

living with energy IN IOWA

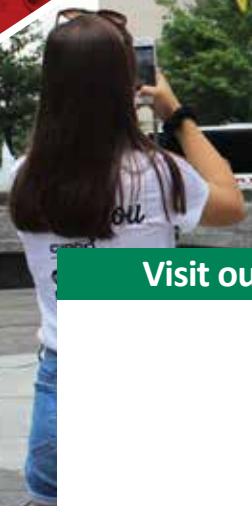


Guthrie County REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

JULY 2018

Win a cordless compact
drill/driver kit!
See Page 5

YOUTH TOUR 2018



Visit our website at www.guthrie-rec.coop

STORM SAFETY

When thunderstorms are rolling your way, stay safe

- Listen to local news or weather radio for emergency updates. Watch for signs of a storm, such as darkening skies, lightning flashes or increasing winds.
- If a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, take shelter in a substantial building or in a vehicle with the windows closed. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.
- If you can hear thunder, you're close enough to be in danger from lightning. The National Weather Service recommends staying inside for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder clap.
- Avoid using electrical equipment and wired telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios.
- If you're driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity inside and outside the vehicle.
- If you're outside and cannot reach a safe building, avoid high ground, water, tall or isolated trees and metal objects such as fences or bleachers. Picnic shelters, dugouts and sheds are not safe. ⚡

Photo: SCS Photography

OPERATIONS UPDATE

It's time for tests and locators

BY ELDEN WOLFE

The “dog days of summer” may have officially begun, but Guthrie County REC line crews are busier than ever with summer projects. Guthrie County REC’s contractor, Osmose Utilities Services, recently completed annual pole testing. Osmose checked 714 GCREC poles in Dallas County and found 20 that need to be replaced. Our line crews have started replacing rotten poles in Beaver Township of Dallas County.



Additionally, EIR Testing and Maintenance Company completed another annual project by servicing line breakers on the Guthrie and Bear Grove substations. Guthrie County REC line crews have started rebuilding approximately 30 miles of poles and wires in Seeley and Grant Townships of Guthrie County.

Underground fault locators are a critical piece of equipment for detecting and repairing problems with buried utility lines. Currently, Guthrie County REC shares an underground fault locator with Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) and several other electric cooperatives, but GCREC is exploring options related to purchasing a new underground fault locator solely for use by our cooperative. A demonstration was performed on a faulted cable at our Diamondhead substation using a new compact cable locator, which sends pulses into the ground to locate the faulty line. ⚡

Elden Wolfe is the line superintendent for Guthrie County REC.



Office
1406 State Street • P.O. Box 7
Guthrie Center, IA 50115-0007

Office Hours
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Telephone Number
641-747-2206 or 888-747-2206
Calls answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Website
www.guthrie-rec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

IN THE NEWS

NCSC elects Cozy Nelsen to board of directors

Guthrie County REC CEO Cozy Nelsen has been elected District 3 manager-director for the National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC). The announcement was made June 12, during the 37th NCSC Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Forum 2018 and ACES 14th Annual Members Conference in Indianapolis.



NCSC is governed by a 10-member board composed of two directors (one manager and one director) from each of NCSC’s five districts. NCSC has 447 members. Formed in 1981, NCSC provides flexible financing to help electric cooperatives deliver services that go beyond the normal transmission and distribution of electricity.

Cozy will serve a 3-year term on the NCSC board. Congratulations, Cozy! ⚡

The federal government must invest in rural America

BY DAN RIEDINGER

Here's a simple fact the folks at Guthrie County REC know all too well: The 21st century economy runs the risk of leaving much of rural America behind. It's a concern we share with electric co-ops across the country. We have a bird's-eye view of the quality of life for the communities we serve.

Today, fewer than 15 percent of U.S. businesses are in rural areas and small towns. Bank loans for amounts less than \$1 million, primarily to family-owned small businesses and farms, have dropped by nearly half since 2005. These are the basic building blocks of the economy and they're in trouble. The solution is there, but it will take a long-term commitment from Congress and the administration to reverse this trend.

After the House failed to pass an \$867 billion farm bill in May, the Senate Agriculture Committee released its revised bill June 8, with hopes for a bipartisan victory this time around. The new legislation contains programs targeting rural America,



including expansion of high-speed internet, fighting the opioid epidemic and support for farmer veterans and new farmers starting careers in agriculture.

As a local business built by the members it serves, Guthrie County REC has meaningful ties to its rural communities. Here and across the U.S., electric co-ops are making strategic infrastructure investments to give communities the flexibility to adapt to tomorrow's energy needs, investing \$12 billion annually in the areas served by electric co-ops nationwide.

As Congress continues discussing the farm bill, it should support a stronger rural America and enhance key rural development programs by

including:

- More funding for rural broadband grants and loans. A reliable, modern grid and vibrant rural communities depend on a robust communications infrastructure.
- Ample support for proven rural economic development programs.
- A focus on accelerating energy innovation to build new renewable energy resources and modernize the electric grid.
- Continued funding for rural electrification programs.

The need to invest in rural America is real for all of us. So too are the opportunities for our leaders to make a meaningful difference in its trajectory. ⚡

Dan Riedinger writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Come see us at the Iowa State Fair

Guthrie County REC staff will join other Touchstone Energy® cooperatives across Iowa at this year's Iowa State Fair, Aug. 9-19.

Again this year, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa will sponsor the Bruce L. Rastetter 4-H Exhibits Building. Visitors to our booth in the 4-H Building can learn more about saving money with energy efficiency, the value of cooperative membership and more. Plus, there will be a phone charging station and a chance to register to win one of three Instant Pot Ultra 10-in-1 Multi-Use Programmable Cookers.

Three winners of the Instant Pot will be chosen, at random, following the close of the fair. ⚡



Power to Your Community



Visit the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa booth to learn more and register to win one of three Instant Pots!



EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a cordless compact drill/driver kit!

Good things come in small packages: The Ryobi Model P1811 Compact Drill/Driver Kit includes the drill, two 18-volt lithium batteries that also can run more than 100 other Ryobi tools, a quick charger and a storage bag. The retail price of the kit is \$99, plus we're adding a bonus Model P4001 Drain Auger worth \$70! For details on both products, go to ryobitools.com.



Enter the contest by visiting the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website at www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com no later than July 31, 2018. ⚡

ON THE JOB

CEO of Guthrie County REC pledges to make the commitment to zero contacts



The Commitment to Zero Contacts initiative is a little more than a month old, but Guthrie County REC CEO Cozy Nelsen is showing her support of the program’s goal to help eliminate serious injuries and fatalities among lineworkers. Nelsen and more than 180 co-op CEOs in 35 states have signed the initiative’s online pledge as of June 4. A job briefing app developed by Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange also has had a healthy response: 400 downloads from co-ops and more than 1,200 registrations for user names and logins from line crews.

Nelsen said she took the pledge to set an example for line crews and managers.

“I believe strongly that Guthrie County REC’s commitment to safety culture and the effectiveness of our safety program begins with leading by example,” she said. “If we’re all in it together, we can better foster trust and compliance with the regulations that keep us all safe.”

Launched at the 2018 NRECA Safety Leadership Summit in late April, the voluntary initiative targets the alarming rate of serious injuries and fatalities (SIFs) among co-op lineworkers. A nationwide survey of 51,000 co-op employees conducted annually between 2006 and 2015 found an average of more than 23 SIFs each year. ⚡

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

Radio chatter helps get jobs done safely and efficiently

“Phase up 15.”
 “10 up on the neutral.”
 “Two more up on the phase.”

On any given day, communication between linemen working in the field is crucial. Because it’s not convenient to climb down a pole to talk to their fellow workers – and shouting to each other across miles of lines won’t be heard, Guthrie County REC linemen use two-way radios to communicate with each other.

“It’s just a handy thing to have so that everyone on the crew can hear what’s going on,” said Elden Wolfe, line superintendent. “When we’re all on the same page working together, the job goes much faster.”

Recently, crews were stringing new line in the cooperative’s service territory. Phrases like “two more up on the neutral” and “two more up on the phase” kept the line crew in check on the progress as they worked from pole to pole. *Phases* refer to energized electrical conductors carrying alternating currents; *neutral* is a circuit conductor that normally carries the electric current back to the source. Crew members can be



working up to a half-mile apart at times, so quick communication leads a coordinated effort.

Here are a few other phrases or terms that might be overheard, thanks to the *Lineman’s Slang Dictionary*:

Strong arm: A chain or strap hoist for pulling wire

Reptile: An insulating line hose (also called a “snake”)

Pogo stick: A telescoping tool

Leg irons: Climbers’ hooks

Cherry picker: a bucket truck ⚡

Celebrate Our Freedoms Today and Every Day

Your Guthrie County REC Board of Directors honors those who fight for our country, and cherishes the memory of those who sacrificed everything to give us the freedoms we enjoy today.

Keith Peterson,
Guthrie County REC
Board of Directors

Guthrie County REC
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

1406 State Street, Guthrie Center • 641-747-2206 • 888-747-2206
www.guthrie-rec.coop