

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

August 2026

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



A WORD FROM



Craig Codner, CEO
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Our purpose is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable electricity while being transparent about the factors that impact energy costs. We understand every dollar matters, and we are committed to making smart investments that keep the lights on and support the communities we serve.

At Butler County REC, we believe understanding your electric bill is an important part of being an informed member. While the total amount due may seem like a single number, it reflects several different costs associated with delivering reliable electricity to your home or business.

August is typically one of our warmest months of the year, and air conditioners are working overtime. During extreme heat, many members may see an increase in their electric bill and wonder what factors contribute to the cost of electricity.

The largest factor is often the amount of energy you use. During the summer, air conditioning is typically the largest driver of increased energy use. When temperatures climb into the 90s or higher, our cooling systems run longer and more frequently, consuming significantly more electricity than they do during milder weather.

Another major factor is the cost of

Understanding your electric bill

generating or purchasing electricity. Butler County REC purchases power from Corn Belt Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. The cost of producing electricity fluctuates based on fuel prices, including natural gas, coal, and other energy resources used to generate power. Changes in wholesale power costs influence the price of electricity delivered to members.

Transmission costs also play a role. Before electricity reaches your home, it travels across a network of high-voltage transmission lines that connect power plants to local distribution systems (like us). Transmission equipment requires ongoing maintenance and upgrades to ensure reliability, especially as electricity demand continues to grow.

Closer to home, Butler County REC maintains the local electric distribution system — utility poles, power lines, transformers, substations, and other essential equipment that safely delivers power to members. Maintaining this equipment is covered through the facility charge shown on your bill. This is a flat monthly fee all members pay, regardless of how much electricity they use. This fixed fee ensures all members pay a fair share of the basic, operational costs required to keep the power grid reliable and ready to serve your home or business. Whether a member uses a little electricity or a lot, we have to maintain infrastructure and have crews, equipment, and resources available to provide electricity around the clock.

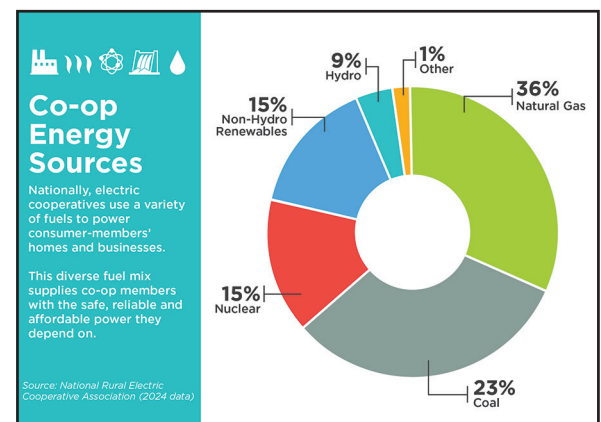
Summer temperatures can also influence costs in less obvious ways. When the demand for electricity is high across a region, wholesale power prices can increase. Utilities and grid

operators must ensure enough generation is available to meet peak demand, and those costs can be reflected throughout the electric system.

The good news is that simple steps to lower energy use can make a meaningful difference. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher when you're away, replacing dirty HVAC filters, using ceiling fans, sealing air leaks, and avoiding the use of major appliances during the hottest parts of the day can help reduce energy consumption, lower your bill, and reduce strain on the local grid.

We encourage you to sign up for SmartHub, if you haven't yet. SmartHub offers easy access to your power usage, bill, and so much more. See how much electricity you typically use — look at your past usage, and monitor current usage. This will give you a better idea of when you use the most power and what in your home is using the most power. Download the app or access SmartHub through our website at butlerrec.coop.

If you ever have questions about your electric bill, SmartHub, or co-op programs designed to help you save, please reach out. We're here to help you make informed decisions that work for your household. Thank you for allowing us to serve you.





Thank you for attending our events!

Butler County REC employees and directors served almost 1,550 meals at our fifth annual member appreciation events in June! The 2026 events were held in Allison, Charles City, Nashua, and Waverly and celebrated our 90th year as a cooperative.

Each member received a bamboo pizza paddle, and drawings were held for bill credits for the adults and walkie talkies for the children.

\$90 bill credit winners: Kathy Bremner, Sumner; Brett Dix, Aplington; Bob Otters, Fredericksburg; Lucian Schmitt, Charles City

\$20 bill credit winners: Richard Burgart, New Hampton; Erwin Johnson, Charles City; Keith Kalkwarf, Aplington; James Lalk, Sumner; Morris Parcher, Rockford; Kyle Poppens, Parkersburg; Larry Riechmann, Sumner; Clint Swieter, New Hartford

Walkie-talkie winners: Sam (Marc) Benning, Clarksville; Madi (Christine) Fox, Sumner; EJ (Cindy) Neisius, Charles City; Clara (Matt) Wedeking, Clarksville

Thank you to our food vendors--West Forty Market, Greene, for supplying the meat, buns, cheese, chips, pickles, and more; to Cindy Johnson, owner of Butler Center Bakeshop, Allison, for the cookies; and to Hansen's Dairy, Hudson, for the ice cream. In addition, each year the venues that we work with are so helpful and easy to work with. We appreciate it!

And thank you so much to everyone who attended. We enjoy seeing you and speaking with you and look forward to next year's events!

Final shot fired: Miller's annual clay shoot ends

After seven years, 2025 was the final time Mike Miller's clay shoot was held. Butler County REC's warehouseman/mechanic and a cancer survivor, Miller held the event each year to raise funds for the following year's Relay for Life. In June, Relay for Life of Butler County announced on their Facebook page that after 25 years, 2026 would be the last year the event would be held.

Miller became interested in trapshooting when his boys participated in the sport at Crocket Ridge Clays and Camping in Ackley, owned by Butler County REC member Dave Swanson. Organized by Mike and his wife Jodi, the Relay for Life fundraising event took place at Crocket Ridge.

Each year, the number of event participants increased, with the final years hosting 150-200 participants and a total of 250 attendees. Held on

a Saturday in September it began at 8:00 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m., with many of Miller's family and friends donating time and resources to the shoot. In addition, the event had over 30 sponsors.

A lunch of marinated pork tenderloin sandwiches (with the pork donated by Tyson Fresh Meats and tenderized and cooked by Mike and his crew), potato salad made by Butler County REC member Shelly Codner, potato chips, and a dessert.

Mike explained trapshooting by stating, "It's like golf; participants go hole-to-hole (on rangers and golf carts), called stations." His event, called the "Miller 100" was so-named due to the 100 targets—10 stations with each person shooting 10 times at each. They shoot at clay pigeons released remotely



by a teammate of the shooter. The target holder holds 300 to 400 targets at one time.

Disappointed that the shoot has come to an end, Miller is proud of the funds he was able to raise for Relay for Life of Butler County. "It was a lot of work, but worth it, and I will miss it," he said.

Make your mark on safety at the Iowa State Fair!



MAKE YOUR MARK AT THE FAIR!

Stop by our booth in the 4-H Exhibits Building; we'll have crayons and coloring pages for kids! (while supplies last)

Iowa State Fair
OFFICIAL SPONSOR

Touchstone Energy
Cooperatives of Iowa

We're keeping things colorful at the Iowa State Fair as the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa are pleased to once again sponsor the 4-H Exhibits Building. Butler County REC is proud to be a Touchstone Energy member, which means we're part of a nationwide network of locally owned co-ops that provides resources and leverages partnerships to help member-consumers use energy wisely.

If you're planning a visit to the Iowa State Fair from August 13-23, make sure to stop by and see us in the air-conditioned 4-H Exhibits Building on the southwest corner of the fairgrounds. It's a great place to take a break from the heat or rain during your adventure.

Electric co-op staff from across the state will hand out crayons and coloring pages while supplies last. Kids can color the pages at our booth or at home and learn about electrical safety. Adults can mark their home location on our statewide service territory map and see which cooperative powers their community.

We look forward to connecting with our co-op members at the Iowa State Fair this summer. Be sure to stop by our booth and say hello!



Helping hands for crews' summer projects

With warmer weather comes construction season for the line crews at Butler County REC. This means extra hands are welcome.

Will Deike and Bryce Hovde joined our line crews for the summer to help with various projects. Will, a 2026 graduate of Waverly-Shell Rock High School, will attend Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon, to earn his powerline degree. Bryce is a 2026 graduate of Northwest Iowa Community College's powerline program.

Thanks for helping this summer, Will and Bryce!

Don't leave your phone in the car

Summer heat can be tough on people. It can also be tough on batteries.

Many of the devices we use every day contain lithium-ion batteries. That includes phones, laptops, tablets, power tools, e-bikes, and e-scooters. Excessive heat can shorten battery life and, in rare cases, create safety risks.

One of the worst places for a battery-powered device is a parked car. Leaving a phone or laptop in a hot car can damage the battery and reduce its ability to hold a charge.

If a battery becomes unusually hot, starts swelling, leaks fluid, or gives off a burning smell, stop using the device immediately. Damaged lithium-ion batteries can become dangerous.

A few simple steps can help:

- Keep devices out of direct sun.
- Do not leave them in hot vehicles.
- Use the charger recommended by the manufacturer.
- If a battery-powered device becomes very hot while charging, unplug it and let it cool.

A little heat awareness can help your devices last longer and operate more safely.

We will be closed
Labor Day - Sept. 7

Contact us at 888.267.2726
if you have an emergency or an outage.
Our phones are always answered.



BCREC Commitment to Community at the fair

Six Butler County REC employees and five of the employees' kids helped serve free hot dogs, chips, and water at the Butler County Fair in June.

Another great way to connect with our members, this was our 11th year participating.

Those serving and grilling were Mandy Brouwer, operations assistant, and her daughter Justine; Craig Codner, CEO, and his son Max; John Endelman, operations manager, and his son, Wrigley; Anne Gardiner, public relations specialist; Rowdy Groen, son of John Groen, GIS coordinator; Mike Miller, warehouseman/mechanic, and his daughter Graci; and Alesha Wedeking, billing clerk and HR representative.



We take pride in serving our members and going the extra mile in everything we do. Get closer to your **local cooperative** for ways we support you and strengthen our community.



When fans save money—and when they don't

Ceiling fans can make a room feel cooler. But they do not actually lower the temperature in that space.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, fans create a wind-chill effect that helps people feel cooler. The room itself does not become cooler. In fact, DOE says, ceiling fans may allow homeowners to raise the thermostat setting by about 4 degrees in the summer without reducing comfort.

That means a fan saves energy only when people are there to enjoy the breeze. Running a ceiling fan in an empty room does not improve comfort and uses electricity unnecessarily.

Also, did you know that you need to change the direction that your ceiling fan blades spin every spring and fall?

During summer, ceiling fans should rotate counterclockwise. That pushes air downward and creates the cooling effect people feel. Running them in the wrong direction for the season won't keep you comfortable.

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