



A WORD FROM

Vicki Daily, General Manager

Those of us who work for electric cooperatives pride ourselves on powering lives and empowering communities, but we tend to shy away from boasting about the great career opportunities that co-ops provide.

In many rural Iowa communities, the electric cooperative has a reputation as a stable employer that offers professional opportunities and solid benefits in an innovative and exciting industry. For young people looking for options

Consider a co-op career!

outside of the traditional college path, electrical linework is a great alternative that offers great pay, fulfilling work and career advancement. High in demand, lineworkers must have technical knowledge of electricity and power equipment and possess the physical endurance to climb poles and handle heavy gear in adverse weather conditions. If you're interested in a lineworking career, we invite you to visit with our co-op linemen to learn more.

In addition to hiring great line workers, co-ops employ professionals who work in the areas of accounting, human resources, communications, engineering, information technology, economic development, business management and more. If you're looking to earn an advanced degree, you can put that education to great use in rural Iowa by working for a locally owned electric cooperative. Many of our employees have enjoyed long careers at the

co-op that provide competitive salaries and excellent healthcare and retirement benefits. We also offer competitive college scholarships annually to students in our service territory.

We're also proud to support "Serve our Co-ops; Serve our Country," a national cooperative coalition created to employ veterans, active military service members and their spouses. Our co-op assists local initiatives that work to increase employment opportunities for veterans in rural communities and provide needed resources and support.

For most of us at Grundy County REC, the most fulfilling part of the job is seeing how our efforts directly improve the quality of life for the families and businesses we serve. Because the co-op is locally owned and governed, we're committed to making a difference in the community. As you think about your future plans, we hope you consider a cooperative career!



Promoting co-op careers

Lineman Karl Nielsen (above) helped promote cooperative careers to the Dike-New Hartford High School students at the high school's Career Investigation event held on May 8 in Dike.

Safety program includes CPR training

Safety is a number one priority at Grundy County REC. The cooperative's safety program includes regular training sessions that cover a number of topics from safety on the job site, to first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR.

CPR training was held on April 18 for all employees and was led by a safety instructor from the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The training consisted of classroom education on the proper CPR technique and hands-on training with CPR manikins.

We hope this training is never needed, but it is good to know that cooperative personnel are prepared in case it is!



Line Foreman Tony Sienknecht completing hands-on training with CPR manikin.



Think summer storms are harmless?

If you think you have a better chance of being hit by lightning than winning the lottery, you are right.

According to National Weather Service (NWS), there are an estimated 25 million lightning flashes in the United States each year, killing 28 people and injuring 252 annually (averages based on data from 2008-2017).

Your odds of being struck by lightning are 1 in 1,171,000 in any given year. When you consider a person's average lifespan (estimated at 80 years), the odds drop to around 1 in 14,600.

The odds of winning the Mega Millions jackpot is 1 in 302.6 million and the Powerball, 1 in 292.2 million, according to Lottery USA.

Safe Electricity offers these weather-related reminders from FEMA, the Red Cross and other safety organizations:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower or utility pole as lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas, such as hills.
- Get away from bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!).
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Learn about your community's emergency warning for severe thunderstorms.
- Never talk on a landline telephone during a thunderstorm. Electricity will look for the quickest route to the ground via wiring. Although many homes don't have landlines anymore, many businesses still do.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning. A *severe thunderstorm watch* means that they are possible in and near the area. A *severe thunderstorm warning* means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is serious and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

The best way to protect yourself against lightning or other storm-related injury or death is to monitor the weather. Lightning can strike from 10 miles away, so if you can hear thunder, you are at risk for being struck by lightning.

Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$16 billion to members since 1988 - \$1.1 billion in 2017 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



Help keep Iowa's roads safer

We are committed to the safety of our employees and members and support Iowa's Move Over or Slow Down law. In fact, we encourage motorists to move over AND slow down when approaching utility vehicles on the side of the road with activated flashing lights.

According to the Iowa law, motorists must move over or slow down when approaching any vehicle stopped on the side of the road with its flashing lights activated, including passenger cars with hazard lights. Those who don't obey the law could receive a ticket or even lose their driver's license.

Please give our employees the room they need to work safely, so they can go home at night. Their jobs are dangerous enough.



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Tips for maintaining an efficient HVAC system

Ah, summer. Cookouts, swimming pools, camping—it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors. And when it's time to come back indoors, there's nothing better than that cool blast you feel from your air conditioning unit.

Your heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) system is essential to keeping your home comfortable during summer months, and if it breaks down, it's also the most expensive equipment to repair or replace. Luckily, there are simple steps you can take to lengthen the life of your HVAC system.

Change or clean filters. Dirty filters block airflow, which can greatly decrease the efficiency of your system. The Department of Energy recommends changing or cleaning filters at least every month or two during the cooling season.

Clean the HVAC unit. Outdoor condenser coils can become clogged with pollen, dirt and small debris. Use a hose to spray the HVAC unit once each season to ensure maximum airflow. (Warning: Do not use a pressure washer to do this, as it can damage the equipment.)

Clear space around the HVAC unit. Dryer vents, falling leaves and grass left behind from the lawnmower can create buildup. Remove any debris around the HVAC unit. If you have foliage near the unit, trim it back at least 2 feet around the condenser to increase airflow.

3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.



If you want to evaluate the efficiency of your HVAC system, follow the steps in the graphic shown on the left.

You should also have your HVAC system periodically inspected by a licensed professional. The frequency of inspections depends on the age of your unit, but the Department of Energy recommends scheduling tune-ups during the spring and fall, when contractors aren't as busy.

When HVAC equipment fails, it's inconvenient and uncomfortable—especially during the dog days of summer. Remember, your HVAC system runs best when it's regularly cleaned and serviced. With a little maintenance along the way, you can add years to your system's lifespan.

What are power surges, and what can I do about them?

A power surge is an increase of power. Minor surges may cause no apparent damage, but over time they can take their toll on devices. Major surges can damage or fry your computer or TV.

Devices that require a lot of power to switch compressors or turn motors on or off – air conditioners, refrigerators and space heaters, for example – call for sudden, brief draws on power. These power demands upset the steady flow of volts in the electrical system. Power surges can also be caused by faulty wiring and overloaded outlets or circuits.

Safe Electricity suggests these

options to protect electronics and appliances:

1. **Use surge protector strips or devices.** During a severe storm, unplug your electronics.
2. **Consider investing in uninterruptible power supply devices.**
3. **Consider having a whole-house surge protector installed** by a qualified electrician.
4. **Consider updating outlets** with those that feature ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), if you haven't already



A surge protector can keep your expensive electronics safe.

done so.

People who choose whole-house surge protection can still use the individual plug-in versions for their most sensitive electronics, providing two levels of protection. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Chase Morrison



Karly Wilhau



Benjamin Paper



Rachel Cooley

Scholarship winners

Grundy County REC would like to congratulate our 2019 scholarship winners! Chase Morrison of Traer is the winner of the Basin \$1000 scholarship. Karly Wilhau, Benjamin Paper and Rachel Cooley were each awarded a \$750 scholarship from Grundy County REC.

Chase is the son of Mike and Shellie Morrison. Chase attends North Tama High

School and plans on attending St. Ambrose University. Chase has already been accepted to their doctor of physical therapy program.

Karly is the daughter of Jason and Katrina Hemann of Reinbeck. Karly attends Gladbrook-Reinbeck High School and plans on attending Hawkeye Community College. Karly wants to continue helping others and

share her love of agriculture and livestock by becoming an FFA instructor.

Benjamin is the son of Jason and Valerie Paper of Conrad. Benjamin attends BCLUW High School and plans on attending the University of Northern Iowa. Benjamin plans on obtaining a theater performance degree and going to New York to be able to audition for a play.

Rachel is the daughter of Paul and Deborah Cooley of Reinbeck. Rachel attends Gladbrook-Reinbeck High School and plans on attending Simpson College. Rachel plans on getting a business degree and is considering getting into accounting or business management.

Best wishes for all the GC REC 2019 graduates!

Youth Tour winner

This year Grundy County REC decided to send a high school student to Washington D.C., June 14-20, for the trip of a lifetime! Peyton Gingery (right) from rural Holland who attends Grundy Center High School was selected as the winner. Peyton will have the opportunity to meet other students from throughout Iowa, learn more about electric cooperatives, meet Iowa's members of Congress and visit the historic sights of Washington D.C. Congratulations to Peyton on this honor!



Co-op Connections card

Featured Business of the Month

Use your Co-op Connections card at 319 Decor & Design in Grundy Center to get a discount. 319 Decor & Design offers a full showroom to showcase interior design services and home selections by Katie. Their product line includes cabinetry, countertops, lighting, flooring, rugs, furniture, artwork and other decor.

Other area businesses participating include:

- Crazy Daisies - Grundy Center
- The Landmark Bistro - Grundy Center

- Natural Grind - Grundy Center
- Stylish Living - Grundy Center
- Tasty House - Grundy Center
- Retro Rooster - Traer
- Sweets on Main - Traer
- Traer Theater - Traer
- A Wild Hair Salon & Boutique - Traer



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smart choices



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