

## Youth Tour scholarship winners recognized

Butler County REC is pleased to recognize two students, from last year's Youth Tour finalists who are 2020 high graduates, with a \$500 scholarship award.



Morgan Biretz, Wapsie Valley High School, plans to attend Iowa State University in the fall. She is the daughter of Eddie and Denise Biretz, Fairbank.



Brandon Hennings, Tripoli High School, plans to attend Hawk-eye Community College this fall. He is the son of Robert and Kathy Hennings, Tripoli.

*Best of luck, Morgan & Brandon!*

## Ruzicka selected for Youth Tour

Cael Ruzicka, a junior at Charles City High School, was selected to represent Butler County REC at the 2020 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. that was to be held in June. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Youth Tour was cancelled. Butler County REC, however, will be working with Cael regarding attending the Youth Tour in June of 2021.

The son of Butler County REC members Michael and Angela Ruzicka of Marble Rock, Cael is active in sports, band, choir, drama, FFA, and Boy Scouts; is a three-year class president; and is the student representative on the school board.

Congratulations, Cael!



## Directors earn certifications

Butler County REC directors Troy Feldman and Allyn Harms recently completed board certificate programs through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Feldman, representing the northeast quarter of Butler County since 2018, earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate. The CCD is the first part of the Director Certificate Program and is a set of five courses focusing on basic governance knowledge and the essential skills required of cooperative directors.

Harms, representing the southeast quarter of Butler County for the past seven years, earned his Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). The BLC is the second part of the NRECA director education program, consisting of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance topics.

Butler County REC views the education of directors as essential, enabling your board to make informed decisions. Congratulations, Troy and Allyn!



*(L to R) Directors Allyn Harms and Troy Feldman with board president Duane Rieckenberg.*

## Stuck at home? Conserve electricity

With the kids studying at home and parents teleworking over the past couple of months, you may have seen an increase in your energy bills.

Like any period of higher-than-usual indoor activity it's normal for electricity use to spike.

And if students have stay-at-home summer school, your family might continue to increase its use of computers, lights, TVs, game consoles, and other electrical devices that can run up electricity use.

The antidote: Follow smart, common-sense conservation practices to keep energy use in check:

As the weather warms up, delay turning on the air conditioning as long as your home is comfortable with open windows and running ceiling fans.

When you do switch on the a/c, keep it at the highest comfortable temperature. For every degree higher you set the thermostat, you can cut your energy use by up to 4 percent.

Insist that everyone turn off the overhead lights when leaving a

room, power down the TV when nobody's watching, disconnect the computer and printer at the end of the day, and switch off exhaust fans once the steam clears from the bathroom after a shower.

Unplug cell phone chargers when not in use. Whenever you leave an unused device plugged into the wall, it continues to draw electricity.

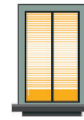
Hold off on running the clothes dryer and dishwasher until after dark. When many people are home during the day, electricity is often used at the same time. It places less of a burden on the overall electrical system when we spread out our energy use.

Clean the a/c filter every month. With more-than-usual activity in the house, filters can clog sooner. A clean filter lets air flow easily, placing less of a burden on the air conditioning system as it keeps everyone comfortable indoors.

Contact us for more energy-saving ideas.

## Summer Energy-Saving Tips

Costs associated with cooling your home can make up a large portion of your summer electric bills. Stay cool and save money with these energy efficiency tips!



### NO-COST TIPS

Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.



Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you're away.



Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave a room.



### LOW-COST TIPS

Plant trees and shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.



Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.



Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space. Solar lights are easy to install, low maintenance and provide free electricity.

## IS OWNING A HOME YOUR DREAM?

Contact Homeward, Inc.

515-532-6477 [homeward@mchsi.com](mailto:homeward@mchsi.com)

[homewardiowa.com](http://homewardiowa.com)

## Save with rebates!

Your electric cooperative offers members a variety of incentives for new electric heating and cooling systems, including air source and geothermal heat pumps. Rebates are also available for insulating and weatherizing your home.



Contact us for details and rebate forms

## Let's talk about phone scams

While the rapidly changing energy market has created more options for consumers, it has also resulted in more utility scams.



Source: 123rf.com

These scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist, and consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their utility service.

### Avoid phone scams

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. This person will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a very short, urgent time frame to pay the "past due" amount.

You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. Never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly.

### Use trusted sources

In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor – your local electric cooperative. We are a community-focused organization that works to efficiently deliver reliable and safe energy to our members.

Remember, we're just one call or click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills – we're here to help.

## Don't Let Tragedy Strike

**30** Around 30 people are **killed** each year from lightning strikes.



**$\frac{2}{3}$**  of lightning fatalities are associated with outdoor **recreational activities**.



### SEEK SHELTER

In a four-sided building or an enclosed hardtop vehicle at the first sight of lightning.

Never swim when lightning is in the area.



**WAIT 30 minutes**

...after the **last rumble** of thunder before heading back outside.

**TOP 3**  sports-related lightning fatalities

1) Soccer 2) Golf 3) Running

Safe Electricity.org

Source National Weather Service, NOAA

## Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke

Heat is a major weather-related killer in the United States, killing hundreds of people each year.

- If you or someone else experiences heavy sweating and weakness, immediately seek a cool environment, drink water, and apply a cold compress.
- If these symptoms progress to high temperature, vomiting, and unconsciousness, seek emergency medical attention.

Try to prevent heat-related illnesses by seeking out cool environments, drinking lots of water, and wearing light clothes.

Source: EnergyEdCouncil.org



# June is Home Safety Month

June is Home Safety Month, and it's the perfect time to sweep your house of electrical hazards.

Start with a self-audit of your home—something you should turn into an annual ritual. Check that all of your appliances are still in working order by turning them on and off, listening to the sound of the motor (is it “normal”?) and inspecting their cords and plugs for damage.



*If you have young children, plug wall outlets with child-safety caps.*

Some more quick tips:

- Replace appliances whose cords are frayed or worn. You can't fix those.
- Resolve to buy new appliances that have the thumbs-up from an independent testing laboratory like Underwriters Laboratories.
- Choose light bulbs with the correct wattage for each light. You'll find the maximum safe wattage imprinted on the fixture.
- Get those electrical cords out from under your carpets! Covering cords can cause them to overheat and start a fire.
- Put your extension cords away. They're not meant for everyday use.
- Install waterproof covers on your outdoor outlets.

## Don't mail your REC payment



Sign up for automatic bill payment with Butler County REC and you won't have to worry about writing a check, finding a stamp, or mailing your bill payment.

The following are sign-up options:

- Visit our website at [butlerrec.coop](http://butlerrec.coop) and click on SmartHub; or go to MY ACCOUNT, PAYMENTS, and Other Choices
- Call Pay-by-Phone, 844.749.3051, and set up when you pay your bill
- Call the office at 319.267.2726 and we can send you a form

Why not make life a little easier and give yourself the freedom of one less thing to remember?

Contact us if you have questions.

## EnergyWise Renewables program supports renewable energy

Butler County REC's EnergyWise Renewables program was established in 2006 to give co-op members the opportunity to support member-owned renewable energy projects in its service territory. Initially, the program supported only wind generation. Today the program includes solar and any type of distributed generation that provides an alternative or enhancement to the traditional electric power system. All contributions go to support small-scale distributed generation in our service territory. Butler County REC does not charge for the administration of this program.

To take part in this voluntary program, complete the information below and return to Butler County REC. If you already contribute, there is nothing you need to do now. Your participation is greatly appreciated.



### EnergyWise Renewables Participation Form

I wish to support (the amount you select will be automatically added to your monthly power bill):

- 100 kilowatt-hours (\$1.50 per month)
- 200 kilowatt-hours (\$3.00 per month)
- 300 kilowatt-hours (\$4.50 per month)
- 400 kilowatt-hours (\$6.00 per month)
- Other per month \_\_\_\_\_. Maximum contribution is 3,000 kilowatt-hours (\$45.00 per month)
- One-time contribution. I wish to support EnergyWise Renewables with a one-time contribution. My check for \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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 521 North Main • PO Box 98 • Allison, IA 50602  
 PHONES: 319.267.2726 or 888.267.2726 • FAX: 319.267.2566  
 OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 WEBSITE: [www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop) • E-MAIL: [butler@butlerrec.coop](mailto:butler@butlerrec.coop)  
 Craig Codner, CEO • EDITOR: Anne Sesker, CCC

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