

# in touch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Cooperation helps build new emergency services building

With two floods eight years apart and space running out in the two current buildings, it was time—time for the Greene community ambulance department, fire department and six surrounding townships—four in Butler County and two in Floyd County—to begin discussing a new joint emergency services building. “The city was trying to find a location. The trucks are getting bigger and we needed to do something,” said Don Feldman, Dayton township clerk and Butler County REC and Corn Belt Power Cooperative board member.

Two years ago the three entities met and agreed to each pay one-third of the cost of the building. A building committee was formed and the first of many meetings was held in February of 2016. The building is scheduled to be done this month.

Located near the Greene City Hall and Community Center, the emergency services building is being built on land donated by the city. The property used to be part of the former Greene Elementary School.

Only local contractors were used to construct the building. “That’s what the committee wanted, so that’s what was done,” commented Feldman. At 60 feet by 175 feet, the building has eight bays and includes meeting room facilities.

Funding was kicked off by a generous \$100,000 donation from the estate of Jim Nettleton, Greene. Butler County REC donated \$500 to the project, while Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Humboldt, our generation and transmission cooperative, gave \$375, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck, N.D., Corn Belt Power’s power supplier, donated an additional \$500.

In a thank you note signed by Jayne Knapp, Greene city clerk, she stated, “Your donation is greatly appreciated and will be put to good use allowing our volunteers to better service our community and surrounding communities.”

### Need a new heating system?

Think electric and call our energy advisor, Mike Boomgarden.

Mike will explain the ins and outs of geothermal systems, air source heat pumps and electric furnaces. If you currently have a gas furnace, he can talk to you about the benefits of an electric insert. In addition, by installing electric heat you will be eligible for rebates and possibly our lower electric heat rate.



Contact Mike at 888.267.2726.

[www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop)

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



From left, Fred Meyne, Greene, project coordinator and chair of the rural fire board; Don Feldman, Greene, Dayton township clerk and Butler County REC and Corn Belt Power Cooperative board member; Gary Doehrmann, Butler County REC accountant; Jim O'Brien, Greene mayor; and Neal Nordmeyer, Greene fire department chief.

### Pay-by-Phone: 1.844.749.3051

If you are one of our members who calls into the Butler County REC office to pay your bill over the phone, please be aware that to protect your information the process has changed.

We take the safekeeping of your personal information very seriously. Therefore, we are moving toward Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance. These are security standards that include not housing member payment information and not taking that information over the phone.

Instead of calling our office to make a payment, please call 1.844.749.3051, our secure phone line dedicated to payments. You will need your Butler County REC account number and your payment method numbers, whether that is a bank account or a credit or debit card. No registration or password is required. For step-by-step instructions, see your December bill insert or our website at [www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop). For a time, we will still offer the option of calling into the office. We will then transfer you to the secure payment line.

In this ever-changing and challenging world of cyber security, know that keeping your information safe is a top priority for us.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at 1.319.267.2726 or 1.888.267.2726.

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## MOVE OVER SLOW DOWN

Keep lineworkers safe.  
Take the pledge at  
[www.MoveOverIowa.com](http://www.MoveOverIowa.com)



*Snow on the roof means heat in the house. Make sure there is plenty of insulation in attics and crawl spaces.*

## Increase efficiency as temperatures plummet

A cold winter can bring an equally cold reality: higher heat bills. This winter, keep your costs and energy use as low as possible by following these winter efficiency tips:

- Have a heating system checkup and change your filter every month or two during winter.
- Check the ductwork that's in your basement or attic. Air leaks in ducts can account for about 20 to 30 percent of wasted heat. If there are leaks or holes in your ducts, use sealant or metal tape.
- Check for gaps and air leaks around doors, windows, outlets and so on. Seal these areas with caulk, sealant and weather stripping.
- Use a programmable thermostat to set your temperature lower when you're away to prevent energy waste from heating an empty house. Using a programmable thermostat can help you save about \$180 each year.
- Leave space around heating registers so warm air can enter the area.
- Replace older heating equipment with newer, more efficient systems.
- Keep curtains open to let direct sunlight heat the home during daylight hours. Remember to close your curtains in the evening to reduce drafts.
- Turn your water heater down to the "warm" setting, or to about 120 degrees, to cut back on the energy waste and reduce the likelihood of scalds. Water heating consumes nearly one fifth of heating costs.

For additional information on energy efficiency, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) or [EfficiencyResource.org](http://EfficiencyResource.org).

Scholarships available for co-op dependents



- Dependents of cooperative members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship for tuition at a two-year or four-year college. Contact your electric cooperative for an application form.
- Corn Belt Power Cooperative partners with Northwest Iowa Community College (NWICC) in Sheldon, Iowa, to offer four \$500 scholarships. Recipients must be students at NWICC studying Electrical Technology, Powerline or Powerline Technology. Contact the NWICC Foundation, Sheila Van Engen, (800) 352-4907 ext. 246, [svanengen@nwicc.edu](mailto:svanengen@nwicc.edu).
- Corn Belt Power partners with Iowa Lakes Community College to offer one \$500 scholarship for students enrolled in the Wind Energy and Turbine Technology program. For more information, contact Tony Condon, institutional advancement manager, Iowa Lakes Community College, 800-521-5054, ext. 4491, [tcondon@iowlakes.edu](mailto:tcondon@iowlakes.edu).



# Preparation is power: Weathering winter outages

Anyone who has weathered prolonged outages due to an ice or winter storm will tell you it is more than inconvenient. Prepare now to ensure you're not left in the cold when the next one happens.

Safe Electricity recommends assembling an emergency "kit" with essential items including flashlight; portable radio; first-aid kit; non-perishable food; bottled water; extra blankets and clothing; outerwear including hats, gloves and scarves; and rags or duct tape to seal air leaks.

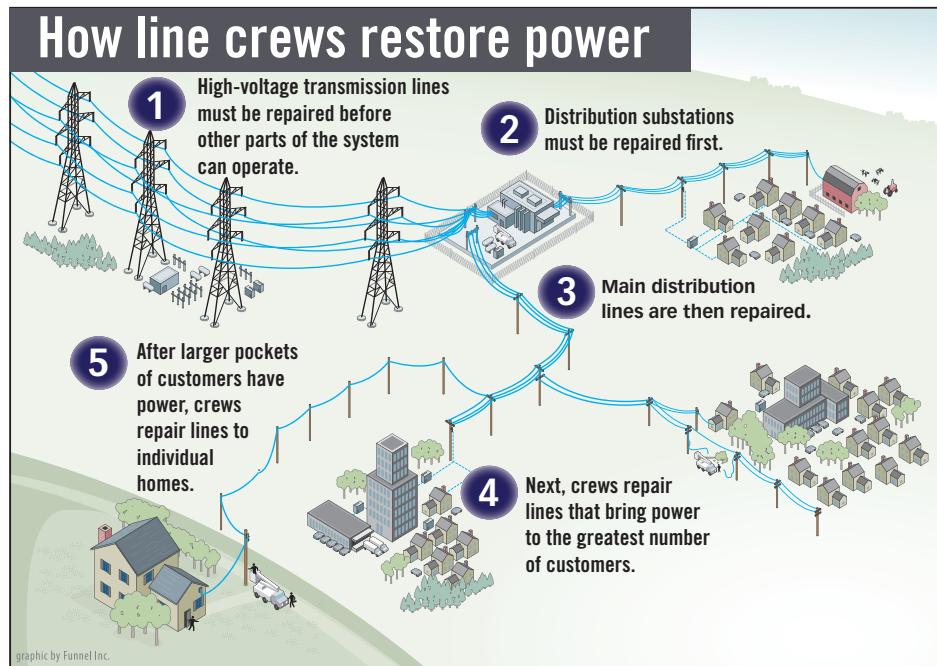
Know how you can get area weather updates. Visit state and local websites for emergency outage plans in your area. Develop an emergency plan with your family. Keep your mobile devices fully charged and ready to use when a storm is headed your way.

Additional tips for weathering a cold weather outage:

- Dress in several layers of warm clothing. Wear a hat to avoid the loss of heat from your head.
- Reduce the amount of wasted heat by closing doors to rooms not being used and closing curtains and blinds.
- Lower the temperature of your refrigerator as low as possible, and avoid opening the refrigerator doors.
- Unplug devices such as televisions and computers. Use surge protectors to protect electronics when power comes back on.
- Watch for the signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Use caution when going outside. Downed power lines could be hidden by snow or ice. If you see a downed power pole or line, stay far away and report it to your electric utility.

A portable generator can provide power in the event of an outage. Have an electric cord long enough to keep the generator at least 20 feet from any door, window or vent to keep carbon monoxide out of the home. Never use a portable generator in the home or garage –and never plug it into a home wall outlet or connect it directly to the home's electrical system. Install battery-powered or battery back-up carbon monoxide detectors near floors on each level of the home.

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



## MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the age-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

Source: Dept. of Energy

## LED lighting rebate reminder



Decorate your home with energy-efficient LED holiday lights! They have a long life-span and are safe. Your Touchstone Energy cooperative is offering a \$2 bill credit for each LED-lighted item purchased.

Contact us for details or visit our website for a form.

# Nominating Committee seeks candidates for board of directors

Butler County REC's board of directors have appointed the following members to serve on a nominating committee and select members to run for three director positions that will expire on March 17, 2018:

- **Phil Barnett, Clarksville, phone 319-239-7165**
- **Gene Carpenter, Plainfield, phone 319-276-4706**
- **Steve Brouwer, Aplington, phone 319-231-5020**

This committee will meet at the cooperative office in Allison at **11 a.m., Dec. 28, 2017**, to nominate members for the office of director. The election will take place at the cooperative's annual meeting on Saturday, March 17, 2018.

Your co-op's board of directors consists of nine members serving three-year terms. Every year three of the positions come up for election. Each director must reside in the area he or she is elected to represent.

**This year, the board is seeking nominations for the following areas: the northeast quarter of Butler County, the western half of Bremer County and the southwest quarter of Butler County.** At this time, the members listed below are currently serving as your board representatives and will not be seeking re-election:

- **Don Feldman, Greene**
- **Duane Rieckenberg, Ionia**
- **John Klahsen, Aplington**

If you are interested in running for a position or want to recommend someone residing in any of these areas, please contact a member on the nominating committee before Dec. 27, 2017. Please call our office if you need help to reach a member of the nominating committee.



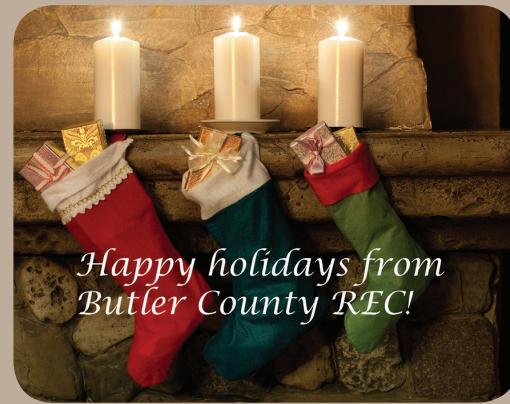
*Lineworkers from Legacy Contracting, Inc. out of Minnesota continue to replace poles along Hwy. 14 near Greene. Legacy is completing FEMA work for us that will continue into the spring of 2018.*

## Nomination details

The list of nominations will then be posted at the Butler County REC office in Allison. For 10 days after posting this list, additional nominations of members residing in the general area of vacancy may be made by written petition. Forms will be provided at the request of any member and must be signed by no less than 20 members of the cooperative. Any member so nominated must give prior consent to such nomination. The following excerpt from the Butler County REC articles of incorporation and bylaws further explains this process:

Not less than sixty (60) days prior to the regular annual meeting of members, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee of not less than three members of the Association who are not directors of the Association. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of nominees, residing in the general area of the vacancy, with at least one member nominated for each vacancy to be filled at the next annual meeting. The written list of nominations of the Nominating Committee shall be posted at the office of the Association not less than thirty days prior to mailing the notice of the annual meeting of members. For ten days after posting of the list of nominations by the committee, additional nominations of members residing in the general area of the vacancy may be made by written petition on forms provided on request of any member, and signed by not less than 20 members of the Association. Any member nominated shall give prior consent to such nomination whether by committee or petition. The notice of the annual meeting of members shall list the names of all nominees for the office of director.

In the event any member who is nominated either by the committee or petition withdraws consent, dies, or for any other reason is unable or declines to serve as a director, prior to the annual meeting but after the deadlines set forth above for posting and mailing of notices, and as a result thereof there remains only one nominee from the general area of any vacancy, then the committee on nominations shall be vested with full authority to nominate an additional member of the Association residing in the general area of the vacancy, so that two nominees from that area exist. If sufficient time exists prior to the annual meeting, the members of the Association shall be notified by mail of the new nomination. If sufficient time does not exist, prior to the election of directors at the annual meeting, a general announcement shall be made concerning the withdrawal, death, etc. of the person originally nominated, and the person subsequently nominated by the Nominating Committee.



*Happy holidays from  
Butler County REC!*

We will be closed Dec. 25, Dec. 26 and Jan. 1 to celebrate the holidays. Our phones are answered 24/7 to respond to outages and emergencies.

**INtouch** is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative

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