

living with energy

IN IOWA



Guthrie County REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

AUGUST 2018

Win an Amazon Echo Show! ▶ See Page 5

Building communities with

solar energy

Energy audits turn into **big savings** for your home

Tips for **using appliances wisely**

Recipe box favorites

Visit our website at www.guthrie-rec.coop



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Planning to attend the Iowa State Fair?

It's Iowa State Fair time again, which means Guthrie County REC is joining the Touchstone Energy®



Cooperatives of Iowa to sponsor the Bruce L. Rastetter 4-H Exhibits Building.

Visit our booth in the 4-H building throughout the fair Aug. 9-19 and learn more about saving money with energy efficiency programs and rebates, the value of cooperative membership and more. Don't forget to place a marker on the big map to show which cooperative you belong to!

All visitors to the booth, whether they are co-op members or not, are invited 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. ⚡



Guthrie County REC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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.

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

CEO presents grant award

On behalf of the National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC), Guthrie County REC CEO Cozy Nelsen presents Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Executive Vice President Chuck Soderberg with a Cooperative Youth Educational Fund grant.

The NCSC program provides meaningful assistance to electric cooperative statewide organizations to support service and cooperative education. The funds can be used to cover the cost of the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., as well as other efforts such as videos, training programs, camps and scholarships to educate

electric cooperative youth about the cooperatives principles.

The grant award was presented during the IAEC's Managers' and Board Presidents' Summer Meeting in July at Okoboji. ⚡



SAFETY MATTERS

Back to school safety – distracted walking



The popularity of using mobile phones for doing just about everything other than making a phone call has prompted tougher laws to dissuade distracted drivers on the roads. But what about on the sidewalks?

As your child gets ready to head out the door for the first day of the new school year, take a moment to talk with them about the importance of pedestrian safety when it comes to distractions. Each year, more and more people are injured because of texting, talking or listening to music while on their mobile phones. In fact, the Governors Highway Safety Association reports that U.S. pedestrian deaths totaled nearly 6,000 in 2017 for the second straight year amid mounting signs that both walkers and drivers are dangerously

distracted.

No age group is immune from being injured or killed by distracted walking, but with kids about to start school, now is a good time to remind everyone in your family about the dangers. Here are a few pointers from the National Safety Council:

- Don't walk, talk and text at the same time.
- If you must talk on your phone or text, move out of the way of others and to the side of the walkway.
- Don't cross or walk in the street while using an electronic device.
- Don't walk while wearing headphones (whether the sound is on or not)
- Always be aware of your surroundings, especially in congested areas. ⚡

What is a zero-energy home?

Tiny houses have been all the rage in the last few years for people looking to make their carbon footprint just a little bit smaller. More recent headlines are touting what's known as "zero-energy homes," or ZEH, in which, over the course of a year, a home replaces (generates) enough electricity to offset what it has used.

It's about as efficient as a house can get without giving up electricity altogether, and it's becoming a trend. A ZEH has all of the comforts of a regular home – it heats, cools, entertains, washes and dries. It just does it more efficiently, and then generates enough solar electricity to cover its own needs.

ZEH builders incorporate features like extra-thick windows and insulation, built-in temperature and monitoring systems, and strategically placed skylights to reduce lighting needs. But even the sunniest of climates are bound to have a cloudy day. And for those days the ZEH



draws the energy it needs from the electrical grid. There are also days that are long, the sun is cooperating and the weather is mild so there's no need for heating or cooling. That's when the solar panels generate more than what is needed and send it back onto the grid.

At the end of the year, the energy used and the energy generated should cancel each other out.

Of course, having all of these features makes the ZEH more expensive than a traditional home of the same size, about 20-60 percent more. However, federal and state energy-efficiency rebates that may be available and a potential electricity cost savings of up to \$22,000 over 10 years might be able to make up for the increase in purchase price.

At least one zero-energy home exists in north Iowa (sunpoweredhome.net), and more are sure to come. To read more about the advantages of zero-energy homes, visit www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/zero-energy-ready-home. ⚡

Explaining the cooperative advantage in two minutes (or less!)

As a member, you already know what makes being part of a co-op great. But explaining the cooperative difference to friends or others who have never heard of a co-op can be challenging – especially when you only have a minute or two to do so.

The next time you find yourself talking to someone who's not in a co-op, whether you're in line at the grocery store or sitting next to them at the ball field, try some of these points to explain what makes co-ops special.

- "My electric co-op makes sure I have safe, reliable and affordable electricity."
- "I feel good about belonging to a co-op because it is focused on bettering not just my community, but also every community it serves."
- "I know many of the employees by name; they live and work right here. Do you know (*insert co-op employee name here*)?"
- "One of the best things about being a co-op member is having a share in the revenue. Since co-ops are not-for-profit, anything more than the cost to operate the business goes back to members like me."
- "I know that when I call my cooperative they will quickly respond because they are in my community, too, not some far-away high-rise office building."
- "My neighbor sits on the REC board of directors, so I know my voice is heard when it comes to cooperative business." ⚡

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win an Amazon Echo Show!

Amazon's Echo Show brings together what people love most about Alexa, but now she can show you things, too! Watch video flash briefings, Amazon Video content, see home security cameras, view photos, catch weather forecasts, and create to-do and shopping lists. With Amazon-supported devices you can be more efficient with your energy use by turning on and off lights or setting the thermostat.

The suggested retail price is approximately \$230. For details go to www.amazon.com/echoshow. Enter the contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiowa.com no later than Aug. 31, 2018. ⚡



OFFICE CLOSING

The Guthrie County REC office will be closed Monday, Sept. 3 in observance of Labor Day. We wish our members a safe holiday!

IN THE COMMUNITY

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 \$155.00 and donate 15 cents to RECare. By the same token, if your bill was \$154.01, we would bill you \$155.00 and donate 99 cents to RECare.

Name _____

Guthrie County REC Acct. No. _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Signature _____

Date _____

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Cooperative cybersecurity

Addressing the persistent and evolving reality of cyber threats is important for individuals and organizations alike. As people become increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, there are more opportunities for cyber threats. Guthrie County REC takes these threats seriously and takes measures to ensure staff are trained to know what to do.

One thing helping co-ops like Guthrie County REC is RC3, the Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities program through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). This program helps electric cooperatives build stronger cybersecurity programs and, with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, is developing tools to help cooperatives develop a culture of cybersecurity.

Electric cooperatives, large and small, are investing time and resources to build stronger cyber defenses and increase their resiliency to cyberattacks. As co-ops ramp up capabilities in the beneficial use of digital technologies, they are integrating best practices to safeguard consumer data and grid operations from cyberattacks.



Office Manager Lori Hix regularly attends IT Users Group meetings hosted by our power supplier, Central Iowa Power Cooperative. These meetings are held every few months to discuss related topics and concerns within the IT landscape.

“Our top priority is ensuring our members’ data is kept secure, so I make sure that staff computers are kept up-to-date with current antivirus software because that is our first line of defense against any type of cyberattack,” Hix said. “Thankfully, we haven’t had any incidents, but we are constantly looking for suspicious emails or other signs that an attack may be imminent.” ⚡



Guthrie County REC Board Member Julie Kiley and Jenna Achenbach, daughter of GCREC members Julie and Brent Achenbach.



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