

# living with energy

IN IOWA

**Grundy County REC**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

SEPTEMBER 2019

Use your Co-op Connections® card at local businesses ▶ See Page 3

## Iowans participate in Energy Trail Tour

Visit our website at [www.grundycountyrecia.com](http://www.grundycountyrecia.com)

Touchstone Energy®  
Main Street Summit  
lands in Iowa

After-school recipes

Insulating for comfort  
and energy savings

*Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine (ISSN: 1935-7176) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase **Living with Energy in Iowa** is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

**Editorial Office:** 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350. E-mail address: editor@livingwithenergyiowa.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and length before publication. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

**Website:** www.livingwithenergyiowa.com

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

**Change of Address:** Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

© Copyright 2019, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. No portion of the editorial, photographic or other content of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine or its website may be reproduced without written permission of the editor.

**ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG**



**IOWA 811 ONE CALL** SM

**800-292-8989**

## Features

### 6 Touchstone Energy® Main Street Summit lands in Iowa

The three-day event, which drew 135 attendees from around the country, proved Iowa is where powerful possibilities unfold!



### 8 After-school snacks

With the kids back in school, discover some of our readers' favorite after-school snacks. **PLUS:** Find out how you can receive a \$25 credit on your power bill!



### 10 Annual energy trail tours build powerful engagement

The tours give co-op members a firsthand glimpse into electric generation and an opportunity to meet the people responsible for providing the power.



## Favorites

### 3 Statewide Perspective

Education is key to effective cooperative leadership

### 14 Energy Matters

LIHEAP funding announced for 2019-2020

### 3 Editor's Choice Contest

Win a Roomba® 680 Robot Vacuum

### 15 Out Back

Perils of wrap rage

## ON THE COVER

Ben Sanders, journeyman lineman for Midland Power Cooperative (left) and Matt Pociask, job training/safety instructor for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives participate in an apprenticeship workshop at the Midland Training Field in Jefferson. The workshop is part of the apprenticeship program and trains an apprentice in the routine and non-routine tasks required for a lineman. The goal is to ensure an apprentice completes the necessary tasks correctly and safely, not only for their personal safety, but also for the safety of co-workers and the members they serve. ⚡

Photo: Scott Meinecke, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



# Education is key to effective cooperative leadership

BY KATRINA DAVIS

*“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”*

This quote from John F. Kennedy never fails to guide and inspire me in my role at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC). As the director of education and training, I schedule, organize and manage conferences, educational workshops and training sessions for the directors and employees of Iowa’s electric cooperatives.



When we think about the elements of effective leadership, knowledge about the industry usually ranks near the top. The same is true for the elected directors at your locally owned electric cooperative. For electric co-ops to best serve their member-owners, it’s important for directors and staff to be informed and educated on the latest industry trends and challenges. In fact, your locally elected co-op board of directors invests a significant amount of time to attending training and educational sessions nationally and regionally in order to best serve you, the co-op member-owners. These programs are especially important for newer directors as they must learn quickly about their roles and responsibilities and understand the challenges and issues unique to the electric industry.

This focus on education and information stems from the core cooperative principles that guide all cooperatives. In fact, at IAEC, I work to manage and organize more than 50 education and training events for our electric cooperative members every year. We focus on providing valuable and affordable opportunities for co-op directors and employees to attend governance education courses and industry conferences, so they are informed on the latest challenges, trends, regulations and technologies

affecting electric cooperatives.

In August each year, IAEC staff members travel across the state to present industry updates to electric cooperative directors and staff. In these full-day sessions, we cover safety and loss control statistics, regulatory updates, highlights from the recent state and federal legislative sessions, new training opportunities for directors and staff, and IAEC financial and operational updates. We also allow plenty of time for attendees to ask questions in order to fully explore and understand the material.

This summer, we also talked about the upcoming international project in rural Guatemala; four Iowa electric cooperative linemen will travel with volunteers from Illinois and Wisconsin in early October to

bring the benefits of electricity to 42 households, a medical outpost and a school. We’ll make sure to share this incredible story with you in a future issue! We also presented a session at our statewide district meetings on the importance of transparency in governance and the accessibility of information about how decisions are made at your local electric cooperative.

Your electric co-op directors and staff work hard to ensure that you receive safe, reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity. Investing in valuable education and training helps ensure that our leaders make informed decisions that will guide the cooperative to a successful future as we power lives and empower the communities we serve. ⚡

Katrina Davis is the director of education and training for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

## EDITOR’S CHOICE CONTEST

### Win a Roomba® Robot Vacuum!



The Roomba® 680 Robot Vacuum provides a thorough clean, all at the push of a button. The Roomba’s patented 3-Stage Cleaning System is specially engineered to loosen, lift and suction everything from small particles to large debris from carpets and hard floors. Dirt Detect™ sensors alert the Roomba robot vacuum to clean more thoroughly on concentrated areas of dirt. Preset Roomba to clean when it’s convenient for you, so you can keep up with everyday messes. The Roomba robotic vacuum is the new must-have appliance of the century! Valued at \$299. ⚡

### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month’s contest by visiting [www.livingwithenergyiowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com) no later than Sept. 30, 2019. You must be a member of one of Iowa’s electric cooperatives to win. There’s no obligation associated with entering, we don’t share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified. The winner of the Nest® Learning Thermostat from the June issue was Brady James from T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative.

BACK IN THE DAY

# Drive down memory lane



The unincorporated community of Zaneta recently achieved a milestone when it received its first paved road. This community, founded in the 1800s, was a stop on the Chicago and North Western Railway. Check out the new road by taking a cruise to County Road D35 west of Hudson. For those who remember the old road, enjoy taking a drive down memory lane! ⚡



**Office:** Grundy County REC  
303 N Park Avenue  
P.O. Box 39  
Grundy Center, IA 50638

**Phone:** 319-824-5251 or 1-800-390-7605

**Fax:** 319-824-3118

**Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):**  
800-292-8989

**Website:** www.grundycountyrecia.com

**Facebook:** facebook.com/GrundyCountyREC

**E-mail:** vdaily@grundycountyrecia.org

**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Call our office 24/7: 319-824-5251

**General Manager/CEO:** Vicki Daily

**Officers and Directors:**

- District 1: Kevin Pruisner
- District 2: Norbert Boyle
- District 3: Nick Strohhenn
- District 4: Larry Rohach
- District 5: Ben Espenscheid
- District 6: David Schmidt
- District 7: Jason Paper

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP

# Co-op Connections Card

Use your Co-op Connections® card at A Wild Hair Salon & Boutique in Traer. At A Wild Hair Salon, you will find highly trained professionals who will help you find the look that is right for your personality and lifestyle. They have professionals trained to collectively meet your haircare needs, including coloring, cutting, care, styling and more. Be sure to stop by today and receive your discount by showing your Co-op Connections card.



Other area businesses offering the Co-op Connections discount include the following:

- **Natural Grind** – Grundy Center
- **The Landmark Bistro** – Grundy Center
- **319 Décor & Design** – Grundy Center
- **Crazy Daisies** – Grundy Center
- **Tasty House** – Grundy Center
- **Stylish Living** – Grundy Center
- **Sweets on Main**– Traer
- **Retro Rooster** – Traer
- **Traer Theater** – Traer ⚡

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY



**Grundy County REC Operations Manager Steve Ralston (right) and Line Foreman Tony Sienknecht (above) participated in the Felix Grundy Festival parade on July 13.**



**Karl Nielsen, lineman, participated in the Touch a Truck event at Rock Around the Clocktower on July 18 in Grundy Center. Adults and kids had the opportunity to check out the Grundy County REC truck, sit inside, see demonstrations and ask questions.**

# Climbing competency and basket rescue

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' Safety and Loss Control Department recently conducted recertification for pole climbing and bucket rescue with our linemen. ⚡



Linemen Aaron Bird, Karl Nielsen and Tyler Thomas conducting the bucket rescue competency portion of the recertification.



Line Foreman Tony Sienknecht completing the pole climbing competency test.

CONGRATULATIONS

## Nielsen and Sienknecht complete line course

Congratulations to Karl Nielsen (*top photo*), first class lineman, and Tony Sienknecht (*bottom photo*), line foreman, who recently completed the Line Maintainer Course!

Steve Ralston, operations manager for Grundy County REC (*left*) and Matt Pociask, job training/safety instructor for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (*right*) presented the awards at a recent Grundy County REC safety meeting. ⚡



# Hunting safety is a priority around electric equipment

Hunters have their sights on wild game when preparing for hunting season; however, including thoughts of electrical safety can help prevent an accident with utility equipment.



Grundy County REC urges hunters to take precautions and be aware of potential electrical hazards while hunting.

- Always carry emergency supplies in the event of an accident – cell phone, whistle and flashlight.
- Never shoot power lines or electrical equipment.
- Note the location of power lines and other electrical equipment before you begin a hunt.
- Obey all signs that advise electrical safety, especially when selecting the location for a tree stand. Tree stands are the leading cause of hunting injuries.
- When setting up and taking down the stand, do not make contact with any overhead electrical equipment.
- If you are using a portable electrical generator on your hunting trip, do not run it in a confined area, and use it outside only.
- Never use power poles to support a tree stand. ⚡

# Touchstone Energy Main Street Summit lands in Iowa

*Event proves Iowa is where powerful possibilities unfold*

BY DAWN SLY-TERPSTRA

Call it coincidence or call it fate. The week Touchstone Energy® brings its newest initiative – the Main Street Summit – to Iowa, Major League Baseball announces next year’s Field of Dreams game. The 2020 game will be a match-up between the Chicago White Sox and New York Yankees on a new field adjacent to the field of movie fame near Dyersville. For those of us in flyover country, when the big leagues play on our fields, powerful possibilities unfold.

Those possibilities were perfectly encapsulated at the Des Moines Social Club (DMSC), site of Touchstone Energy’s Best in Class: Strategy Execution program and the Main Street Summit. As effective storytelling is more about the “show” than the “tell,” this venue immersed 135 participants in the creative placemaking experience. Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration and potential, with the intention



of creating public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness and well-being. The theater and meeting spaces in this converted fire station – a project of founder Zack Mannheimer of McClure Engineering, who is also a presenter at national cooperative events – was its own case study for those who gathered to learn more about economic development strategies and resources.

The Summit’s focus during the

first half of the event included managing change by developing strategy, translating change to create a new reality, and aligning strategy and leading change. The room was set to facilitate small group work. Table exercises played a key role in learning more about strategies implemented by cooperative peers.

## Discovering “Iowa Nice” is real

The attendees from 22 states, many of whom had never been to



*“The teamwork and cooperative spirit from the Iowa Welcoming Committee was infectious. It made what could have been a grueling week for staff into a fun, energized trip to a hidden gem of a city. We couldn’t have picked a better place to get our members fired up about community and economic development.”*

– Scott Bialick  
Senior Business Development Program Specialist  
Touchstone Energy®



# BEST IN CLASS MAIN STREET SUMMIT

Iowa, discovered that “Iowa Nice” and Midwestern hospitality are real. A committee of Iowa electric cooperative staff who formed a Welcome to Iowa group made sure that was the case, along with participants from local cooperatives. A reception on the rooftop of the DMSC, a food truck throw-down and DJ in the courtyard, allowed everyone a chance to get to know each other better while sharing their region’s opportunities and challenges.

After lunch on the second day, the balance of the conference focused on economic development – the star of the show. Discussions ranged from how to start an economic development program by building partnerships and identifying funding sources, to practical tools and applications, as well as types of development initiatives from across the country. Speakers included Bette Brand, administrator, USDA/RD Rural Business Cooperative-Service; Zack Mannheimer; Jim and Mallorie Rasberry from HGTV’s

Home Town, as well as presenters from electric cooperatives and development groups.

## Seamlessly intersecting the past and present

On the second evening, 30 attendees participated in a mobile classroom experience to Winterset organized by Iowa Area Development Group (IADG). Participants from South Carolina, Oregon, North Dakota, Florida, Kentucky and a handful of Iowans learned how history and culture can become big draws in small towns. A farm-to-table dinner at the Northside Café (made famous by “The Bridges of Madison County”) preceded a tour of Winterset’s town square – where all the storefronts are occupied – and a behind-the-scenes look at the John Wayne Museum. Mark Catton, a museum exhibit designer from Iowa, accompanied the group and discussed his experiences working with project stakeholders to develop and curate a public space that engages an audience while keeping the story of John Wayne relevant.

## Visiting the energetic hub of Iowa

Many visiting Iowa for the first time discovered the unexpected cultural life in downtown Des Moines – trendy restaurants and bars, the hip vibe of the East Village, Triple A baseball, and the rapid growth and development of a city and a state identified by many national publications as a top place to live. The phrase “Who knew?” was repeated often by those making fresh discoveries, prompting smiles of pride and surprise among natives.

As the conference ended, many attendees seemed reluctant to leave – hungry to learn more about growing their communities, building on their local legacies and aspiring to merge past and present.

This trip to Iowa – to learn about economic development and placemaking – showed visitors “if you build it, they will come!” ⚡

Dawn Sly-Terpstra is the vice president of corporate communications for Central Iowa Power Cooperative.

*“Before the Main Street Summit kicked off in Iowa, I had an opportunity to meet with teams from several electric co-ops and exchange ideas about the cooperative difference. I was blown away with all the wind generation I saw on my day trip, loved experiencing firsthand the importance of leadership in revitalizing local communities and had corn on the cob so satisfyingly sweet I didn’t need dessert. But the story that really stuck with me was the Freedom Rocks. It highlighted many lessons from the Summit like the importance of making the ordinary outstanding with a simple story, giving communities something local to celebrate and being open to opportunities.”*

– Anne Harvey  
Director of Member Relations & Communications  
Touchstone Energy®



*“Iowa was the perfect backdrop to celebrate and promote community development. Co-ops across Iowa are committed to their communities at the local and state levels, including creating, owning and supporting development organizations, namely IADG. Efforts like these mixed with “Iowa Nice” hospitality, made our Summit valuable to attendees from dozens of states and sets a template other states can emulate.”*

– Josh McGhee  
Strategic Communications Manager  
Touchstone Energy®

# AFTER-SCHOOL SNACKS

September is National Family Meals Month™ – a nationwide event designed to support families in enjoying more meals together.



## Granola Bars

- 1 cup nut butter
- ½ cup finely chopped dates or other dried fruit
- ½ cup dark chocolate chips
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 3 cups oatmeal
- ¾ cup roasted pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup roasted sunflower seeds
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Combine nut butter, fruit, chocolate chips, olive oil, honey and vanilla. Heat in saucepan to melt butter and chips. Combine oatmeal, seeds and salt. Pour butter mixture over seeds mixture. Mix well, coating oatmeal and seeds. Prepare a jelly pan by spraying with baking oil and lining with parchment paper. Press mixture into prepared pan. Press hard and firm. Cool, then cut into bars. Store in airtight container.

Lora Hoven • Albia  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## Quickity-Split Banana Chocolate Marshmallow Treat

- 1 large banana, peeled
- 8-10 small marshmallows
- 10-15 semi-sweet chocolate chips

With a knife cut a groove down the center of a banana. Pry open and place marshmallows and chocolate chips in the groove. Place on a microwave safe plate and set on high for 45 seconds. Remove from microwave and wait for the gooey goodies to cool, then enjoy.

Dave Duit • Nevada • Consumers Energy

## Apple Cartwheels

- ¼ cup peanut butter
- 1½ teaspoon honey
- ½ cup miniature chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 4 medium red apples, unpeeled but cored

In a bowl, combine peanut butter and honey. Fold in chocolate chips and raisins. Fill center of apple with mixture. Refrigerate at least one hour. Cut into ¼-inch rings. Makes approximately 2 dozen rings.

Erma Coblentz • Cincinnati  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## No-Bake Energy Bites

- 1 cup oatmeal
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ⅓ cup honey
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- ½ cup ground flax seed
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and chill 30 minutes. Once chilled, roll into balls and enjoy. Store in an airtight container for one week.

Glenda Jager • George  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

### PLAN AHEAD AND KEEP IT SIMPLE

When you have time, prepare staples (think rice, quinoa) and refrigerate or freeze to throw into soups/casseroles/side dishes later in the week. From time-to-time, make extra of your family-favorite recipes and pop into the freezer to pull out when you are rushed for time.

## Easy Kid-Size Pizzas

- 8 ounce package flour tortillas
- ½ cup pizza sauce
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 8 ounces sliced pepperoni

Cut 12 circles from tortillas with a round cookie cutter. Place circles in the bottoms of greased muffin tins. Spoon pizza sauce over tortilla circles; top with cheese and pepperoni. Cooked ground beef or sausage can be used instead of pepperoni. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10-12 minutes. Scoop out of tin when done.

Mary Gropper • Chelsea  
T.I.P Rural Electric Cooperative

## Freezer Fruit Slushies

- 10 ounces frozen strawberries
- ¾ cup water
- ¾ cup ice cubes
- 1 6-ounce can pink lemonade concentrate, frozen carbonated citrus soda

Blend everything except the carbonated drink in a blender until smooth. Freeze mixture into a 2-quart container or in individual serving cups. To serve, put a generous ½ cup slush mix in a glass, pour carbonated drink over to fill the glass and serve with a spoon to mix and stir. Fresh fruit pieces can be stirred in too. Any frozen fruit can be used instead of strawberries.

Faith Blaskovich • Lohrville  
Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association

## Scotcheroos

- 1 cup white Karo syrup
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1½ cups peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 6 cups crispy rice cereal
- 12 ounces butterscotch chips
- 6 ounces chocolate chips

Mix Karo syrup and sugar in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add vanilla, peanut butter and mix well. Pour cereal into a large bowl and pour syrup mixture over it. Stir gently to coat then pour into a greased 9x13-inch pan. Pat cereal mixture with wax paper to evenly fill pan. Melt all chips in a double boiler and spread melted mixture over cereal mixture. Cool and cut into bars.

Jane Person • Batavia • Access Energy Cooperative

## Creamy Strawberry-Orange Pops

- 8 ounces strawberry flavored yogurt
- ¾ cup orange juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups frozen whole strawberries
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 6 paper cups, 7-ounce size
- 6 wooden popsicle sticks

Combine yogurt, juice and vanilla. Blend until smooth. Add strawberries and sugar. Blend until smooth. Fill cups ¾ full. Freeze for 1 hour then insert sticks. Continue to freeze. Peel cup off to serve.

Ava Nester • Rock Rapids  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

### EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Frequent family meals increase self-esteem, a sense of well-being, positive social behaviors and stronger family relationships.

FAMILY MEALS

### MAKING THE GRADE

Kids – from elementary to high-school age – who eat meals with their families four times a week or more earn better test scores and succeed in school.

FAMILY MEALS

### INVOLVE THE KIDDOS

Involve your children in food shopping, meal planning, and meal preparation whenever possible. Let your children pick one part of each meal (e.g., fruit side dish).

FAMILY MEALS

### WEIGHING THE PROS

Adults and children who eat at home more regularly are less likely to suffer from obesity. Increased family meals are associated with greater intake of fruits and vegetables.

FAMILY MEALS

## Wanted: Winter Soups & Stews The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

When temperatures drop, winds howl and snow flies, warming up with a hearty bowl of goodness is always on the menu! We're looking for your best recipes for winter soups and stews. If we run your recipe in the magazine, we'll send a \$25 credit for your electric co-op to apply to your power bill. Recipes submitted also may be archived on our website at [www.livingwithenergyiowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com).

The deadline is Sept. 30, 2019. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

**EMAIL:**  
[recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com](mailto:recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com)  
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your e-mail message.)

**MAIL:**  
**Recipes**  
*Living with Energy in Iowa*  
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48  
Des Moines, IA 50322-2992

# Annual energy trail tours build powerful engagement among members

BY ANGELA CATTON

For more than 50 years, Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) based in Le Mars has been conducting co-op member tours to power plants. The tours give energy end-users – including many electric co-op members in Iowa – a firsthand glimpse into electric generation and an opportunity to meet the people responsible for providing the power that is delivered directly to their homes, farms and businesses. Because of its northwest Iowa location, NIPCO's member cooperatives receive power from neighboring cooperative resources. Co-op members learn how coal is a valuable part of America's energy mix, while showcasing how environmentally responsible power is possible within a carbon-constrained world.

During three educational and fun-filled days, members are immersed in rural electric cooperative history, the co-op business model, and the Touchstone Energy® brand as well as gaining a deeper understanding and pride about the cooperative difference. Each year and during two tours,

participants include 90-100 members from eight different distribution cooperatives and several municipal utilities, all with a common bond of belonging to and advocating for the rural electric cooperative industry.

## Serving up electricity

What began as a single day tour to the Oahe Dam and Powerhouse in Pierre, South Dakota, evolved into a three-day journey in the mid-1980s. The event grew when NIPCO began to supplement its hydroelectric (water) power supply with power purchased from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a generation and transmission (G&T) power cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Today, NIPCO receives approximately 80% of its power supply from Basin Electric and 20% from Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), which markets power generated from the Missouri River Dam System. NIPCO's generation portfolio includes electricity generated from coal, water, wind, natural gas and other sources. Because of the resource diversity, NIPCO and its member cooperatives want co-op members to have an opportunity to see and understand the electricity sources powering their lives. NIPCO facilitates the tours, with its member cooperatives sponsoring travel costs for tour participants. In many cases, the trip is offered at no cost or for only a nominal fee to their member-consumers who express an interest in the journey.

Every tour begins by offering this analogy to tour participants:



Energy Trail Tour participants pose for a group shot in front of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's 900-megawatt Antelope Valley Station, a coal-fired electric generation station.

“Electricity works a lot like ordering food at a drive-thru window. When you order a hamburger and fries at the speaker, you expect it to be ready for you when you pull up to the window. There is an expectation that the food will be affordable, of good quality and available to you immediately. The electric power supply is no different. When you order up your

## NIPCO's Iowa-based electric distribution cooperatives

- Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative – Woodbine
- Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative – Estherville
- Nishnabotna Valley Rural Electric Cooperative – Harlan
- North West Rural Electric Cooperative – Orange City
- Western Iowa Power Cooperative – Denison
- Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative – Merville

*“Tell me and I forget; Teach me and I remember; Involve me and I will learn.”*

– Benjamin Franklin



Oahe Powerhouse  
in Pierre, South Dakota



A tour member snaps a photo in the room which houses a scale model of the coal gasification plant.

power at the switch, you expect it to be delivered to you. That electricity isn't stored in the switch plate. When you flip that switch, that power must travel hundreds of miles to reach your location at the exact time you demand it.” How that electricity is “served up” to your light switch takes a cast of thousands. Tour participants experience the passion, innovation and dedication of each of NIPCO's power providers as representatives from every aspect of power supply and delivery act as tour guides and answer questions from the group.

The Energy Trail Tours showcase generation facilities that include hydropower at the Oahe Powerhouse and Dam in Pierre, South Dakota, and the coal-fired Antelope Valley Station in Beulah, North Dakota.

At Dakota Gasification Company, located adjacent to the 900-megawatt Antelope Valley Station, tour participants learn about the method of carbon-capture and coal gasification and the many products manufactured through this process, including fuel additives such as diesel exhaust fluid and fertilizers used

in agricultural production, such as anhydrous ammonia, ammonium sulfate and urea.

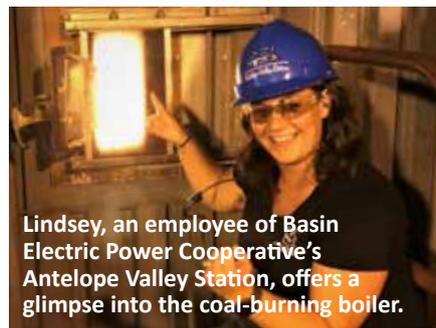
### Caring for the environment

The Coteau Properties Company Freedom Mine in North Dakota allows co-op members to see the mining process of the area's lignite coal. Land that is mined is carefully returned to its original contour and reseeded to return to its original use. Whether it's going back to a natural prairie or cropland, it's monitored for several years. Often, members catch a glimpse of the deer, fowl and antelope that graze on the reclaimed acres.

Energy Trail Tour participants also learn about wind generation and the importance of renewable energy resources in America's overall energy mix. Iowans are very familiar with the fact that their state leads the way in wind generation. As such, the tour includes a mobile classroom on the process of wind generation and how a turbine works.

### Showcasing safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible power

Education about power generation and delivery is an important element



Lindsey, an employee of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Antelope Valley Station, offers a glimpse into the coal-burning boiler.



55 years ago, a group of rural electric cooperative members enjoyed the Energy Trail Tour!

in the way NIPCO and its member cooperatives engage with member-consumers. For decades, energy trail tours have served as a powerful way to deepen co-op members' understanding of how energy reaches them and strengthen the relationship with their local cooperative.

“This trip reinforced the need for a balanced approach to meeting our future energy needs, one that protects our environment, our communities, U.S. jobs and the reliable electric service that our industries need – and our citizens have come to expect,” says Fred Wirtz, a member of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative.

Gregg and Zolene Streck, members of North West REC, echoed those same sentiments, “We were so impressed how land was put back for use – even better than it was and the efficiency of coal use. We definitely will encourage others to take the trip.”

To learn more about the Energy Trail Tour, visit [www.nipco.coop](http://www.nipco.coop). 🌱

Angela Catton is the manager of member relations and development for NIPCO.

# Wildwood Hills Ranch receives \$10,000 through CIPCO's annual charity event

Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) and its 13 member systems hosted its annual golf and charity events at the Legacy Golf Club, with proceeds benefiting Wildwood Hills Ranch in St. Charles.

Wildwood Hills Ranch of Iowa exists to transform lives and strengthen communities by providing healing, hope and God's unconditional love to children and youth at risk.

After a day of golfing, boating, or tours of the ranch, participants learned more about the programs offered by at Wildwood Hills Ranch, including programs for Iowa's at-risk-youth and combat veterans. The event was capped off with the announcement of \$10,000 raised to support the program.

"CIPCO system members are committed to supporting not-for-profit organizations bringing needed services to the communities we serve," says CIPCO CEO Bill Cherrier. "Each year, members and associated organizations participate in our event to raise funds to support an outstanding program."

"We're honored our group was selected this year as the recipient for this event," states Wildwood Hills



Ranch Executive Director Matt Moeckl. "This generosity supports what we do best and educates more Iowans about the needs that exist, which sadly, are not diminishing." ⚡

CIPCO is a generation and transmission electric cooperative built by member cooperatives and the communities they serve. With a balanced, 24/7 energy portfolio, CIPCO is committed to providing cost-effective, clean, safe and reliable energy. CIPCO and its 13 members serve over 300,000 Iowans in 58 Iowa counties.



## CIPCO's member cooperatives

- Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Consumers Energy
- East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative
- Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative
- Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative
- Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative
- Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative
- Midland Power Cooperative
- Pella Cooperative Electric Association
- SIMECA (South Iowa Municipal Electric Cooperative Association)
- Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative
- T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

# Insulating for comfort and energy savings

BY PAT KEEGAN AND BRAD THIESSEN

You may be dreading winter. It feels like every year, no matter what you do, your home still feels cold and heating bills rise.

If this sounds like your house, there's a good chance it needs more insulation. Most older homes, and many newer ones, are not properly insulated. Adding insulation can be a good investment year-round since it can help keep out the summer heat as well.

## Not all insulation is the same

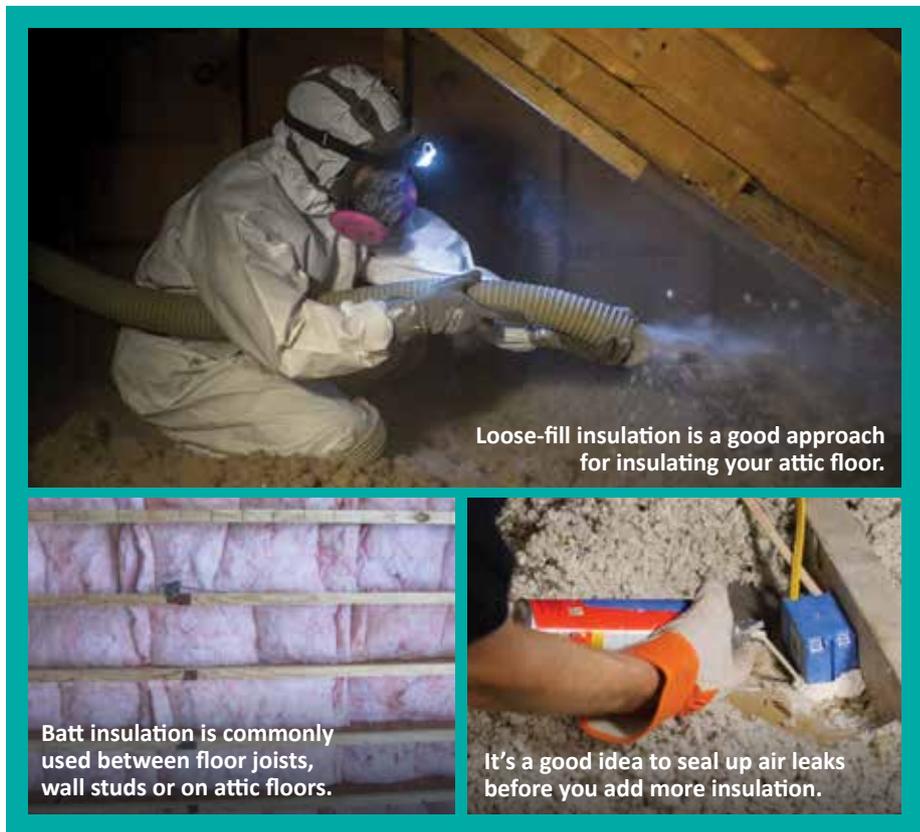
There are many types of insulation, and the three most common types in residential buildings are batt, loose-fill and rigid.

Batt insulation can be made with several kinds of fibers, including fiberglass and wool. It's cut to fit between the framing in your ceilings, walls or floors. Loose-fill insulation is made with small pellets or particles. It can be added by hand or blown in by machine into attic floors or exterior wall cavities. Rigid insulation comes in light sheets and is installed against a solid surface like an exterior wall or foundation.

All insulation is measured by its R-value. A higher R-value is more effective. The amount of R-value you need depends on the climate and where the insulation is being added in your home.

If your heating costs are higher than expected, there's a good chance the attic is part of the problem. Finished attics are usually under-insulated and correcting the problem can be a challenge. If your attic is unfinished, solutions will be simpler and more cost-effective.

You can inspect your unfinished attic but be cautious. Loose-fill insulation in older homes may have harmful asbestos that you absolutely do not want to disturb. It's probably best to just poke your head in enough to look around, since it's easy to damage wiring or ducts, or step through the ceiling.



Loose-fill insulation is a good approach for insulating your attic floor.

Batt insulation is commonly used between floor joists, wall studs or on attic floors.

It's a good idea to seal up air leaks before you add more insulation.

Photo: Jesus Rodriguez

## R-values matter

The attic will likely have loose-fill insulation or batts on the floor. Look carefully to see if the insulation is spread evenly with no gaps or voids. To determine whether there is enough insulation, you can start by researching the recommended amount for Iowa. The Department of Energy publishes this information, which is available on its website – [www.energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation). After measuring the depth of the insulation, you can calculate the R-value. Different types of insulation have different R-values per inch. If your attic insulation is far short of the recommended levels, you will likely see major energy savings by having a professional add enough to reach that level.

The next place to check is the walls. Many homes built before 1980 have little or no wall insulation, and even newer homes may lack proper insulation. You might be able to see

if the walls are insulated by carefully removing an outlet cover.

The most common technique for adding insulation to walls is to have it blown in through holes drilled from inside or outside the home. These holes can be easily patched. An alternative, if the house is being re-sided, is to add rigid insulation to the exterior, underneath the new siding.

Finally, if your floor gets cold in winter, and you have a crawl space, you can install batt insulation between the floor joists. If your home is built on a concrete slab, rigid foam can be installed around the perimeter.

Insulation works great if you choose the right approach and the work is done carefully. Contact the energy experts at your local electric co-op for more information about insulation solutions and home energy audits. ⚡

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency.

# Details released for Iowa Home Energy Assistance Program

The 2019-2020 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel and type of housing.

Besides meeting the income guidelines, you must furnish the Social Security numbers of all household members and a copy of recent heating and electric bills. You also must show proof of income for all household members age 19 and over. If you receive alimony or child support, it will need to be verified too.

If you're a wage earner, you should bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period before the date of application or a copy of your federal income tax return. If you're self-employed or a farmer, provide a copy of your most recent federal income tax return. And if you're on a fixed income – Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program (FIP), Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance



and pensions – take copies of check stubs from the last 30 days. For FIP recipients, bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information.

In Iowa, applications for the program will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis from Nov. 1, 2019, through April 30, 2020. The start date is Oct. 1, 2019, for elderly (60 and over) and/or disabled applicants. If you're not sure where to apply, visit [humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply](http://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply) to contact your local community action agency, call 2-1-1 or write: LIHEAP, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319. ⚡

Income Maximums	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$21,858
2	\$29,593
3	\$37,328
4	\$45,063
5	\$52,798
6	\$60,533
7	\$68,268
8	\$76,003

**Note:** For households with more than eight members, add \$7,735 for each additional member.

**BUT RIGHT NOW  
IT'S YOU I'M  
WORRIED ABOUT.**

**HIS JOB IS DANGEROUS ENOUGH.** The last thing he needs is for you to drive into his utility truck because you ignored the flashing lights, cones and signs. When you see utility crews at work, slow down and move over. You have the power to protect a life.



**MOVE OVER  
SLOW DOWN**



# PERILS OF WRAP RAGE

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

As tempting as it is to pick up that neatly packaged set of earbuds or that new DVD for your grandkids or even those muffins at the local grocery store, it's easy to forget that, sooner or later, you're going to have to open that package.

Dismantling these slick, hermetically sealed containers is an endless source of frustration, so much so that it has engendered an emotion as well as an official name: "wrap rage."

Wrap rage leads to the use of unorthodox items in the battle to procure the item you spent too much for from the outer trappings that imprison it.

As one who's been known to use a butcher knife to attack a clamshell package that held a toy tractor, I share your pain, quite literally and metaphorically. I ended up with a gash between my thumb and first finger that, while not requiring medical care, did require some awkward bandaging and some even more awkward questions from friends and family.

*"Gee, Grandma, what did you do to your finger!?"*

*"Oh, nothing, darlings. It's just a symbol of my unbounding love for you."* (Insert martyred tones.)

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 6,000 Americans are injured each year in wrap rage incidents, with most of those injuries to the hands, fingers, arms and legs. (Presumably, this last injury occurs when un-wrappers use their legs to stabilize the offending product.) These wounds include punctures, lacerations, cuts, and burns from untwisting the approximately 180 cable ties holding that doll against a cardboard lining.

Safety experts continue with a list of safety precautions that begins sternly ("Wear protective eyewear."



If I need to wear protective eyewear to open a box, doesn't that indicate that something is terribly wrong?) and ends up throwing in the towel ("Buy the kid a sweater."). Really.

Even Consumer Reports has joined the harangue, initiating the Oyster Awards for the year's hardest-to-open packages.

Packaging companies maintain that stiff clamshell coverings and tough blister packets not only deter shoplifters but also ensure the product arrives intact. They also make it possible for the buyer to see exactly what is being purchased.

But it's worth noting that the

online merchandising giants are turning more often to user-friendly packaging – pull tapes and plain cardboard boxes without excess stuffing.

I'm patiently waiting, hopeful that more companies will jump on the bandwagon to provide packages that are easier to open. In the meantime, I've got my butcher knife ready. But I don't think I really need protective eyewear. ⚡

---

Valerie Van Kooten is a writer from Pella who loves living in the country and telling its stories. She and her husband Kent have three married sons and two incredibly adorable grandsons.



SMALL SAVINGS  
LEAD TO BIG ONES

Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperatives of Iowa  
[www.touchstoneenergy.coop](http://www.touchstoneenergy.coop)



Your local electric cooperative helps you find more ways to save energy, save money and help the environment. So small savings today lead to big savings tomorrow.