

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

July 2026

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A WORD FROM



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Across the country, electric utilities are facing a surge in demand from large, non-traditional energy users — including data centers, artificial intelligence operations, and cryptocurrency facilities. These projects bring opportunity, but they also come with a reality: they require massive amounts of power and significant investment in infrastructure.

At Butler County REC, our responsibility is clear. We have an obligation to serve — an obligation we're proud to fulfill. We must support growth where it makes sense — but never at the expense of the families, farms, and businesses that make up our cooperative membership.

That's why, in collaboration with our power suppliers, Basin Electric and Corn Belt Power, Butler County REC developed a Large Load Program designed to protect our existing members from bearing the costs and risks

Big energy demands, smart protections for our members

of serving these new, energy-intensive operations.

Large loads are fundamentally different from traditional growth. A single data center or crypto operation can require as much electricity as thousands of homes. Serving that level of demand often requires new generation resources, transmission upgrades, and long-term infrastructure investments. Without the right measures and protocols in place, those costs could easily be spread across all members — driving up electric rates for households and local businesses.

Butler County REC's Large Load Program ensures that doesn't happen.

Under this program, those requesting service for large, non-traditional loads are required to bear the financial responsibility for the infrastructure and resources needed to serve them. In simple terms, the costs are assigned to the large load — not shifted onto our existing membership.

Why did we do this?

Occasionally, these types of projects can be volatile. Markets shift, technologies evolve, and facilities can scale down or shut off more quickly than traditional loads. Without proper planning, utilities can be left with stranded assets — infrastructure that still must be paid for, even if the original electric consumer is no longer there. This program

helps protect our members from that risk.

At the same time, the program does not shut the door on growth. In fact, it does the opposite. By creating a clear, consistent, and responsible framework, we are able to evaluate and serve large load opportunities in a way that supports economic development while maintaining reliability and financial strength.

The program also provides members with transparency and consistency when navigating large load requests. It ensures every project is evaluated through the same disciplined process. This process is one that prioritizes fairness, system reliability, and long-term affordability.

Butler County REC's mission hasn't changed.

We are here to provide reliable, cost-effective power to our members — not just today, but for years to come. As new industries and technologies emerge, we will continue to adapt. But we will do so in a way that keeps our commitment to our members at the center of every decision.

We know growth is coming. We're ready for it. And most importantly — we're making sure you, our members, are protected.

Database survey winner announced

Congratulations to member Bradley Williams of Rockford! Bradley won a \$200 bill credit from Butler County REC for completing our recent survey of members.

Butler County REC administers the database survey every two years to gauge our members' needs. This survey is helpful in guiding the direction of the cooperative.

Thank you to the over 300 members who completed the survey. We appreciate your time, effort, and comments!



\$3,255,598.08 allocated by Butler County REC board

As a member-owner of Butler County REC, you share in the excess margins of the cooperative in the form of patronage dividends. This is part of the cooperative difference. Investor-owned utilities pay their excess margins to their investors, not those who use their services.

After reviewing the operating revenues for 2025, your board of directors approved to set aside \$3,255,598.08 in excess margins. These margins – retained as patronage capital – will be used to help keep your electric cooperative financially sound and the quality of service as high as possible.

Allocation

Your share of the 2025 margin – your patronage allocation – was listed in the box directly below your name on the June 2026 electric bill for May's usage. The total unretired patronage for all of your accounts was included.

The amount you earn in a given year is based upon the amount of electricity you use. The sum of your bills for the year is multiplied by a percentage to determine your allocation.

Payment

Butler County REC is currently on a 19-year payback schedule, so this patronage allocation will likely be paid in 2044. The latest distribution of patronage was in February 2026, when \$1,665,803.72 was returned to those who were members in 2008 and 2009, along with a portion of the 2024 patronage Butler County REC was allocated by Corn Belt Power Cooperative, one of our generation and transmission suppliers.

Address

If you move out of our service territory and will no longer receive electrical service from Butler County REC, it is important to keep your address current with us. We rely on former co-op members to send us their new address for patronage disbursement mailings.

Board directors earn certifications

Congratulations to Troy Feldman, Greene (left in photo); Grant Greenzweig, Charles City (right in photo); and Ken Kappmeyer, Waverly (center in photo), for earning certifications through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Troy earned his Director Gold credential. This required earning his Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates. He then completed three additional credits from the Board Leadership series. To maintain his Gold status, he must earn three more credits from the NRECA Approved List of Continuing Education programs in the two-year period from attaining his Director Gold credential.

Grant and Ken earned their Credentialed Cooperative Director certificates by taking five core courses.

These credentials recognize their commitment to our members and to their cooperative board education. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!





Are you in the Fair Spirit?

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa are again sponsoring the Rastetter 4-H Building on the south side of the Iowa State Fairgrounds for Fair Spirit, Aug. 13-23. Cooperative employees from across the state will be working at a booth in the AIR CONDITIONED building.

Read your August InTouch newsletter for more information, and plan to stop by and say hi!



Lights, camera... cover! Submit your best shot

Do you love to snap photos? Submit your high-resolution photos for cover-photo consideration to *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine at editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could win \$100!

The magazine also accepts recipes for publication and awards an Editor's Choice prize each month. Check out your monthly magazine for more information.

Honoring service: BCREC helps install veteran's flagpole

At Butler County REC, we believe in the power of cooperation among cooperatives and commitment to community. Our recent involvement with Veteran Flagpole Initiative (VFI) allowed us to combine the two.

Formed in 2021 by a group of friends, VFI installs flagpoles for veterans. Five years later they are going strong and living their mission of funding and installing flagpoles in the yards of veterans at no cost.

Last fall, we proudly joined T.I.P. REC, Brooklyn, Iowa; Grundy County REC, Grundy Center, Iowa; Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Humboldt, Iowa; and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck, North Dakota, in donating \$4,500 to VFI, covering the cost of nine flag installs for United States veterans.

This spring, a team that included Butler County REC line crew members Cade Bennett, Ben Bowman, Clint Deutsch, Luke Leichtman, Shane Usher, and Tanner Wangsness and Grundy County REC lineworker Derek Snakenberg installed a flagpole for Shane's dad, Veteran Troy Usher of Ionia, whose property receives power from Butler County REC. This was the first REC-sponsored and 198th install for VFI.

Troy was in the U.S. Navy for six years, serving our country on shore



Troy, far left, holding the flagpole with his son Shane, with our crew who helped with the installation, and Derek Snakenberg, far right. While the flag was raised for the first time, the national anthem was played.

and on the USS Richmond K. Turner, a destroyer, for three-and-a-half years working in supply, parts, and materials. His tenure on the ship, which housed 400 service people, included eight months during the Persian Gulf War, circling the area. He commented, "I'm happy I went in.... It was a good experience. I saw a lot of places."

Derek Snakenberg is not only dedicated to cooperative members, but he is also dedicated to VFI and has made fundraising for them a personal mission. In 2025, he ran more than 50 miles in the RAGBRAI leg from Iowa Falls to Cedar Falls — carrying an American flag — to raise awareness of VFI.

VFI installs include a 20' telescopic heavy-duty flagpole, hand-stitched United States flag, an Iowa flag, and a solar-powered light. All materials are made in the United States and are paid for through donations.

VFI has a goal of installing one flagpole in each of Iowa's 99 counties by 2028 — "Operation 99." Currently, they stand at 58 counties served, impacting 149 veterans.

If you are interested in donating to or volunteering for VFI, visit their website at www.veteran-flagpoles.org.



Keep your home's second floor cool in the summer

Are you struggling to keep the second story of your home cool on these sizzling summer days? These steps can help cool down your upper floor, as well as keep your entire home cool through the end of the season. No sweat!

- **Keep blinds and drapes closed.** Light colored window coverings are most effective at blocking heat energy from the sun. Consider investing in thermal blocking drapes or insulated shades to keep your rooms cool.
- **Limit heat being created upstairs.** Devices such as computers and hair dryers emit hot air. Use them downstairs, instead.
- **Use ceiling fans.** Be sure to set ceiling fans to rotate counterclockwise in the summer to push cool air downwards and turn them off when you leave to conserve energy.
- **Adjust the dampers.** Control airflow by adjusting dampers up and down to restrict or increase airflow. If the second floor is warmer in the summer months, keep dampers on second-floor vents fully open, and only partially open the vents on the first floor to force more cool air to the second floor.
- **Check for air leaks.** EnergyStar.gov estimates that between 25% and 40% of the money spent on cooling and heating homes is lost due to air leakage problems. Use caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation to seal gaps.
- **Turn the fan from auto to on.** This maintains air circulation throughout the home, allowing the entire house to stay cool, whether the air conditioner is running.
- **Evaluate ductwork.** Check your ductwork for leaks or improper sizing to ensure even air distribution in every part of your home. If you don't feel cold air coming from second floor vents, or you see old and cracked seals in your ductwork, it could be time for maintenance.
- **Check your air filters.** Regularly change your air filters to optimize airflow — dirty filters decrease air movement.
- **Add portable air conditioners.**
- **Adjust HVAC systems.** Consider a zoned HVAC system, with thermostats on each floor.
- **Keep heat-generating appliances off during the hottest hours.** Limit use of these appliances to early morning or evening when possible and consider grilling outdoors if you plan to cook.
- **Don't forget the attic.** If your roof and attic area are not properly insulated, heat will seep in through the roof and heat the second floor. You can also have an attic fan or vents installed to help remove hot air from the attic.



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