

# living with energy IN IOWA

AUGUST 2021



Guthrie County REC  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Guthrie County REC donation benefits Bayard UMC ▶ See Page 4

Visit our website at [www.guthrie-rec.coop](http://www.guthrie-rec.coop)

Show you care  
with RECare

Spectacular  
sandwich recipes

Electric co-ops support  
rural child care options

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**ON THE COVER**



Congratulations to Karleen Stanley, a member of North West REC in Orange City, for submitting this month's cover image. She captured this beautiful photo while sitting on her front porch in Plymouth County. ⚡

# Thank you for shining the light on local volunteers

BY ERIN CAMPBELL



Earlier this summer, Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives had an opportunity to try something new. Following last year's pandemic

precautions and derecho destruction, we thought the timing was right to shine the light on positive efforts in our state. The Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of Iowa started the Shine the Light contest to honor the unsung heroes in our communities who volunteer their time and talents.

In the pages of this magazine and through your electric co-op's social media posts, you were invited to nominate a local volunteer in June. Because this was our first year managing the statewide contest, we didn't know what kind of response to expect. We are thrilled to share that 39 people from 19 of Iowa's electric cooperatives nominated a local volunteer through our contest website.

We received the email confirmation messages as nominations were submitted. It was truly a blessing to read each entry as they popped into my inbox. I looked forward to learning about incredible Iowans as the month went on; it was a delight to read the heartfelt essays from the nominators.

Our judging panel is now working on the difficult task of sorting through the entries to select three winners who will each receive \$1,500 for their local charity or community organization of choice. We will feature the three winners in next month's issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine, and we have already identified several other nominees that we may highlight in future issues.

On behalf of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, I want to

thank the Iowa electric cooperative member-consumers and employees who took the time to submit a nomination this summer. You have truly helped us in our cooperative effort to shine the light on community heroes. Thanks to you, our new contest is off to a great start, and we are already looking forward to being inspired by next year's nominees!

On Pages 10-11, you will find the list of our 39 nominees, in alphabetical order by last name. We want to honor each and every one of them for their commitment to their communities – it's the same guiding principle that drives your electric cooperative every day. ⚡

Erin Campbell is the director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

### Win a Breville Panini Press & Grill!

Make spectacular sandwiches at home with a Breville Panini Press & Grill. The versatile appliance is perfect for quick weeknight meals and casual entertaining, doing double duty as an indoor grill and sandwich press. With a large surface area, this family-friendly machine accommodates up to four sandwiches at once. ⚡



#### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com) no later than Aug. 31, 2021. 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 Cuisinart smoker from our June issue was Jeanie Hall, Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

IN THE COMMUNITY

# Bayard UMC donation



Pictured from left: Cozy Nelsen, Bayard UMC administrative board members Ron White and Martha Wolf, lay servants Deb Smith and Jill Albright, Don Schwartz and Pastor Carolyn Schwartz.

Guthrie County REC takes pride in supporting the efforts of local community organizations. On June 25, CEO Cozy Nelsen and board member Don Schwartz presented the Bayard United Methodist Church with a \$5,000 donation to help offset the cost of a new roof for the church and parsonage. The roofing project started in July.

The donation included contributions from Guthrie County REC, board member Don Schwartz and his wife Carolyn; with a match by CoBank's Sharing Success Program. ⚡

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

# Affordable electricity powers quality of life

BY COZY NELSEN

At any given point throughout the day, we're using electricity either directly or indirectly. And because of that, and because electricity is so abundant and available with the simple flip of a switch, it's easy to take it for granted.

According to the Energy Information Agency, the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances and consumer electronics *than ever before*. With the average home containing 10 or more internet-connected devices, it's no wonder we occasionally might wince at our monthly bill. But keep in mind, it's no longer just the "light bill."

From the infrastructure of your home (appliances, water heater and HVAC system) to charging your smartphones, computers, TV and Wi-Fi router, your energy bill covers so much more than lighting. All these things mean the need for electricity is increasing as a necessity

to powering our quality of life.

Basic economics tells us that when demand goes up, so do prices for most goods and services. But that's not true with electricity. Let's take a look at how the value of electricity compares to other common expenses:



Over the last five years, the cost of rent increased 3.4%, medical care increased 2.8% and education increased 2.2%. But the cost of electricity only increased 1%. Considering all the ways we depend on electricity, it remains a great value.

The employees of Guthrie County REC care about you, the member-consumers we serve, and understand that electricity is more than a commodity in your lives – it's a necessity. That's why we will continue working hard to power your life, reliably and affordably. ⚡

Cozy Nelsen is the CEO of Guthrie County REC.

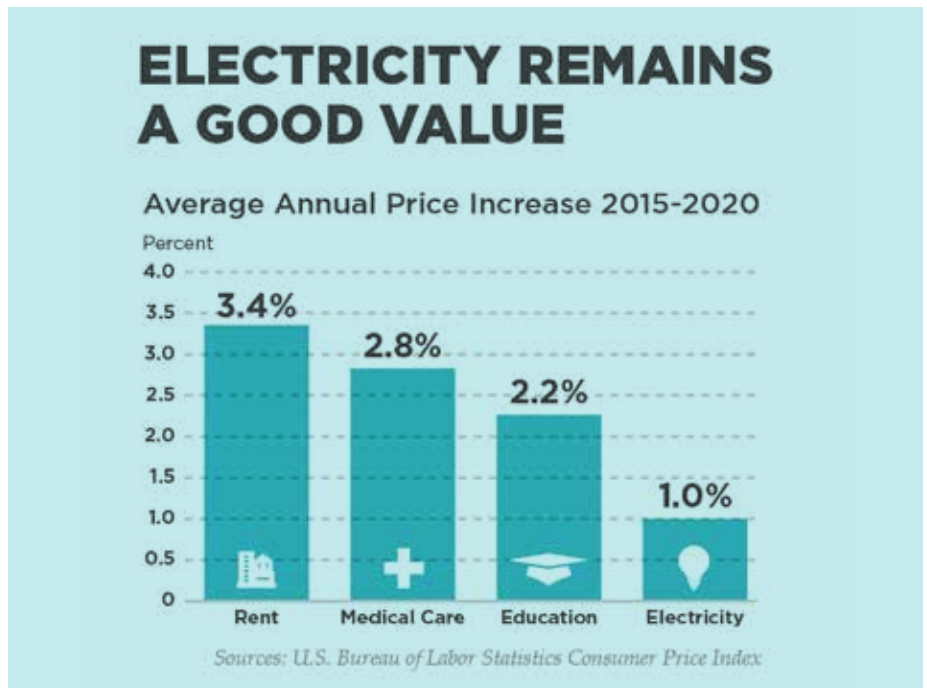
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[www.guthrie-rec.coop](http://www.guthrie-rec.coop)

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# Understanding power surges and blinks

BY ELDEN WOLFE

During severe weather, you've likely experienced your lights blink or returned home to find the clock on your microwave or oven blinking. When this happens, it means there has been a brief disruption of your electric service which could have resulted from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts that can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

Guthrie County REC encourages

all of our member-consumers to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard sensitive electronics when this happens. If you're experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.



Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar weather events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

No matter the cause, co-op crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help, too! Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling 888-747-2206 and having your account number available. ⚡

Elden Wolfe is the line superintendent for Guthrie County REC.

Photo by David Smith, Power on the Prairie.



## Show you care with RECare

Members of Guthrie County REC are provided many opportunities to support their communities. Your cooperative is proud to take part in initiatives that make a difference for members across our service territory.

You likely have neighbors who struggle to pay their electric bills each month, especially during peak heating and peak cooling times of the year. There's an easy way you can help those neighbors: RECare, a program through which Guthrie County REC members can help fellow co-op members with electric bills and weatherization costs.

RECare participants can contribute on a one-time or monthly basis. All contributions are directly distributed to local community action agencies within Guthrie County REC's service area. Funds are used to supplement energy assistance received under the federal low-income heating energy assistance program (LIHEAP), and to assist low-income member-consumers with weatherization projects. ⚡

### YES, I want to be a part of members helping others and contribute to RECare.

- I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.
- I will contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount automatically will be added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will have my monthly electric bill rounded. I understand this amount automatically will be added to my monthly electric bill and rounded up to the next highest dollar. For example, if your bill was \$154.85, then we would bill you \$155 and donate 15 cents to RECare. By the same token, if your bill was \$154.01, we would bill you \$155 and donate 99 cents to RECare.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guthrie County REC Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Child care options expand with rural utility support

BY KAY SNYDER



Child care has joined workforce and housing as one of the most critical needs across Iowa. According to a report from the Iowa Department of Human Service's Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, 28% of Iowa communities are considered child care deserts. A child care desert is defined as a city with more than 50 children in the community and more than three children per child care slot.

Child care shortages are complex issues that must be addressed at different levels. As communities tackle this issue, it is no surprise that Iowa's rural utilities are engaged and supporting long-term solutions.

## Stanton: Need for child care spurs additional development

Stanton has many projects focused on adding to the community's quality of life while attracting technology companies and new citizens. One key project is the expansion of the Stanton Child Resource Center (SCRC).

Two to three years ago, the community began initial conversations to expand and renovate the existing SCRC facility. But with new considerations due



to COVID-19, the planning group began exploring options for a less-expensive facility and one that could accommodate pandemic-related guidelines. These factors led to the decision to build a new SCRC facility in a different location.

As additional people were brought into the planning conversation, an opportunity arose to tap into property in a 22-acre section of land owned by the Stanton Area Industrial Foundation and create a master plan for development of the Stanton Technology Park.

The new 11,000-square-foot SCRC facility will accommodate up to 130 children, which is 50 more than the current facility. It will be the first business in the new Stanton Technology Park, which is the perfect amenity for future businesses and

employees in the area.

"A lot of people are looking at getting out of the cities. They'd like to raise their children in a rural setting, but they need good jobs, housing and reliable day care," says Kevin Cabbage, CEO and general manager of Farmers Mutual Telephone Company. "We will start with the day care and then build around it. This is just one component of an answer to growing southwest Iowa."

The project is currently in the fundraising stage and dirt work will be completed this fall. The new SCRC is expected to open in Spring or Summer 2022. Southwest Iowa REC, Central Iowa Power Cooperative and Farmers Mutual Telephone Company, support this effort, which will provide electric power and telecommunications to the day care and future technology park.

"Southwest Iowa REC is pleased to support the Stanton Child Resource Center and Stanton Technology Park," says Phil Kinser, CEO of Southwest Iowa REC. "Local families are well-served by the center, and the need to serve more children and families is critical to area development."



**Glidden: New child care center coming soon**

Conversations and planning for a child care center in Glidden began several years ago. These discussions led to the development of Lil Wildcat Education Center, Inc. in 2020, which will construct and operate a child care facility in the community.

Fundraising is in full swing for this new 5,327-square-foot child care facility that will be located next to the Glidden-Ralston School building. The new day care will be a licensed child care center with rooms for infants through five-year-olds, plus a before- and after-school program. Though the education center will be located near the school, it will operate year-round to provide consistent opportunities for families who need day care throughout the year.

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) is supporting the new child care facility in several ways through its contributions and also by coordinating funds from Basin Electric Cooperative and CoBank. RVEC also secured funds through the U.S. Department of Agriculture

(USDA) Revolving Loan & Grant Program to provide a \$360,000, 10-year, 0% interest loan from its Revolving Loan Fund when approvals for additional funding and a land sale are cleared this summer.

If all goes as expected, construction will begin within the next few months, with the opening in Spring 2022.

**Panora: Little Panther expands to meet demand**

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool in Panora has recently broken ground on a 1,440-square-foot expansion of its existing building. This addition will allow the facility to accommodate 15 more children and two additional full-time employees.

Currently, Little Panthers has a three-year wait for its classrooms. Page Arganbright, director of Little Panther, recognized two local cooperatives that stepped up to provide 0% interest loans to support the expansion and speed the path to construction. Cozy Nelsen, CEO of Guthrie County REC, says Little Panther was one of the first projects

funded through Guthrie County REC’s Revolving Loan Fund.

“Little Panther Daycare is an invaluable asset for Panora and the surrounding area,” says Nelsen. “Guthrie County REC is proud to continue to support this much-needed expansion.”

The Panora Telco leadership was similarly enthusiastic. General manager Andy Randol says they have also supported Little Panther from the beginning because they know the critical role day care provides in the community.

As with most challenges, there are many answers to help alleviate child care needs in Iowa and the results may be slow to recognize. Iowa’s rural utility partners continue to demonstrate their commitment to community by providing technical and financial assistance to support impactful community initiatives, including child care facilities across the state. 🌱

Kay Snyder is the director of marketing and communications for the Iowa Area Development Group.



Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) has been helpful to many utility partners and communities as they have collaborated to support solutions for child care and other challenges. For more information, contact your rural electric cooperative or IADG at [www.iadg.com](http://www.iadg.com).

# SPECTACULAR Sandwich RECIPES



## Oven-fried Pork Tenderloin Sandwiches

- 2 tablespoons light olive oil
- ½ cup flour
- seasoned salt, optional
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup milk
- ¾ cup panko breadcrumbs
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 4 pork loin slices (4 ounces each), tenderized
- 4 hamburger buns

Line a 9x13-inch sheet pan with oven-safe parchment paper. Drizzle olive oil over parchment paper and set aside. Place flour in a shallow bowl or pie plate, add seasoned salt if desired. In a second shallow bowl, beat egg and milk together. In a third shallow bowl, combine panko breadcrumbs, salt and pepper. Dredge both sides of pork slices in flour, then the egg mixture, then the seasoned breadcrumbs. Place loin slices on sheet pan with oil. Bake at 400 degrees F for 20-25 minutes turning halfway through, internal temperature should be 145 degrees F. Serve on buns. *Serves 4*

**Barb Sexton • Rockwell City  
Calhoun County Rural Electric  
Cooperative Association**

## Spinach Sandwiches

- 3 cups fresh spinach
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- mayonnaise
- salt and pepper, to taste
- white or wheat bread

Shred spinach then add celery, onion and eggs. Add mayonnaise until mixture reaches a spreading consistency. Season to taste. Chill until ready to eat. Spread between slices of bread.

**Penny Sue Haley • Keswick  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Tuna Burgers

- 1 can tuna, drained
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup American cheese, cut up
- 1 small onion, minced
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- salt and pepper, to taste
- buns

Mix together tuna, celery, cheese, onion, mayonnaise, salt and pepper. Put tuna mixture on buns. Wrap buns in aluminum foil and place on baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees F for 15 minutes.

**Annalee Buffington • Marshalltown  
Consumers Energy**

## Cheese Salad Sandwiches for a Crowd

- 10 pounds American cheese, grated
- 2 cups sweet pickle relish
- 2 4½ -ounce cans pimento
- 2 dozen hard-boiled eggs, peeled and grated
- 3 quarts Miracle Whip
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar
- evaporated milk, optional

Mix all ingredients together, adding additional Miracle Whip if needed. May also thin with some evaporated milk. Spread on bread, buns or crackers. This recipe can be divided in half for 75 people, or by 10 for 15-18 people. *Serves 150*

**Mabel L. Fisher • Sigourney  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

Source:  
Sandwich America

### THE EARL OF SANDWICH

The man credited with creating the first sandwich is John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich. Legend suggests he was unwilling to free up his hands during gambling events, so his servants brought meat between two slices of bread that he could hold with one hand.



## Jazzed-up Ham and Cheese Sandwiches

- 24 sweet Hawaiian rolls
- 2 pounds smoked ham
- 1 pound pepper jack cheese
- 1 pound cheddar cheese
- 1 cup butter
- 4 tablespoons dried minced onions
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons mushrooms, chopped (optional)

Slice rolls in half. Put bottom half in greased 9x13-inch pan. Layer ham and cheese. Put top half of rolls on top. Melt butter with remaining ingredients and spread over top of buns. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20-30 minutes.

**Steph Messner • Rock Rapids  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Favorite Chicken Salad Sandwiches

- 1 12.5-ounce can white meat chicken
- 1 8-ounce can water chestnuts, finely chopped
- dill or sweet pickle relish
- mayonnaise
- bread

Mix chicken and water chestnuts together. Add relish and mayonnaise to taste. Spread on your favorite bread and enjoy.

**Sandy Slaymaker • Victor  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Grilled Cheese Taverns

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 can tomato soup
- ½ can water
- ¼ cup ketchup
- ½ teaspoon mustard
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- salt and pepper, to taste
- bread
- butter
- American cheese slices
- dill pickle sandwich chips

Brown ground beef with onion, drain grease. Stir in soup, water, ketchup, mustard, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, sugar, salt and pepper. Simmer on low for 1-2 hours, stirring frequently. Heat griddle to 350 degrees F. Butter one side of bread slice and place buttered side down on griddle. Top with a slice of cheese, enough tavern meat mixture to just cover the bread, dill pickles and another slice of bread, buttered side up. Grill 2-3 minutes on each side or until bread is browned and crispy. Let cool a bit before slicing in half diagonally. Tavern meat mixture freezes well for later use.

**Joni Rus • Rock Valley  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative**



**Search** our online recipe archive for thousands of recipes from Iowa's rural kitchens.

[www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com/recipes](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com/recipes)

### KIDS LOVE THEIR PB&Js

The average American child eats about 1,500 PB&J sandwiches by the time they graduate high school.

SANDWICH BITES

### SANDWICHES BY THE MILLIONS

Americans eat about 300 million sandwiches every day, and National Sandwich Day is celebrated on Nov. 3.

SANDWICH BITES

### HAM REIGNS SUPREME

The most popular sandwich in America is the standard ham sandwich with ham, cheese, mustard and mayonnaise. It is followed in popularity by the BLT.

SANDWICH BITES

## Wanted: Christmas Morning Recipes The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

With good tidings and great joy in mind, we want your favorite Christmas morning recipes! No matter if your dish is savory, sweet, simple or extra special, breakfast gathered around the Christmas tree is sure to be a treasured holiday tradition. 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.livingwithenergyiniowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com).

The deadline is Aug. 31, 2021. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions. **Also provide the number of servings per recipe.**

**EMAIL:** [recipes@livingwithenergyiniowa.com](mailto:recipes@livingwithenergyiniowa.com)  
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

### MAIL: Recipes

*Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine  
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48  
Urbandale, Iowa 50322

### NO. 1 SANDWICH ON THE MENU

Sandwiches are on the menu more frequently than any other type of entrée at restaurants.

SANDWICH BITES

# Shine the Light contest nominees

BY ERIN CAMPBELL



## 2021 SHINE THE LIGHT NOMINEES

**Brad Arndorfer** from Bancroft was nominated by **Richard Arndorfer of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Bancroft Volunteer Firefighter's Association**.

**Suzanne Asklesen** from Cambridge was nominated by **Carol Gilbert of Midland Power Cooperative** for her work with the **Ballard Education Foundation**.

**Helen Beneke** from Pocahontas was nominated by **Parker Aden of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Pocahontas County Foundation**.

**Barb Brennan** from Emmetsburg was nominated by **LuAnn Opheim of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for her work with **Unity Lutheran Ministries**.

**Lynn Buth** from Danbury was nominated by **Clem & Kay Wessling of North West Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with **Danbury EMT**.

**Catherine Burkman** from Albia was nominated by **Aimee Campbell of Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.** for her work with the **Albia Victorian Stroll**.

**Cathy & Denny Carlson** from Hampton were nominated by **Karen Ringleb of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative** for their work with **Carlson Tree Farm**.

**Sandy Carson** was nominated by **Alexis Carson of Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.** for her work with the **Clarke Athletic Booster Club**.

**Judy Combs** from Bloomfield was nominated by **Joye Lore-Lawson of Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Davis County Tourism Board**.

**Karen Conrad** from Epworth was nominated by **Janet Berger of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Epworth Community Food Pantry**.

**Jim Davies** from Hampton was nominated by **Christy Mason of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Windsor Theatre Development Corporation**.

**Gary Doehrmann** from Waverly was nominated by **Anne Sesker of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Waverly Fire Department**.

**Skott Gent** from Monmouth was nominated by **Nancy Miller of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Maquoketa FFA Alumni**.

**Hayden George** from Albia was nominated by **Roger George of Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.** for his work with the **CJ3 Foundation**.

**Michael Goodin** from Schleswig was nominated by **Leroy Hight of Western Iowa Power Cooperative** for his work with **Under the Son Childcare**.

**Dawn Hamilton** from Malcom was nominated by **Marna Montgomery of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Malcom Food Pantry**.

The Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of Iowa are driven by our commitment to community. To celebrate local volunteers this summer, we launched the Shine the Light contest. Employees and member-consumers of Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives were invited to nominate someone who makes a positive difference in their community.

Three winners will be awarded a \$1,500 donation to their charity or community organization of choice and featured in the September issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine.

Please join us in congratulating and thanking these nominees for their outstanding commitment to community. Learn more at [www.IowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.IowaShineTheLight.com). 🌟

Erin Campbell is the director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



**Arika Hammond** from Cherokee was nominated by **June Hammond of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Puppy Jake Foundation**.

**Robert Hantsbarger** from Arthur was nominated by **Twyla Godbersen of North West Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Schaller Volunteer Fire Department**.

**Patti Hastings** from Harpers Ferry was nominated by **Hollee McCormick of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **American Legion Auxiliary**.

**Ronda Hughes** from Lime Springs was nominated by **Jason Passmore of MiEnergy Cooperative** for her work with the **Lime Springs Betterment Foundation**.

**Jodi Irlmieir** from Anita was nominated by **Lorilyn Schultes of Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association** for her work with **Anita Town & Country**.

**Chris Jensen** from Hamlin was nominated by **Gail Petersen of Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association** for her work with the **Caring and Sharing**.

**Barry Johnson** from Hampton was nominated by **Garrett Thompson of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Harriman-Nielsen Historic Farm**.

**Margaret (Margie) Kenyon** from Dallas Center was nominated by **Carolyn Snyder of Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association** for her work with the **Minburn Community Betterment Group**.

**Cynthia (Cindy) Loots** from Pomeroy was nominated by **Nancy Bruns of Calhoun County Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Pomeroy Area Veteran's Park**.

**Erica Luebbers** was nominated by **Amanda Petersen of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Royal Family Kids Camp**.

**Steve Mixer** from Burlington was nominated by **Gina Hardin of Access Energy Cooperative** for his work with the **Des Moines County Community Emergency Response Team**.

**Dwight Morenz** from Lake City was nominated by **Darcy Maulsby of Calhoun County Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with **Central School Preservation**.

**Linda Muhlbauer** from Manilla was nominated by **Jean Voegel of Western Iowa Power Cooperative** for her work with **Main Street Manning**.

**George North** from Allison was nominated by **Deb McWhirter of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with **Allison Wilder Park**.

**Dan & Carol Patterson** from Marengo were nominated by **Nancy McMann of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative** for their work with **Marengo Food Distribution**.

**Stacy Pippitt** from Missouri Valley was nominated by **Lori Clark of Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with **St. Paul Community Table**.

**Larry Rapagnani** from Marcus was nominated by **Jolene Deichmann of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for his work with **Community Ministries**.

**Lori Roose** from Waverly was nominated by **Sandi Miller of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Little Lambs Preschool**.

**Todd Ross** from Denmark was nominated by **Renae Welborn of Access Energy Cooperative** for his work with **Denmark Fire & Rescue**.

**Marianne Sjaarda** from Sioux Center was nominated by **Jen Sandbulte of North West Rural Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **HOPE Food Pantry**.

**Beth Thole** from Sibley was nominated by **Don & Cindy Thole of Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.** for her work with the **McCallum Museum/Farm Shed**.

**Matthew Turack** from Griswold was nominated by **John Turack of Nishnabotna Valley Rural Electric Cooperative** for his work with the **Pregnancy Center of Southwest Iowa**.

**Marlene Walthart** was nominated by **Dawn Eveleth of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative** for her work with the **Emmet County Animal Shelter**.

*We'll announce the three winners during the 2021 Iowa State Fair. Visit the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa booth in the Bruce Rastetter 4-H Exhibits Building.*

# Watts the difference between lumens and watts?



The rise in popularity of LED lighting as a long-lasting, energy-efficient option in today's consumer world has opened the door to new questions about what type of lighting is right for our homes. It's no longer just a matter of watts, but also knowing things like output and color temperature in advance can help you make smart choices in your selection.

One thing you'll notice on LED lightbulb packaging is the number of *lumens* the bulb provides. Lumens are a measurement of total light output, or brightness of the bulb. The more lumens indicated, the brighter the bulb. The fewer the lumens, the dimmer the bulb. Think of it this way: lumens are to light what pounds are to bananas, or what gallons are to milk. So when purchasing LED bulbs, pay attention to the lumens rather than the watts to make sure you're buying the amount of light you want for your home.

The brightness, or lumen levels, of the lights in your home may vary widely, so here's a good rule of thumb:

- Replace a 100-watt incandescent

HOW MANY LUMENS DO YOU NEED? (120V)

BRIGHTNESS →	250+	450+	800+	1100+	1600+
STANDARD 	25W	40W	60W	75W	100W
LED 	4W	5W	10W	15W	20W

bulb with an LED bulb that gives you about 1,600 lumens. If you want something dimmer, go for less lumens; if you prefer brighter light, look for more lumens.

- Replace a 75-watt incandescent bulb with an LED bulb that gives you about 1,100 lumens.
- Replace a 60-watt incandescent bulb with an LED bulb that gives you about 800 lumens.
- Replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb with an LED bulb that gives you about 450 lumens.

Watts are a measurement of power consumption. With traditional incandescent light sources, typically the higher the wattage, the brighter the light. With energy efficient bulbs like LEDs, this is somewhat different because there is no hard and fast rule to correlate wattage with output. For example, one brand's 9-watt LED bulb may emit enough lumens to replace a 60-watt incandescent bulb, while another brand may use 12 watts to replace the same. This is why it's more important to take a look at lumens versus watts. ⚡



The Guthrie County REC office will be closed **MONDAY, SEPT. 6** in observance of Labor Day.



Safety is as simple as ABC:  
**ALWAYS BE CAREFUL**

Take extra precautions in school zones



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# Managing rights of way from top to bottom

BY DERRILL HOLLY

There's more than one way to look at vegetation management. The work electric cooperatives and their contractors do to help keep electric lines and other equipment separated from plant overgrowth plays a major role in service reliability.

From mowing and brush work at ground level to tree trimming near or above power lines, Iowa's electric co-ops regularly inspect and manage the landscape in and around their equipment. Vegetation management is an effective way to prevent outages, minimize the threat of fire damage and maintain access and serviceability.

Utility providers, including electric cooperatives, have worked with local, state and federal foresters to develop integrated vegetation management (IVM) practices aimed at reducing the need for chemicals, costly manual and mechanical control measures and controlled burning.

## Ecosystem benefits

IVM techniques establish low-growing vegetation that out-compete taller-growing species, according to experts at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA worked with utility industry associations and other federal agencies to develop these practices.

The integrated approach can help create sustainable ecosystems such as a meadow transition habitat. Used for both roadside and cross-country rights of way, these techniques encourage the growth of native plant species and increase plant diversity. They also create or restore habitat for local and migrating wildlife, including insects, birds and mammals.

"Trees and other vegetation grow relentlessly," says Randall H. Miller, a vegetation management consultant based in Des Moines.

## Proactive ongoing maintenance

While weather conditions can



affect seasonal activities related to right-of-way work and vegetation management, electric co-ops and other utilities regularly conduct maintenance to mitigate risks.

"Vegetation management that is deferred one year has to be done in the future, and the cost accrues much faster than inflation," says Miller, who serves on the ROW Stewardship Council. "As biomass develops due to growth and trees encroach or engulf power lines, they become increasingly more difficult and less safe to manage."

While some of the work might be done with brush hogs, mowers and chain saws, electric co-ops also rely heavily upon planning, seeding and strategic plantings, often supported by member-consumers and other stakeholders. Youth and community groups often work with co-ops to enhance or adapt rights of way to support and sustain wildlife or provide forage and habitat for migratory species.

Iowa's electric co-ops regularly share information and updates on local vegetation management efforts to keep the public safe and communicate

how tree and plant growth trimming increases service reliability.

"Communication is indispensable to successful vegetation management programs," says Miller. "Stakeholders need to understand how vegetation management will benefit them, and that includes education on how a vegetation management program minimizes the risk of tree-caused power outages."

According to industry research, about 20-30% of all power outages are vegetation related. Removal of tall trees and limbs near power lines also reduces the risks of injuries caused by accidental contacts with energized power lines.

"It should include the concept of 'right tree, right place' and there is no room for tall trees to develop under power lines," says Miller. "Planting the wrong tree under a powerline means the tree cannot reach its full potential and will have to be either removed or continually pruned to keep clear of the conductors." ⚡

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Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

# Working together to combat cyber attacks

BY PAUL WESSLUND

Computer hacking is a top news story these days, and for years, electric cooperatives have focused on blocking cyber threats from interfering with the nationwide electric grid that keeps our lights on. You can also help defend against that electronic mischief – and you should!

## Protecting the “smart grid”

The network of power lines, transformers and substations adds up to an incredibly complex system that reliably brings us conveniences of modern life. That network is transforming into a “smart grid” that does an even better job of delivering electricity.

It’s adding renewable energy sources like solar and wind power, which calls for sophisticated software to keep power flowing at night or when the wind isn’t blowing. Computer algorithms make plans for the most efficient and reliable operations when forecasts call for storms, wildfires or times of high-power use.

Making such modern miracles happen means joining with another dominant part of today’s world – the internet.

The blink-of-an-eye speed of balancing the generation of electricity with the flip of a light switch relies heavily on the electronically connected world. The internet is incredibly useful, but also a target of troublemakers from lone, self-taught experts to international crime rings. Electric utilities know this and work every day through their own offices and national organizations on cyber safety.

You can take smart steps, too, to protect yourself and the electric grid. Because the power grid uses the internet, that means that any of your internet-connected devices

are also part of the grid: computers, security cameras, printers, smart TVs, health monitors – even cars and lightbulbs can be connected to the internet.

## Four ways to be cyber secure

Here are the top tips experts advise to defend against hackers:

- 1 Lock the front door.** If you have wireless internet in your home, the traffic comes in through the router. If you take just one step, create a strong password for that router, and set a reminder to change the password regularly.
- 2 Use a secret code.** Weak passwords make things easier for hackers. A study found the most-used password in 2021 was “123456.” A more secure option uses combinations of uppercase and lowercase letters, combined with numbers and special symbols like “&” or “!” Be aware that every major internet-connected appliance comes with its own factory-installed password you should change right away.

**3 Stay vigilant.** If you receive an email with an attachment you weren’t expecting, don’t open the attachment. If you get a message with a link you didn’t know was coming, don’t click it. Even if it’s from a friend, call them and ask if they sent it – hackers can send messages using your friend’s address.

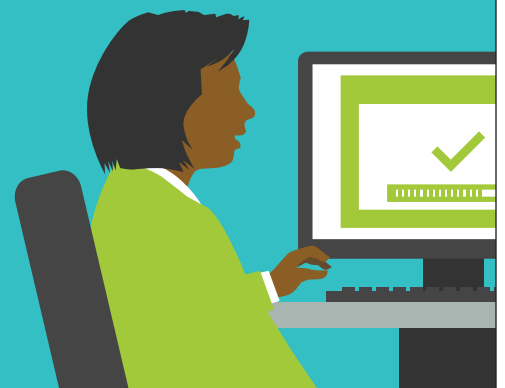
**4 Stay state-of-the-art.** Your computer and other devices will regularly offer updates – install them. They often contain security updates to protect against the latest cyber threats. And they will come to you directly through your computer, phone or printer.

National Cybersecurity Awareness Month is in October, and the Department of Homeland Security has titled this year’s theme, “If you connect it, protect it.” That’s good advice for your home – and for the electric grid! ⚡

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

## Four Ways to Combat Cyber Threats

1. Periodically change the password for your Wi-Fi router.
2. Use unique codes or phrases to create stronger passwords.
3. Do not click links or open attachments from unknown senders.
4. Update software regularly.



# School clothes shopping showdown

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

When our three boys were at home, one of my least-favorite chores of the year was determining what clothing fit after a long summer of what always seemed to be unprecedented growth. As August rolled around, I would haul out the contents of their closets for the annual “try-on.”

This was met with great resistance by the male contingent. I don’t know if girls would have been any easier, but each of my sons swore the clothing in their closet was just fine, even though I had seen inches of ankle showing in the blue jeans and bulging seams on the T-shirts over the summer.

The final showdown usually came the night before the scheduled shopping trip, when they were forced to try everything on so I could make notes. They would rip items on and off with a speed I couldn’t have purchased on a school day, so my notes were usually perfunctory and illegible.

## Dressing room drama

It was a challenge to do the shopping day with all three boys, but I didn’t have the time or energy to take them one at a time. We would set off in fairly high spirits, but ultimately, we always found ourselves in the same situation – the boys inside a men’s dressing room with me standing outside the entrance, trying to get them to try things I was bringing in.

Any one of the three would hiss, “Mom, get OUT OF THE MEN’S DRESSING ROOM!”

“What’s the big deal? Everyone is curtained off,” I’d reply. As I looked around, I realized the only other dressing room occupants were other mothers trying to get a glimpse of



whether the jeans on their own child were too tight or too long.

I added, “If you won’t come out into the store so I can see what you’re wearing, I have to come in.”

“I am NOT coming out there,” a son would growl.

“Okay, your choice,” I’d blithely chirp, ripping the curtain open.

No matter how an item of clothing fit, my sons would pronounce it “fine.” Too big, falling off the shoulders, stomach showing, pants squeezing, hems dragging . . . it was all “fine.” It took the persistence of a sleuth to get a true picture of what fit and what didn’t.

We’d arrive home, crabby, tired and hungry.

## Foiling mom’s plans

I thought I arrived at a great solution the year the boys were old

enough to drive themselves. I sent them shopping with a list and some money and told them to come home with what they needed. Our youngest son returned with a bag of socks and three video games. He determined he didn’t need anything else to wear. Plot foiled.

My husband Kent was in a dressing room trying on jeans recently, when he overheard a conversation a man and his son were having next to him. The father instructed, “When mom comes over, tell her you love it. If you say it’s ‘fine,’ she’ll make you go out and show her.”

It seems they’re on to us, moms. 🚀

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, two incredibly adorable grandsons and a lovely granddaughter.



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