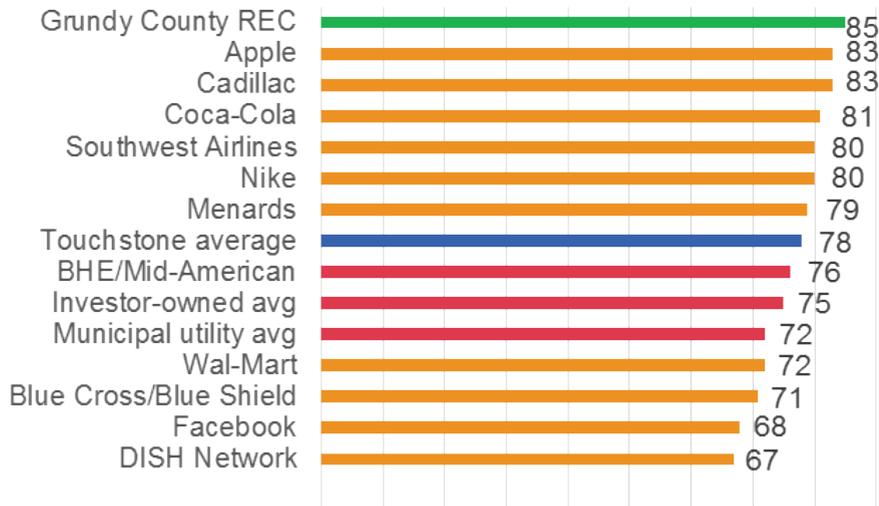


## American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) survey

Grundy County REC (GCREC) preforms an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) research every two years. We received the results of the survey in December. The coop's ACSI score ended up at 85, which is higher than the national Touchstone Energy co-op average (79) and Mid-American Energy/Berkshire Hathaway's rating (76), as well as the average scores for investor-owned utilities (75) and municipal utilities (72). Previous GCREC ACSI scores were 88 in 2015, 78 in 2013, and 89 in 2011 and 2007.

Overall satisfaction maintained a very high 92 percent. The same score that GCREC received in the 2015 and 2011 survey, and much higher than the 77 percent it received in the 2013 survey. Member loyalty also had received a very good score of 84 percent, which is a little down from the 2015 score of 90 percent, but higher than the 77 percent in 2013.



Other key satisfaction attributes, members give GCREC the highest ratings for prompt outage response, reliable electric service, courteous employees, knowledgeable employees, quality customer service and professional business manner.

Member awareness of the Touchstone Energy brand is also very high, now 81 percent of respondents have heard or seen the Touchstone Energy name compared to 2011 only 58 percent. Also, 66 percent of the membership recognizes that GCREC is a Touchstone Energy cooperative, compared to 37 percent in 2011. These numbers have stayed about the same level during the last three ACSI surveys in 2013, 2015, and 2017.

Thank you for providing your feedback so we can continue to provide the best service possible to our members.

## Years of cooperative service recognized

The success of Grundy County REC over the past 81 years can be directly attributed to the hard work and dedication of the employees who work each day to ensure the cooperative members receive the best possible service.

Each year Grundy Co REC recognizes employees for their years of service to the organization. In December 2017, we honored Aaron Bird for 10 years of service to the cooperative.



*Kevin Pruisner (left), Grundy County REC board president, with Aaron Bird, first-class lineman.*



# Cooperatives attend legislative reception

Over 150 directors, managers and staff members from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with state legislators and policy makers on January 9 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception at the State Historical Building in downtown Des Moines. Other guests of honor included: Governor Kim Reynolds, Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg, Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey, Auditor of State Mary Mosiman, Attorney General Tom Miller, Iowa Utilities Board Member Nick Wagner and Iowa Department of Economic Development Director Debi Durham. 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, hosted the annual reception.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including items central to Iowa's rural economy. The directors, managers and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues allowing Iowa's member-owned electric cooperatives to continue providing safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans.

Electric cooperative representatives will also be in attendance at the annual REC Day on the Hill to be held on March 14, 2018, at the capitol.



*(From left) Prairie Energy Cooperative's Key Accounts Director Todd Foss, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, and Prairie Energy Cooperative's Assistant Board Secretary/Treasurer and Corn Belt Board President Scott Stecher, Board Secretary/Treasurer Donald Christopherson and Interim Manager Belva German.*

## Winter pruning leads to spring growing

**A**s trees grow, it's easy to take their health and our safety for granted. However, maintenance and upkeep of trees is necessary, especially as it pertains to safety. Weak, dying and dead branches can break off in storms, damaging electrical equipment, power lines and buildings.

Pruning can help strengthen tree branches and promote growth. When splits in the tree's wood emerge, they expand as the tree grows. This can result in fallen branches that bring down power lines and damage electrical equipment.

It's best to prune during cold weather when the tree is dormant, not when trees are growing. The ideal time is between mid-November and mid-March. Trees pruned during winter months will have increased growth in the spring.

Make sure to plan before you begin to prune. When selecting equipment, take into consideration the area surrounding the tree so that it will not come in contact with overhead power lines. If you're using a chain saw to prune, never reach above your shoulders. Ladders can be especially dangerous, so make sure that you have a firm foundation before you begin to climb. It can be helpful to have someone stationed at the bottom for added stability.

Start with the largest branches that need pruning before moving to the smaller ones. Trim at the growth points, not in the middle of branches. While pruning, make sure that you take frequent breaks so that you can remain focused on the task. During these breaks, always look up to assess if pruning can be done safely in the surrounding area.

Keep in mind: Never trim trees that are close to overhead power lines, including the service connection to your home. That is a job for trained professionals.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



**90%** of deciduous trees can be pruned in the winter once the trees have gone into dormancy.

**Safe**  
Electricity.org

research collected from the Chicago Botanic Garden

# Blanket yourself safely this winter

When winter chill begins and you bring out your electric blanket, first make sure it is safe to use.

- Check the product label and that the model was tested and approved by a safety laboratory. Verify that there is a safety mark, such as "UL."
- Check that all of the wiring is snug.
- When your blanket is in use, it should be flat so the coils aren't folded, which can create a fire risk and burns to the blanket.
- Be careful not to tuck blanket areas with electric wires or run cords under the mattress. This could create friction once you sleep on top of the mattress.
- If you are not in the room, turn off your blanket.
- Check your electric blanket for signs of damage—scorch marks, discoloration, fraying—these can be indications of damaged wiring.
- Stop using your blanket if you smell smoke or a buzzing sound during use.
- If your blanket has been used 10 years or longer, replace it.
- Never dry clean an electric blanket. Check manufacturer's instructions on whether it can safely withstand limited machine washing on the gentle cycle.
- Use your blanket on top of your body. Body weight on top of the blanket can create a fire hazard.
- Don't allow pets near your blanket. Claws can cause rips and tears possibly exposing the electric wiring of the blanket.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative wants everyone to have a warm winter season and safe, peaceful rest.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## Know the Facts

electric blanket safety

 SafeElectricity.org

## DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

Meter tampering can result in electric shock, is illegal and increases electricity rates for other co-op members.



- ⊘ Never break a meter seal.
- ⊘ Never open a meter base.
- ⊘ Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner.

If you know or suspect that someone has tampered with their meter, please contact us immediately.



## What's cookin'?

### Have a recipe everyone loves?

Living with Energy in Iowa is always looking for recipes for the magazine. If yours is chosen, you will earn a \$25 power bill credit! Take a look at Page 9 in any issue of the magazine to learn how to submit your recipe either by email or by mailing to the magazine's headquarters.

**Looking for a new recipe?** Go to the website and click on Recipe Archive at the top and search by main ingredient and/or category. Try a new recipe tonight!

## BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.



### ■ WATER

Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.



### ■ TOOLS

Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.



### ■ FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS

First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.

Learn more at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)



Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.



Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup>  
Cooperatives

The power of human connections<sup>®</sup>

## Where are they?

Grundy County REC is holding unclaimed property resulting from patronage dividend refunds due to the persons listed below. Please contact the REC office at 319-824-5251 or 1-800-390-7605 if you have any information on these people. If the person is deceased, we would appreciate the name of the next of kin so we can contact them. If Grundy County REC does not hear from the owner within six (6) months, we are allowed to retain this property in accordance with Iowa law or deliver this property to the State Treasurer's Office for disposition as abandoned property.

Parke W./Diane Adamson

Timothy J. Aiken

Trent M Alberts

Leona D. Arter

Chris R. Balvanz

Lisa Bandfield

Troy A./Karen L. Barfels

David E. Barnes

Israel L. Barron

Bruce L./Cindy L. Berry

Stacey A. Bockes

Adam R. Boege

Kenneth Joel Bolen

Peter M. Bonel

Louis J. Bouchard

Bratland Brothers

Kevin L. Bungler

Steve G. Buresh

Dennis Cain

Karla M. Campton

Darryl E./Darlene A. Carr

Gunther J. Christiansen

Paul A. Christiansen

Duane E./Penny Covington

Darren T. DeGroot

Doris W. Dinsdale

William Doolan

Patrick M. Dooley

Jeffrey L. Eckles

Lyn A. Eckles

Edward W. /Sheila M. Eilers

Rhonda J. Ensley

Edward E./Kimberly Felts

James A./Shelley Ferneau

Jeff E. Frye

Kevin E. Frye

Stephen/Thea Gibbons Sr.

Dennis L./Staci L. Goad

Gregory/Kim Goodenbour

Jeffrey A. Gray

N. R. Haren

Norman J./Doreen Ann Hayek

R. Todd Hofsaess

Kenneth Hoing

John R./Kathleen A. Holst

David A. Johnson

Kendal Johnson

Roger A./Janice M. Johnson

Terry Kannegieter

Fritz J. Koch

Kenneth L. Kosnar

Craig R. Kottke

Donald A./Pamela L. Labs

Bart L./Brenda L. Latta

Brian L./Melanie LaVelle

Mark L. Legg

Darryl L. Maser

David L./Kimberly K. Meade

Bruce A./Jeralyn Meffert

LaVerne/Janice Mendel

Kevin D. Montgomery

Don G./Patricia Morehouse

Mark T. Mulder

Ross W. Murty

David L./Sandra L. Nass

Larry F./Audrey K. Norte

Dyno Nobel

Ms. Lynn O. Olson

Dan L. Parizek, Jr.

Connie Patterson

John Polka

Michael W./Cathy Priest

Tracey E. Raders

Kerry L./Barbara Randall

Lamont A./Susan M. Rice

Justin K. Rishel

Wilma L. Rogers-Morillo

Mary L. Ross

Jonathan A./Teri L. Rstom

Dale E./Donna M. Russie

Jon Schuck

Russell Seymour

Curtis G. Sivertsen

Thomas J. Spear

James E./Sherri D. Stoakes

Dennis R. Stowell

David K./Tracy A. Stull

Steven L./Cari R. Teske

Dr. L. Fred Vondra

Betty M. Whorrall

Donald A. Wellner

Beuna Wilimek

**INtouch** is published monthly for members and associates of Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative  
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OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
GENERAL MANAGER: Vicki Daily



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