

## Annual message to members

From Duane Rieckenberg, board president, and Craig Codner, CEO

When traveling in a car, you experience bumps, curves and turns along with smooth road. This is true in business, as well. In 2018, Butler County REC also road out the bumps, curves and turns to enjoy the smooth road.

To begin the year, we were able to lower the energy cost adjustment (ECA) on your electric bill. This was due to a decrease in the cost of power from Corn Belt Power Cooperative, our wholesale power supplier, and based off of our financial review.

Part of the cooperative difference is also receiving the benefit of excess margins, or patronage, through payout of patronage dividends. We were able to return almost \$676,000 to members, not only from Butler County REC but the amount allocated from Corn Belt Power, as well.

In 2018, we also conducted a cost-of-service study to review rates and ensure that everyone is paying what they should for their service. Your board has elected to continue to analyze the data before determining if any rate modifications are needed. As always, we will keep you informed.

In an effort to achieve cost-savings, shaving the peak during demand on our system is a priority. When your cooperative saves money, so do you. Toward that end, we now require load control receiver (LCR) installations on all Marathon water heaters purchased from Butler County REC. This resulted in over 75 LCR installations



Duane Rieckenberg, board president



Craig Codner, CEO

in 2018, an estimated total savings of \$50,000 to the cooperative and in turn, our members. Contact us if you have an electric water heater and would like to be a part of the program. You will receive a one-time \$10 bill credit for participating.

In November of 2018, construction began on Solar II, north of the town of Bremer. We are excited to add this additional renewable generation to our portfolio. It is expected this array will produce enough power to serve approximately 20-25 homes annually. Solar II is anticipated to be online this spring, joining Solar I at our Horton warehouse.

One core cooperative principle is members electing members to govern the cooperative. The position of cooperative director requires forward thinking and dedication. Our nine-member board is committed to you and making beneficial decisions on your behalf. They are invested in continuing their education on current

and emerging technologies impacting utility operations. Three directors earned Director Gold Renewal Certifications, and one earned a Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate. We are proud of their dedication to our members.

In addition, we are committed to our communities. Not only through our economic development efforts and USDA loans, but through the volunteer efforts of our employees, who logged 1,524 volunteer hours in 2018. This is almost 400 more hours than in 2017 given to community schools, churches and organizations.

Our employees returning home safely every night will always remain our priority. We have logged over one million hours of no-lost time accidents. We live the practice of “see something, say something.” And it is evident.

Though the road in 2018 was not always smooth, we endured the bumps, curves and turns. Thank you for riding with us!



# The commitment of a lineworker

National studies consistently rank power line installers and repairers among the most dangerous jobs in the country. Laboring high in the air wearing heavy equipment and working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession.

But these brave men and women are committed to safety, as well as the challenges of the job.

Your electric cooperative's lineworkers are responsible for keeping power flowing day and night, regardless of national holidays, vacations, birthdays, weddings or other important family milestones.

## Family support system

To perform their jobs successfully, lineworkers depend on their years of training, experience and each other to get the job done safely. Equally impor-

tant is their reliance on a strong support system at home.

A lineworker's family understands and supports their loved one's commitment to the greater community during severe storms and outages.

This means in times of prolonged outages, the family and their lineworker may have minimal communication and not see each other for several days. Without strong family support and understanding, this challenging job would be even more difficult.

## Community commitment

In your community and across the country, electric co-op lineworkers' mission-focused mentality of helping others often extends beyond their commitment to their work at the co-op.

Lineworkers are often familiar figures in the community. They can be found coaching youth sports teams, volunteering for local charities and serving on local advisory boards.

**Committed to the job.  
Committed to safety.  
Committed to you,  
our members.**

Lineworker Appreciation Day  
April 8, 2019



## Thank you

Monday, April 8 is Lineworker Appreciation Day. Take a moment and acknowledge the many contributions they make to our local community. And thank their family members, as well.

## Stay safe during planting season

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. If you farm, take care of yourself by getting as much rest as possible and allowing yourself breaks to clear your head. Be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm.

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out. Stay where you are and call 9-1-1 so the appropriate utility can de-energize the power.
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger.
- When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.

**Contact us for additional electrical safety information.**



In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members.

RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

## RECare MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

### RECare Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will make a one-time contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_



**Return to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative**

# Grain bin requirements

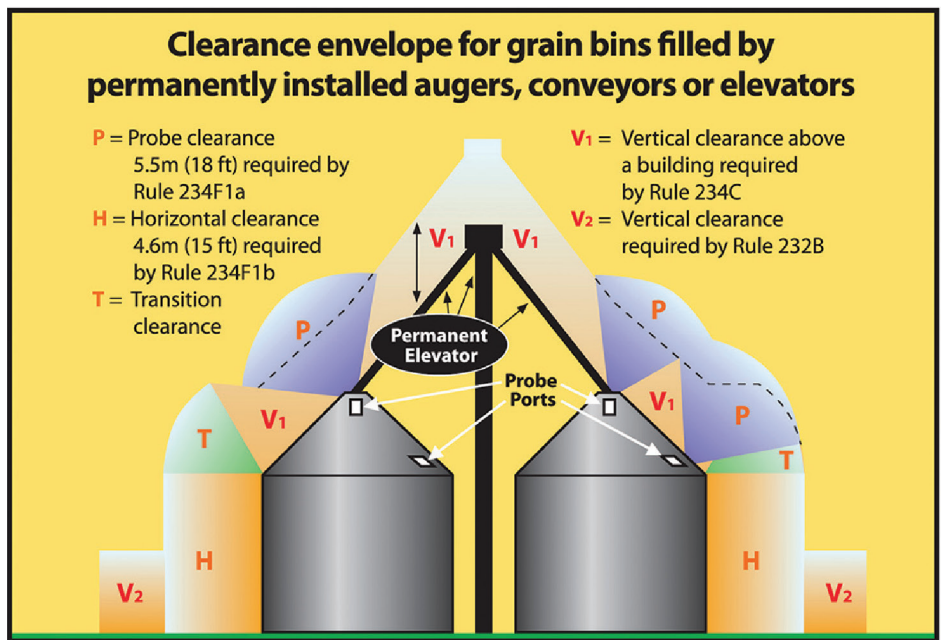
When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact your electric cooperative. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

The drawings at the right show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact your cooperative listed here.

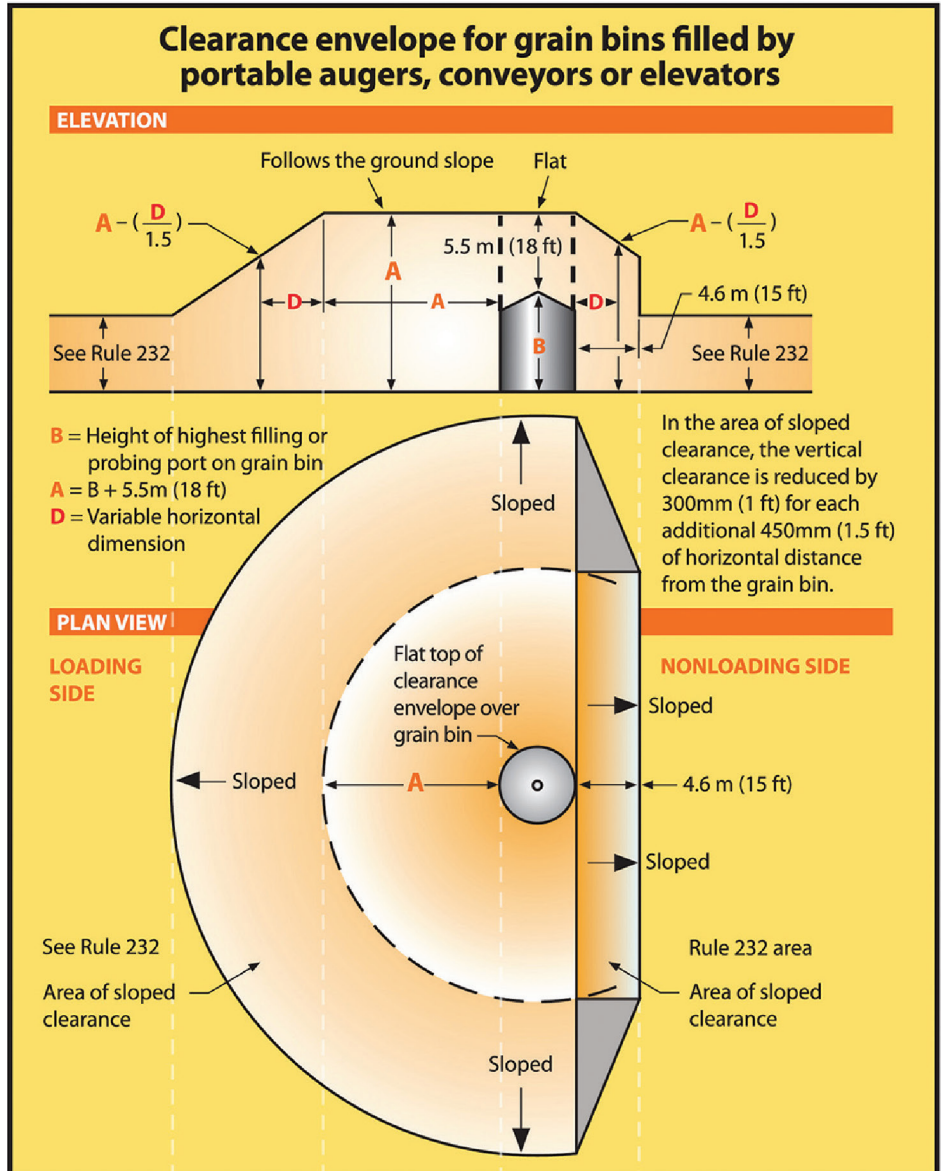
|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Butler County REC.....          | 319-267-2726 |
| Corn Belt Power.....            | 515-332-2571 |
| Franklin REC.....               | 641-456-2557 |
| Grundy County REC.....          | 319-824-5251 |
| Prairie Energy Cooperative..... | 515-532-2805 |

According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2017 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (The Iowa Utilities Board has adopted this language.)

**Disclaimer:** These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings refer to that publication. Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or for damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



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## Years of service recognized

Congratulations to the following Butler County REC directors and employees recognized for their years of service: (front row, l to r)—Mike Miller, 5 years; Leland Boyd, 30 years; Janis Cramer, 35 years; (back row, l to r)—Chris Wehling, 10 years; Tyler Aukes, 5 years; Kyle Lorenz, 10 years; Matt Rowell, 20 years; and Duane Rieckenberg, 40 years. Not pictured: Tom Wubbena, 40 years; Derek Buss, 15 years; Mike Hall, 15 years; Anne Sesker, 15 years; and Andy Uthoff, 10 years.

## Renting? Conserve energy anyway

Reducing electricity use as a renter may seem tough when you have little control over the biggest energy users in your place, like your refrigerator, dishwasher or heating and cooling system. But there's still plenty you can do:

- Ask your landlord or property manager to lower the water heater temperature to 120 degrees.
- Look for an Energy Star-qualified window air conditioner if you are responsible for purchasing it.
- Hang heavier curtains to help shield the heat in the summertime. In the winter, tape clear plastic sheeting around window frames to help insulate thin windows.
- Install sink aerators on all faucets.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with more efficient LEDs.
- If the windows and doors are drafty, ask your landlord about installing weather-stripping to seal off cracks.

## RECare generosity appreciated

Paying heating bills is not easy for some of our members. In 2018, almost 70 of you helped fellow REC members with that task through RECare, our program of members helping members. In addition, \$300 was contributed to our RECare fund from the Rockford High School Future Farmers of America (FFA). Thank you so much for helping others.

Through RECare, we provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay heating bills and to assist in the weatherization of homes of low-income consumers.



**INtouch** is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative  
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## Do You Know... The cost to outfit a line person?



The following are average costs of clothing for one line person:

- Hard hat: \$10
- Safety glasses: \$5
- Fire-retardant (FR) shirt: \$70
- FR sweatshirt: \$150
- FR pants: \$75
- FR coveralls \$200
- Working gloves: \$7
- Rubber gloves: \$175
- Rubber sleeves: \$464
- Boots: \$350



## Congratulations!

Pam Hermann, Rockford, won a sous vide precision cooker in a contest in *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine. The contest was advertised in the January issue of the magazine.

*Living with Energy in Iowa* is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. Each issue offers a contest.



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