth Center, Clarksville

Congratulations! Butler County REC appreciates your dedication and volunteer service.



**RECare IS
MEMBERS
HELPING
MEMBERS**

Butler County REC continues to extend a helping hand to members in need. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, we have 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 electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

You have the power to make a difference.

RECare CONSUMER 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 Butler County REC, PO Box 98, Allison, IA, 50602

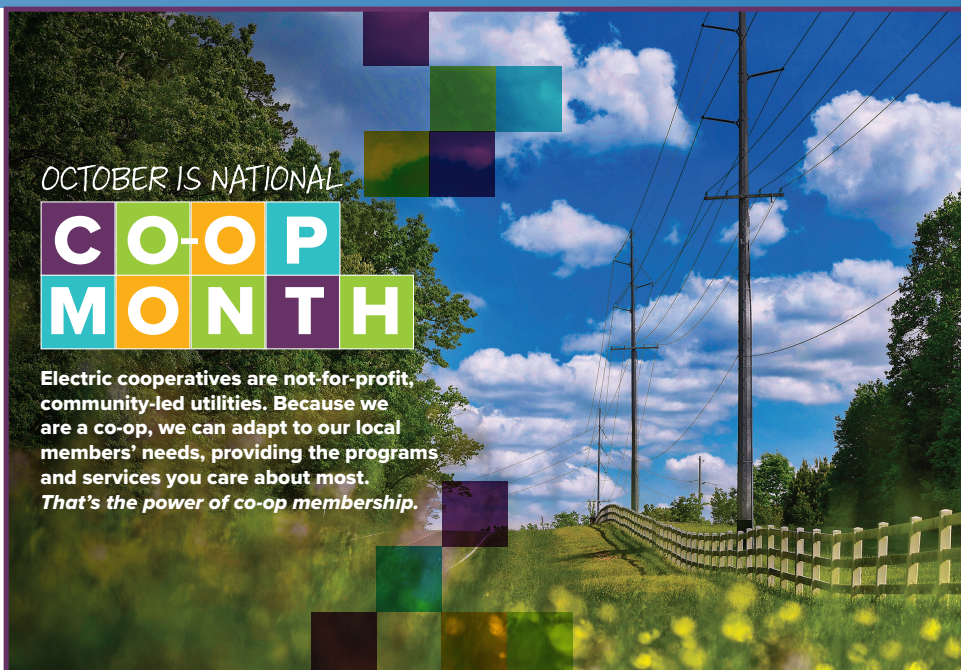
REMINDER:

You should receive your Butler County REC power bill by the 10th of the month.

If you have not received your bill by the 10th of the month, be sure to give us a call or log in to SmartHub to view and pay your bill.

Need help signing up for SmartHub? Visit our website, download the app, or give us a call!





OCTOBER IS NATIONAL

CO-OP MONTH

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, community-led utilities. Because we are a co-op, we can adapt to our local members' needs, providing the programs and services you care about most. That's the power of co-op membership.

Co-ops power with purpose

At Butler County REC, we are deeply committed to our members, and we're glad you are part of the electric cooperative community. This month, National Co-op Month, is a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities built by the communities they serve. For Butler County REC, our mission has always been to provide you with reliable power. We care about your quality of life, and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving, and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

- 1. Open and Voluntary Membership:** Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.
- 2. Democratic Member Control:** Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.
- 3. Members' Economic Participation:** Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At Butler County REC, this happens through paying your energy bills.
- 4. Autonomy and Independence:** Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.
- 5. Education, Training, and Information:** Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees and directors have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.
- 6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives:** Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.
- 7. Concern for Community:** All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve by giving back to help them thrive and grow.

As we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is reliable power. Our purpose is people—the local communities we're proud to serve.



Five steps to becoming a co-op voter

Get Ready: Registering to vote is easy! To help, Co-ops Vote has a website full of voter resources and information. You can check it out at www.vote.coop. It's essential to regularly check your registration and verify that your information is correct and up-to-date.

Get the Details: Every state's election process is different, and it's important to know about upcoming voter registration deadlines, the process for requesting absentee ballots, and more, so you don't miss key dates. You can find all the information about voting in Iowa by visiting www.vote.coop/gotv.

Get Informed: Before you head to the polls, educate yourself on policy issues.

Get the Background: Learn about your candidates. You can view a list of your current elected officials on the Voices for Cooperative Power website: www.voicesforcooperativepower.com/issues, and then click to view their official website for news releases and official policy positions.

Get Others Involved: Now that you've done your research and are officially ready to head to the polls as a co-op voter, it's time to get your family, friends, and neighbors involved.

We encourage you to become a co-op voter. Together, we have the power to educate lawmakers, build awareness about our issues and concerns, and support legislative issues that are important to our communities. The co-op voice is powerful, and it starts with you!

Keeping our farmers safe

Farmers have a potentially dangerous occupation involving long days and tiring work. Here are some reminders about electrical dangers on the farm:

Overhead power lines. If you make contact with a power line, guy wire, power pole, electrical box, or any other electrical equipment, do not get out of your vehicle. Call 911. If you must get out due to smoke or fire, with your feet together, make a solid jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop away as far as you can.

Contact us to determine proper clearance. Always maintain at least 10 feet between the power line and the tallest height of your equipment. Reminder: Due to wear, age, and weather conditions, power lines can change height. Also, use a spotter.

Call us before moving or adding a grain bin. Requirements are in place to decrease the chances of farming equipment and machinery coming in contact with power lines. If you are planning on building a new grain bin or remodeling around an area that has one, contact us.

Before you dig, always call 811 to have underground utilities marked. Don't rely on your memory. Have all utilities marked so that you know for sure. Utility locators dispatched by 811 do not mark private lines.

Use standby generators with care. Be sure to correctly use the transfer switch. Once you properly engage the switch, it stops your farm's generated power from entering utility lines, aka backfeeding, which can electrocute lineworkers who are working to restore power.

Contact us at 888.267.2726 for additional safety information.



Ready your home for winter

Even if it's not cold outside yet, it's time to get ready for the day when the temperature falls.

Here are five fall jobs that will prepare your home for cold weather:

1. Caulk windows and doors, even if you did it last fall. Cracks in old caulk can let cold air in and warm air out.
2. Reverse the direction of ceiling fan blades so they circulate clockwise.
3. Have your chimney inspected and cleaned if you plan to burn wood this season. Buildup of creosote can cause a chimney fire.
4. Call an HVAC tech to inspect your central heating system and perform maintenance and any needed repairs so you don't lose heat once it is cold outside.
5. Change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors before heating season begins.

TRICK OR TREAT

Don't Let an Electrical Mishap Be Your Halloween Trick

As you ready your yard and porch for Halloween, make sure the decorations you plug in do not become hazardous. To avoid a Halloween scare, take these safety precautions:

- Discard any decorations that have **cracked or frayed cords** or damaged plugs.
- **Do not** put any decorations on power poles, padmount transformers or any other electrical equipment.
- Use decorations that are endorsed by a reputable testing laboratory such as **Underwriters Laboratories (UL)**.
- If you are using extension cords outdoors, make sure they are **rated for outdoor use**.
- **Secure all cords** so they do not become tripping hazards.

- Plug all cords into circuits protected by **GFCIs** to prevent electrical shock.
- **Do not use nails or tacks** to hang lights or other electrical decor.
- Keep decorations **away from flammable items** like bales of hay, cornstalks or witch's brew.

Have a safe and festive Halloween complete with safe tricks and tasty treats.

Learn more at: Safe Electricity.org

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