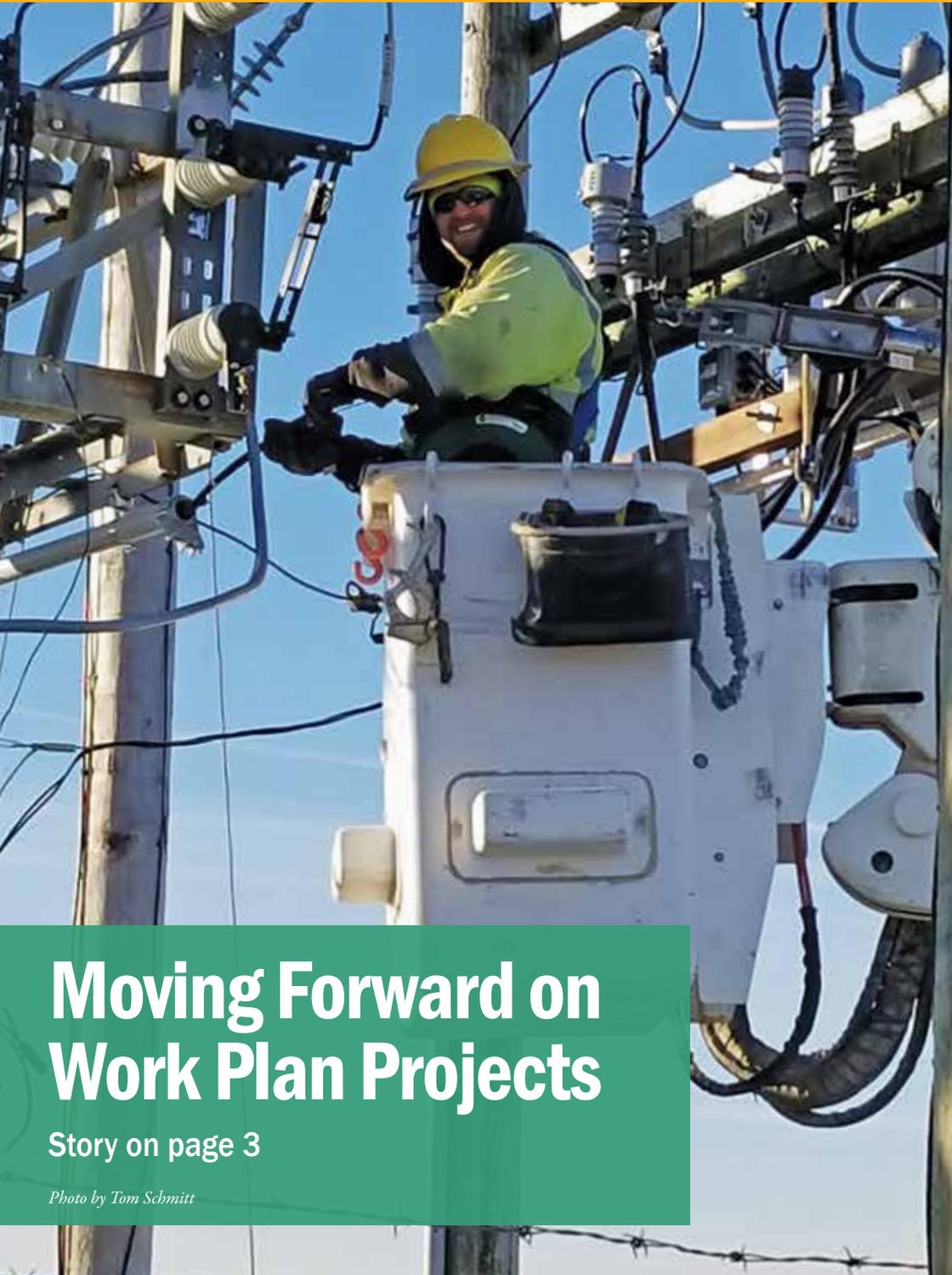


heartland LINK

A publication of East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative



Moving Forward on Work Plan Projects

Story on page 3

Photo by Tom Schmitt

AG REBATES page 4

March is National Ag Month. Celebrate by saving with a rebate!



ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION page 6

Cooperatives define key areas of focus for 2019.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

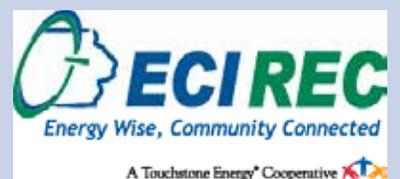
page 9

Save up to \$11,000 with dealer, federal, and Cooperative rebates & incentives.

MEET KATIE

page 10

New benefits and administrative assistant joins ECI REC.



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Tree planting tips and safety rules

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our members say thank you

“Thank you for restoring power!” **JUDY IRISH**

“Just want to say thank you to ECI REC! Early this morning, we woke up to no furnace. We called our HVAC guy. An hour later, no HVAC. But an ECI REC truck showed up! The smart meter showed possible trouble. They checked connections to the house and tinkered with the breaker box. The furnace kicked in! Courteous guys, too!” **CONNIE SVOBODA**

“Thanks for getting the power back on this morning. Not a fun time to be out in the weather.” **ROSS T. CODER**

take the member challenge

1. **KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON:** In February, the Garrison substation also received the ____ upgrade.

2. **SAFETY:** Whether you're purchasing new grain bins or remodeling areas with existing bins, proximity to _____ power lines must be considered.

3. **KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON:** Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) will partner with Clēnera, LLC, to develop _____ the largest solar project in Iowa—and one of the largest in the Midwest.

Find the answers within the stories, features, and content of this newsletter and you could win a prize. Send your answers to memberchallenge@ecirec.coop. Or, print the word(s) at the top of the back page, cut it out, and send it to: ECI REC, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember there is a deadline! Entries for this issue must be received by April 1. Sixteen names will be drawn from all correct entries. Members will not be allowed to win more than once per calendar year.

last issue's challenge winners

The following names were drawn from the Jan./Feb. 2019 *Heartland Link* entries. These members will receive a \$10 credit on their account.

Lois Schulte

Peggy Bearbower

Steve Forney

Dennis Von Ahsen

Adrian & Karen Hill

James Miller

George Reiss

Judy Hettinger

Kathy & Reginald Meyer

John & Carol Lappe

Steven Francois

Alice Billingsley

Harold Miller, Jr.

Lelann Sommerfelt

Beverly & Kevin Hermsen

Jerilynn Titsworth

Calendar Notes

3/10 – Daylight Saving Time

4/14 – Palm Sunday

4/19 – Good Friday

4/21 – Easter

Contact ECI REC

EMAILS

memberservices@ecirec.coop
(rebates, product sales)

csr@ecirec.coop
(billing, new customers)

WEB SITE

www.ecirec.coop

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Steve Marlow
Chief Executive Officer
Ext. 421
steve.marlow@ecirec.coop

Teresa Floyd
Manager of Finance and Consumer Service
Ext. 450
teresa.floyd@ecirec.coop

Tom Schmitt
Line Superintendent
Ext. 519
tom.schmitt@ecirec.coop

Adam Albertsen
Director of Member Service
Ext. 503
adam.albertsen@ecirec.coop

Lisa Franck
Manager of Communications
Ext. 472
lisa.franck@ecirec.coop

Nathan Groom
Information System Administrator
Ext. 410
nathan.groom@ecirec.coop

ADDRESS

2400 Bing Miller Lane
PO Box 248
Urbana, IA
52345-0248

PHONE

319-443-4343

TOLL FREE

877-850-4343

FAX 319-443-4359

HOURS

Monday-Friday
Office: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

(closed Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)

 OPERATIONS NEWS
OUTAGE UPDATES

facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec

COVER STORY: OPERATIONS UPDATE



Photo by Tom Schmitt

Moving Forward on Work Plan Projects

a Keeping the Lights On feature

ECI REC'S FOUR-YEAR WORK PLAN

covers upgrades to our system that will make it even more reliable and able to provide affordable power to our members. Projects for 2019 include:

- » Rebuilding overhead lines
- » Converting overhead lines to underground
- » Upgrading three substations
- » Keeping up with annual inspections

REBUILDING AND CONVERTING

OVERHEAD LINES - Highline Construction, Inc., out of Paynesville, Minnesota, is the contractor for overhead line rebuilds. They will work in 17 ECI REC substation areas, with plans to complete 45.3 miles of overhead rebuilds by November 2019.

Work started on January 7. Recently, Highline finished four miles of distribution rebuild south of Rowley, in the Buchanan County service area. They are currently working on 2.5 miles of overhead lines east of Brandon and will continue working on projects in the Independence area before moving to Vinton in early summer.

In addition to the overhead rebuilds, 24.3 miles of underground work is out for bids. Work will start in early spring in Benton, Blackhawk, Buchanan, and Iowa Counties.

UPGRADING SUBSTATIONS - Homer, Garrison, and Sumner substations are scheduled for upgrades in 2019. Line Foreman Kevin Walton, Apprentice Lineman Cole Berger, and SCADA Technician Doug Appelgate updated the oil circuit reclosers and equipment in the Homer substation with electronic reclosers (referred to as "vipers"). In February, the Garrison substation also received the viper upgrade.

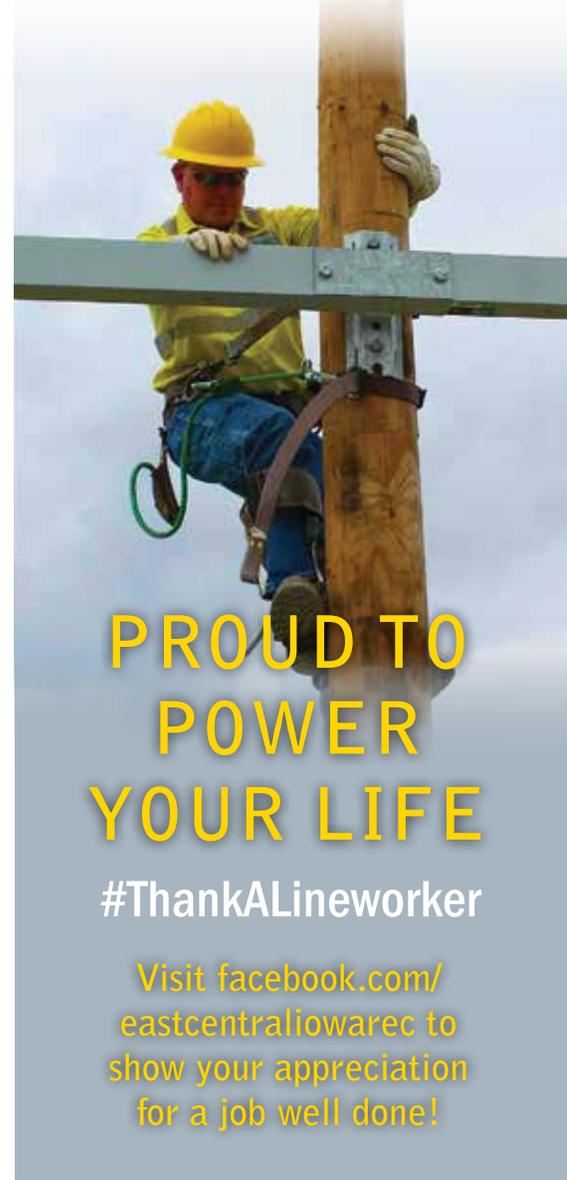
The transformer at Sumner substation, located on the south side of Independence, will be upgraded from a 5MVA to a 10 MVA. Larger underground cable will be added around the industrial park and will tie with the existing conductor along Highway 150. These changes will increase the capabilities of the Sumner substation.

Other scheduled technology upgrades have been completed in almost all ECI REC substations. Only the Van Horne substation remains. Continuous upgrades allow us to be more proactive in responding to outages, including remotely re-routing power from one substation to another if that need should arise.

ANNUAL INSPECTIONS - At ECI REC, we strongly believe a proactive maintenance program is essential to preventing outages. We hire Osmose

Lineworker Appreciation Day

MONDAY, APRIL 8



**PROUD TO
POWER
YOUR LIFE**

#ThankALineworker

Visit facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec to show your appreciation for a job well done!

Utilities Services to inspect our line and equipment. Each year, they perform sound tests and bore poles above and below the ground line, where poles decay fastest. They also visually inspect the poles.

Osmose performed line and pole inspections for the Garrison and Fairbank substations last fall, looking at 4,330 poles and 232 underground points. They found 116 rejected or rotten poles that need to be replaced. ECI REC line crews continue to work on replacing these poles. ♻️

Celebrate National Ag Month With Rebates From ECI REC!



March is National Ag Month! ECI REC would like to remind our producers to take advantage of our ag energy-efficiency incentives. You can find even more lighting incentives at ecirec.coop!

LIGHTING - All lamps & fixtures must be ENERGY STAR® or DesignLights Consortium® qualified

EXISTING BUILDINGS

- » LED tubes replacing T12/T8: \$3/lamp
- » LED lamps ≥ 6W: \$2/lamp
- » Indoor LED fixtures (non-troffer): 8-14W \$10/fixture; 15-49W \$15/fixture; 50-99W \$25/fixture; ≥ 100W \$40/fixture

ALL BUILDINGS

- » Occupancy sensors: \$15 each
- » LED high bay/troffer fixtures: Contact ECI REC
- » Outdoor security lighting: 20-34W \$10/fixture; 35-49W \$20/fixture; 50-74W \$40/fixture; 75-124W \$50/fixture; ≥ 125W \$60/fixture

NEW BUILDINGS OR ADDITIONS

- » Indoor LED fixtures (non-troffer): 8-14W \$5/fixture; 15-49W \$10/fixture; 50-99W \$20/fixture; ≥ 100W \$30/fixture

LIVESTOCK/DAIRY EQUIPMENT

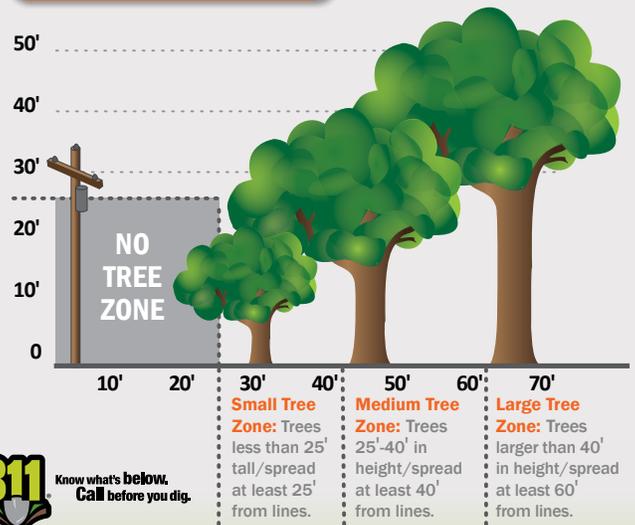
- » Ventilation fans (BESS lab rated @ .10 in static pressure): \$3/in. (fan blade diameter)
- » Ventilation thermostat controller with humidistat: \$25 each
- » Circulation fans (BESS lab rated): \$1/in. (fan blade diameter)
- » High-volume, low-speed fans (minimum 10' diameter): \$35/ft. (fan blade diameter)
- » Dairy heat reclaimers: \$5 per milking cow
- » Dairy milk pre-coolers: \$4 per milking cow
- » VSD vacuum pumps: \$40/horsepower
- » Scroll compressors: \$250 each (must replace reciprocating compressor)
- » Electric heated livestock waterers: \$50 each (≤ 175W per trough opening)
- » Heat lamps: \$3/lamp (≤ 175W replacement of 250W)
- » Single-crate heating pads: \$25/single pad (≤ 85W)
- » Double-crate heating pads: \$50/double pad (≤ 170W)
- » Heat lamp or pad controller: \$50/controller

Iowa celebrates Arbor Day on Friday, April 26! Visit www.arborday.org.

If you're planning to plant trees this spring, help ensure your tree doesn't get an unwanted haircut down the road:

- » Choose the spot based on the tree's full-grown height and spread.
- » Obey the no-tree zone: Don't plant trees within 25 feet of power lines.

Tree Planting Guide



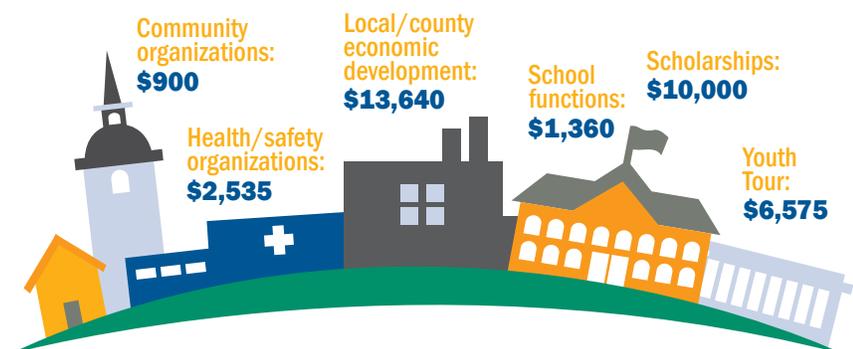
APRIL IS SAFE DIGGING MONTH!

Spring is near, and you may be planning outdoor projects. Whether it's a deck addition, planting a tree, trenching in fields, or a landscaping masterpiece, remember to call Iowa One Call by dialing 8-1-1 before you dig. Although light gardening typically doesn't call for deep digging, other seemingly simple tasks like planting shrubs or installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines. A severed line can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm the person digging, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Committed to our Community: ECI REC's 2018 Donations

a Community Connected update

IN 2018, ECI REC gave more than \$35,000 to 21 community organizations, including 10 college scholarships. Some of the donations came from the Cooperative's general funds, but much of the money came from our Community Reinvestment Fund, where unclaimed patronage dividends are deposited. Commitment to our community is one of ECI REC's core values, as well as one of the seven principles by which all cooperatives are expected to operate.



Members Help Members by Contributing to RECare

a Community Connected article

WITH SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS like you, ECI REC's RECare program distributes funds to low-income members in Benton and Buchanan County. These donations are used to pay for heating bills or the cost of winterizing the homes of ECI REC members who need assistance.

In 2018, 68 members donated \$4,985 to RECare. Some members donated once a year, while others had the Cooperative add a few dollars to their electric bills each month. No matter the size or frequency of the donation, it made a difference! We are proud our

members are digging into their pockets to help others.

RECare funds are distributed to qualifying members through community action agencies. Donations from our northern service area are administered by Operation Threshold, while donations from our southern service area are administered by Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP).

If you would like to support RECare, visit ecirec.coop. Hover over Your Electric Bill, look down the list for Member-Supported Programs, and click on RECare. ♻️



Scan to fill out form online.



This Earth Day, make the commitment to go paperless with your utility bill by using SmartHub, a Web and mobile tool that will help you manage your account from paying your bill to reporting outages. Earth Day is our annual reminder to step up and make a change that will better our planet, and one of the biggest steps we can take is reducing the amount of paper we use.

Go paperless with SmartHub.
Available on Apple and Android devices and on the Web.

SUPPORT RENEWABLES IN IOWA > You can volunteer to support the development of renewable energy production facilities in Iowa via your monthly bill. In 2018, an average of 86 ECI REC members contributed an average of \$3.93/month each to support the production of renewable energy in Iowa. Member support for the year totaled \$4,163.50.

- Cost is \$2.10 for each 100 kWh. Purchase only 100 kWh or any multiple of 100 kWh.
- All voluntary contributions from members to this fund will be used for the development of alternative energy production facilities in Iowa. Alternative energy production facilities may include wind energy, biomass, solar, and other nontraditional generation technologies.
- Once you have signed up, your participation continues until you notify us that you wish to make a change.

IOWA RENEWABLE CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM

Name: _____
 ECI REC Account #: _____
 Email: _____
 Daytime phone #: _____
 Signature: _____
 Date: _____

I wish to support the purchase of:

- 100 kWh for an extra \$2.10 per month
- 200 kWh for an extra \$4.20 per month
- 300 kWh for an extra \$6.30 per month
- _____ kWh at \$2.10 per 100 kWh per month

Please return to: East-Central Iowa REC
 PO Box 248 | Urbana, Iowa 52345

ECI REC Advocates for Members at Annual Reception

a Looking Out for You feature

ON JANUARY 15, ECI REC Board members were among 150 representatives from Iowa's electric cooperatives who attended the Annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in Des Moines.

The event is sponsored by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives, the Iowa Communications Alliance, and the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Stores of Iowa.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will discuss topics pertinent to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric cooperatives will be important advocates for a balanced approach to energy issues. Such an approach allows member-owned electric cooperatives to continue providing

safe, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans.

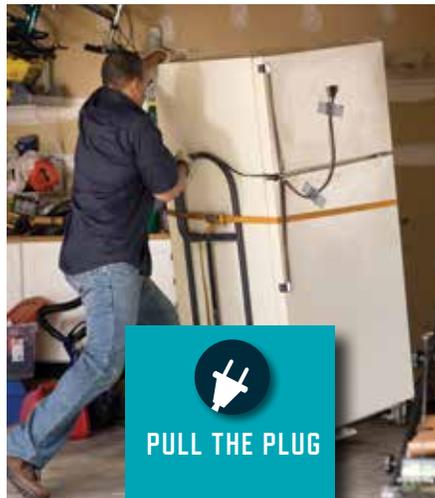
Two key areas Iowa electric cooperatives plan to focus on this year include:

- » Participating in the strategy being crafted to help establish infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations.
- » Detailing specific vegetation management rights in Iowa code so cooperatives can perform trimming in easements as needed to maintain safe and reliable power delivery.

Electric cooperative representatives from all parts of the state will travel to the state Capitol on March 20 for the annual REC Day on the Hill, another opportunity to discuss important issues with Iowa legislators. 



Advocating for safe, affordable, reliable electricity delivered in an environmentally responsible manner. Sign up for Rural Power updates from your electric cooperative at www.iaruralpower.org. Follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/iaruralpower.



PULL THE PLUG

WE PAY YOU TO PULL THE PLUG

Recycle your old appliances through ECI REC's Pull the Plug partnership with CLEARResult out of Marion, Iowa.

- Refrigerators (full size), \$35 each
- Freezers, \$25 each
- Window air conditioners, \$25 each

Call CLEARResult at 855-838-7817 to schedule your pickup today. Limit 3 appliances per year, per address.

You may know heat pumps are efficient, but which type is right for you?

Features	Types of heat pumps	
	Air-source	Geothermal
The Science	Captures and moves naturally occurring heat rather than creating heat via combustion	Relies on the earth's constant temperature to regulate the air inside your home
How It Works	Transfers hot or cold air between your home and outside to maintain a comfortable environment all year round	Transfers heat energy from below the earth in cold weather – and heat energy from your home in warm weather
Most Likely to Be Used For	Upgrading existing equipment or new construction installation	New construction or retrofitted to an existing home



SAVINGS WITH STAYING POWER

EFFICIENT | CLEAN | SAFE | ELECTRIC

Grain Bins: Farming Safely

a Safety feature

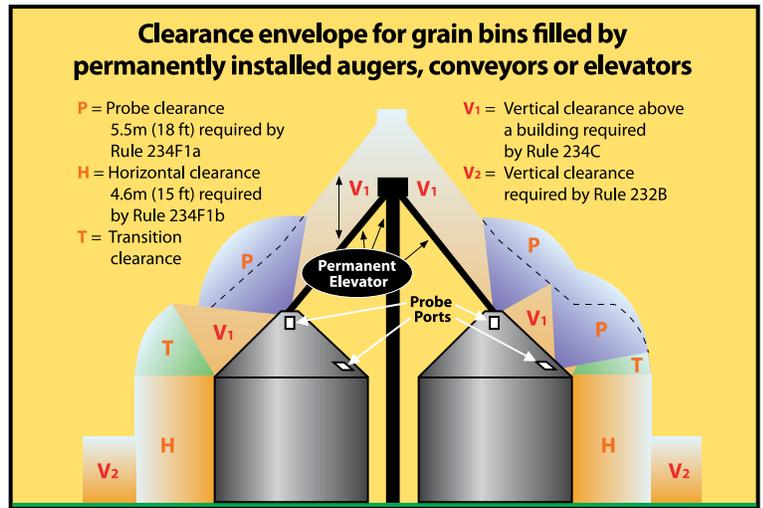
AS REWARDING AS IT MAY BE, farming is an extremely difficult job—and it ranks among the top 10 most dangerous professions in the United States. At ECI REC, safety is top priority for both our employees and our members. That’s why our Cooperative provides assistance in planning a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins.

Grain bins play an integral role in the efficiency and profitability of farm and ranch operations, and safety regulations should always be considered when working around these structures. Whether you’re purchasing new grain bins or remodeling areas with existing bins, proximity to overhead power lines must be considered.

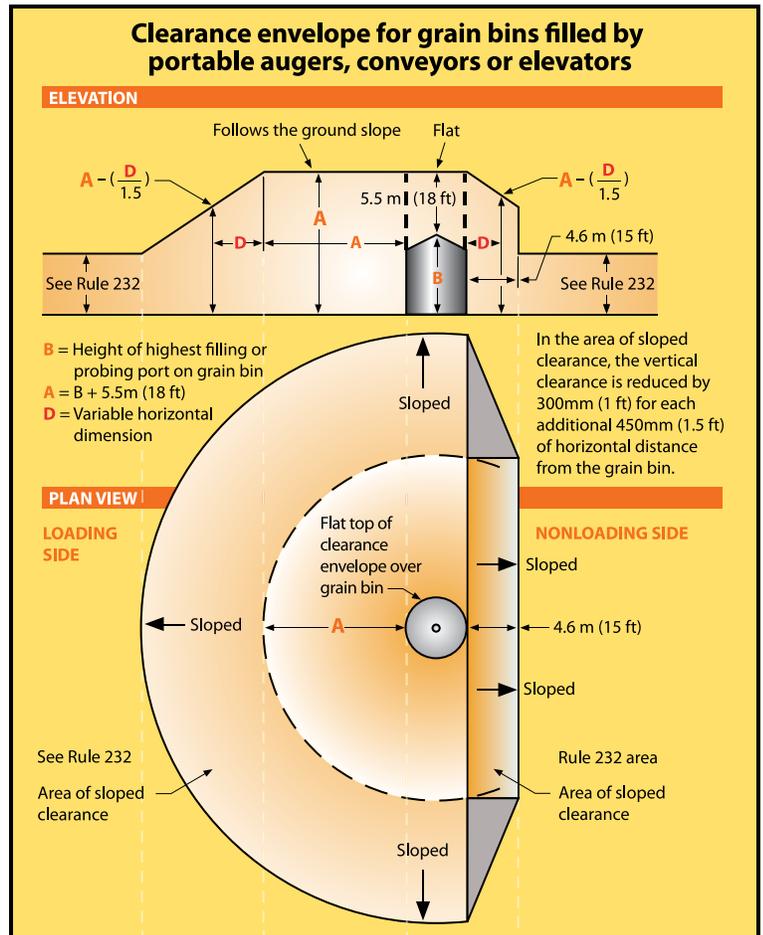
The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors, and elevators. The drawings accompanying this article show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact your electric cooperative.

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 that 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 built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (As adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board.)

The Cooperative is required by the Iowa Utilities Board to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants, and city and county zoning officials. If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please call your local electric cooperative.



From IEEE Std. C2-2017, "National Electrical Safety Code." © Copyright 2016 by IEEE. All rights reserved.



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ATTENTION MEMBERS: Use Caution When Burning Ditches This Spring

Burning helps clean things up, but it can also cause extensive damage to Cooperative property, resulting in electric service problems. Members involved in such fires may be invoiced for damage they cause to Cooperative property.

TWO TIPS FOR SAFE BURNING

1 Green, or newer, poles are more susceptible to burning—use extra caution.

2 Always be aware of the locations of poles, anchor guy assemblies, underground cabinets, and other important Cooperative equipment when burning.

CIPCO Announces Plans for Iowa's Largest Solar Project

a Keeping the Lights On feature

CENTRAL IOWA POWER COOPERATIVE (CIPCO) will partner with Clēnera, LLC, to develop Wapello Solar, the largest solar project in Iowa—and one of the largest in the Midwest. CIPCO will purchase 100% of the energy and capacity output for 25 years from the 100-megawatt facility, which will be located on approximately 800 acres of land in Louisa County. This area is served by Eastern Iowa Light and Power, a CIPCO member cooperative.

The project will incorporate the latest in solar array technology to provide cost-effective, clean electric energy. To maximize energy generation, cutting-edge solar panel technology will be paired with efficient solar inverters and a single-axis tracking system. Clēnera—which is based in Boise, Idaho—will develop and operate Wapello Solar, with the facility retaining all associated renewable energy credits. The expected

completion date for Wapello Solar is December 2020.

“We are thrilled to partner with Clēnera to bring low-cost, clean energy to our members,” said CIPCO CEO and Executive Vice President Bill Cherrier. “This is a milestone project, as we look to strike a meaningful balance with energy cost, reliability, and stewardship for our members.”

This is the second major generation project announced in as many months by CIPCO. The cooperative recently announced a 60-megawatt project to repower the Summit Lake Generating Station in Creston. The project includes demolition of its 70-year-old steam plant and installation of efficient natural-gas-fired reciprocating engines by late 2022. At the end of December, the Heartland Divide Wind Energy Center came online. CIPCO will purchase 100% of the energy produced by this 103.5-megawatt facility. It is

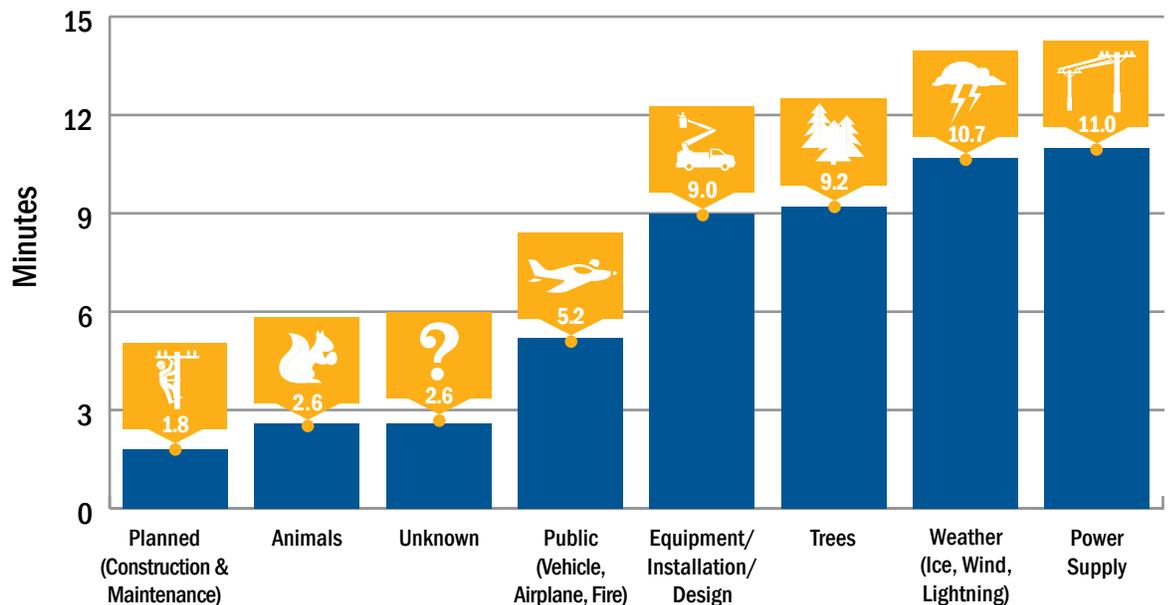
CIPCO's largest wind energy project to date.

These announcements come on the heels of actions by NextEra Energy Resources and Alliant Energy, who petitioned the IUB to close the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC) in Palo in 2020, 14 years before the plant's operating license would expire. CIPCO is 20% owner and receives 20% of its generating capacity from the DAEC nuclear plant.

“We're pleased to add these cost-effective energy projects to our portfolio,” said Cherrier. “Our members and their member-consumers benefit from advantageous pricing on these next-generation resources. Not only do members insist on cost efficiencies, they also demand reliability. It's exciting to provide both through complementary generation projects powered by the wind and the sun.” ☀️

2018 Outage Report Released

2018 Average Outage Minutes per Member Account by Outage Cause



ECI REC is pleased to report that 2018 was another great year, tallying the second fewest outage minutes per member in the history of East-Central Iowa REC. The fact that there were no major weather events last year contributed to this success, but our continuing efforts to execute our Construction Work Plan and maintenance program are another very critical reason outage minutes were minimal. In 2018, over 76 miles of distribution line were replaced; close to another 70 miles will be replaced in 2019.

Considering an Electric Vehicle? We've Got Rebates & Incentives

You may be eligible to use the Fleet Certification Code to obtain your special rebate. Visit www.ecirec.coop and print out the flyer version of this ad found in the Energy Wise > Electric Vehicles section. Take the flyer, along with your electric bill and/or proof of cooperative employment, to your local NISSAN dealer. Offer expires April 1, 2019.



\$3,500 SPECIAL REBATE³

TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COOPERATIVE MEMBERS & EMPLOYEES

FOR ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS IN SELECT STATES. PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIRED.

The All-New
NISSAN LEAF[®]
World's Best-Selling 100% Electric Car¹
No oil changes ever!



ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS RECEIVE:

\$3,500 rebate³, off MSRP

Plus: Up to **\$7,500** in Federal EV Tax Credits⁴

Total Savings: Up to **\$11,000**



NEW in 2019!

ECI REC offers rebates on residential Level II Chargers requiring a 240/208-volt input supply.

Members may qualify for 50% of installed cost up to \$500.

Learn more about the program requirements on the rebate form at ecirec.coop.

Privacy Policy for East-Central Iowa REC

Our Commitment to Privacy: At East-Central Iowa REC, confidentiality is very important to us. As we continue to improve and expand our services and delivery channels, we recognize our customers' need and desire to preserve their privacy and confidentiality. East-Central Iowa REC recognizes the trust you have placed in us and are committed to safeguarding the privacy of our customers' information. The following policy affirms our continued commitment to preserving customer confidentiality.

The Information We Collect: We receive and retain information about our customers through many sources:

- » Information we receive from you on applications or other forms;
- » Information about your transactions with us, our affiliates, or others; and
- » Information we receive from a consumer-reporting agency.

The Way We Use Information: We limit the use and collection of nonpublic personal information to that which is necessary to maintain and administer financial services.

We do not share this information with outside parties unless:

- » The information is provided to help complete a customer-initiated transaction (such as credit reporting agencies, document processing companies, etc.);
- » The customer has requested it;
- » The disclosure is required by law (e.g., subpoena, investigation of fraudulent activity, etc.); or
- » The disclosure is required by banking regulation (e.g., Fair Lending Reporting Act, Home Mortgage Disclosure Act).

When customer information is provided to any of the third parties just mentioned, that third party must agree to adhere to privacy principles that provide for keeping such information confidential.

Limiting Employee Access to Information:

East-Central Iowa REC limits employee access to customer information to those with a business reason for knowing such information. All of our employees are educated on the importance of confidentiality and customer privacy. Any employee who violates the financial privacy of our customers will be

subject to appropriate disciplinary measures and possible termination.

Protection of Information via Established Security Procedures:

To prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and ensure the correct use of information, we have put in place appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure the information.

Maintaining Accurate Information:

We have established procedures so that our customers' financial information is accurate, current, and complete in accordance with reasonable commercial standards. East-Central Iowa REC will respond to requests to correct inaccurate information in a timely manner.

At East-Central Iowa REC, we value our customer relationships. We want you to understand how we use the information you provide and our commitment to ensuring your personal privacy. If you have any questions about how East-Central Iowa REC protects your information, please contact us at 319-443-4343 or use our email ecirec@ecirec.coop.



Meet Katie: ECI REC Welcomes New Team Member

a Keeping the Lights on feature

KATIE STADHEIM joined ECI REC in late January as an administrative and benefits assistant. She is no stranger to ECI REC—she grew up depending on the Cooperative to keep the lights on. Today, Katie and her family are still being served by ECI REC.

Katie is a graduate of Luther College, where she majored in business management and minored in communications. She will be responsible for various administrative duties, including assisting CEO Steve Marlow and the Board of Directors. Katie will also assist the manager of finance with administering the Cooperative's employee benefits programs.

Katie, her husband Tony, and their three children—Teagan, Coralyn, and Olivia—live in the Urbana area. Katie enjoys spending time with family and friends and going on walks with the family's yellow lab, Drake. She also likes traveling, boating, canoeing, camping, and putting jigsaw puzzles together. Welcome to ECI REC, Katie! 🐣

WORK ZONE SAFETY: EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY

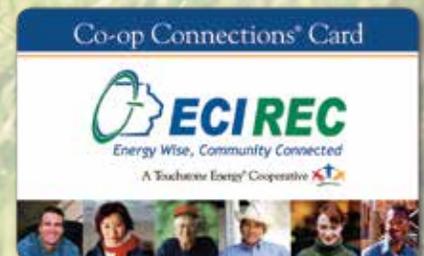
From April 8-12, National Work Zone Awareness Week will bring national attention to motorist and worker safety and mobility issues in work zones. Do your part all year long to make smart, safe choices and protect yourself, your families, and those doing their jobs.



WHAT THE SIGN REALLY SAYS IS – MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN. Iowa law requires motorists to change lanes or slow down when approaching a stationary utility vehicle that has its flashing lights activated. Failure to do so can result in hefty fines or the loss of your driver's license.

MANY WAYS TO SAVE, ALL IN ONE BASKET

The One Card That Does It All.®
Connections.coop



the Directors will allocate the remaining margins to members.

The management team worked hard to propose a 2019 budget that both balances and prioritizes service reliability and rate stability. We will utilize technology and a skilled workforce to accomplish this goal. The 2019 budget includes estimated revenues of \$22,207,556. This amount is lower than 2018, due to an anticipated reduction in kilowatt-hour sales. A return of approximately \$500,000 to members in the form of patronage dividends is also part of the 2019 budget.

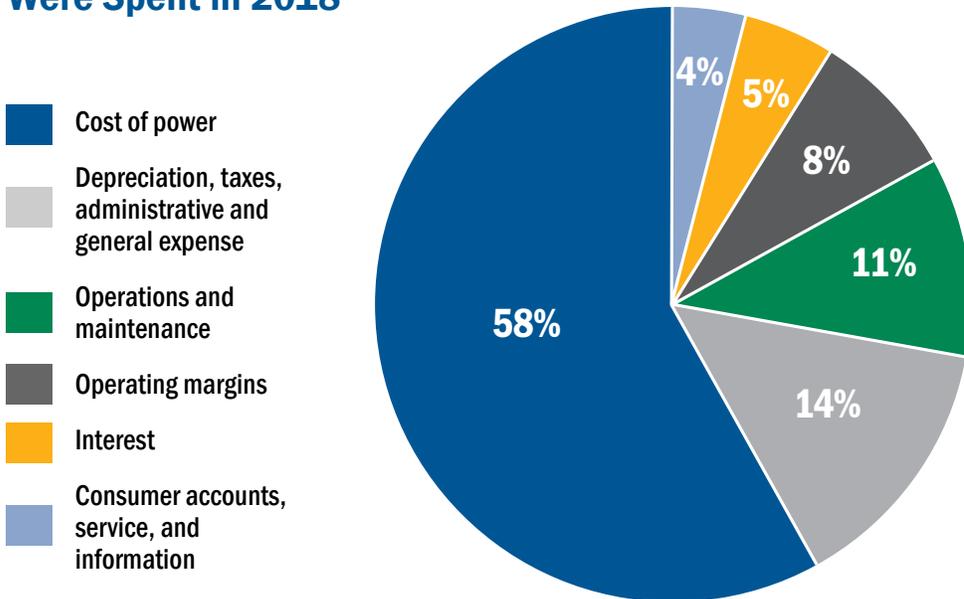
Providing reliable, safe, and affordable electricity in an environmentally responsible manner is our top priority. A breakdown of the 2019 budget is listed below, allowing you to see where your dollars will be invested. The budget includes approximately \$6,000,000 in system improvements. Some of the improvements include, but are not limited to:

- » New services construction – \$109,719
- » 70 miles of line replacement – \$2,994,040
- » Substation upgrades – \$1,300,000
- » New transformers, meters, and special equipment – \$340,000
- » Member services upgrades – \$111,000
- » Sectionalizing (such as breakers and fuses) equipment – \$100,000
- » Pole replacement – \$280,000
- » Technology – \$200,000

These system upgrades are part of ECI REC’s 2017–2020 Construction Work Plan, which makes it possible to accommodate new growth while improving the reliability of your electric service at an affordable cost to members.

The budget includes \$700,000 in preventative and ongoing line maintenance programs, including pole testing, meter testing, tree trimming, transformer and breaker maintenance, and additional services that help keep your lights on. The graph below provides a brief summary. 

How Your REC Dollars Were Spent in 2018



YOUR BOARD



- Board District 1** - Jeff Elliott
(2018/2019 Vice President)
- Board District 2** - Chris Sackett
(2018/2019 Asst. Secretary/Treasurer)
- Board District 3** - Allen Albers
- Board District 4** - Gary McKenna
- Board District 5** - Burt Byers
- Board District 6** - Don Shonka
- Board District 7** - Jim Alberts
- Board District 8** - Nick Donlea
- Board District 9** - Steve Rau
(2018/2019 President)
- Board District 10** - Ryan Kress
(2018/2019 Secretary/Treasurer)

CLASSIFIEDS: Free to members only

Please email your ad to classifieds@ecirec.coop. Ads for the May/June Heartland Link must be received by April 1, 2019.

East-Central Iowa REC will publish non-commercial advertisements as a service to our members. All ads are free. They may be submitted by any member or employee of East-Central Iowa REC. Ads should contain a phone number, name (if desired), a brief description of items with price if applicable. Each ad is limited to maximum of 50 words; please type or print clearly. Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad. No ads will be taken over the telephone—please email, mail, or bring your ad to the office.

QUESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

ECI REC strives to provide you with the best service at the lowest possible cost. But sometimes you have questions regarding your electrical service or billing, or possibly a complaint. We would like to know. Please contact us! Our office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Local phone: 319-443-4343
 Toll free: 877-850-4343
 Fax: 319-443-4359
 Email: ecirec@ecirec.coop
 Mail: 2400 Bing Miller Lane, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345

If you have a complaint related to East-Central Iowa REC’s service, rather than its rates, and the complaint is not resolved, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board.

Toll free: 877-565-4450
 Fax: 515-725-7399
 Email: customer@iub.iowa.gov
 (in subject area, note customer service)

Mail: Customer Service, Iowa Utilities Board, 1375 Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069

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CLIP AND MAIL

See page 2 for the Member Challenge questions.

Answers: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Please note: NO ANSWERS will be taken over the phone.

Members get connected at www.ecirec.coop

-  **24-Hour Bill Pay With SmartHub**
See account information at ecirec.smarthub.coop or download the app.
-  **Outage Center & Map**
View current outages via SmartHub or at outages.ecirec.coop:81.
-  **Online Forms**
Access rebate, service request, and program sign-up forms.
-  **Call Before You Dig**
Notify utilities before you dig at www.iowaonecall.com or call 811.
-  **Facebook**
Find news and updates at facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec.
-  **Co-op Connections®**
Get discounts on everyday expenses. Visit www.connections.coop or download the mobile app.
-  **Heartland Link E-Newsletter**
Email ecirec@ecirec.coop and ask to receive our newsletter via email.
-  **FREE Monthly Energy Tips**
Sign up at www.myenergytips.com to get the Watts \$mart e-newsletter.
-  **Iowa Rural Power**
Join grassroots advocates for Iowa's electric cooperatives. Visit www.iaruralpower.org.



Message From CEO Steve Marlow

Board Approves 2019 Budget

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS is happy to report that a general rate increase will not be required for the seventh straight year! This news follows approval of the 2019 budget and financial forecast.

Kilowatt-hour sales for 2018 were 4.3% greater than budgeted and 4.6% greater than sales in 2017. Expenses were closely monitored and came in \$131,353 under the budgeted amount of \$21,136,890. Margins for 2018 were \$2,353,549. This was \$937,252 over the budgeted amount of \$1,416,297. Margins from electricity sales were \$1,343,448. The remaining \$1,010,101 was derived from non-operating sources, such as patronage from Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO), our generation and transmission cooperative, and other non-profit cooperatives. After assigning some margins to Contingency and Statutory Reserves,