

# InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

June 2026

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A WORD FROM



Craig Codner, CEO  
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When our member-owners are considering making an investment in renewable generation, questions often arise related to net metering and Butler County REC's buyback rate for the excess generation that may be produced by the renewable distributed generation (DG) system.

So, how does a member-owner generate excess energy from a DG system?

If a member-owner owns a solar energy unit, there will be times when the solar system generates more electricity than the member can use. When this happens, the unused electricity flows onto Butler County REC's distribution system as excess energy. The member-owner is compensated for this excess energy at a rate equal to the incremental cost an electric utility would pay to either generate or purchase the energy from a different source. This rate is commonly called avoided cost. After purchasing this excess energy from the member-owner, Butler County REC then can use that energy to serve other members.

**What is net metering?** When DG systems were first introduced years ago, net metering was introduced to encourage the development of small-scale DG and also to compensate the owner for the excess generation. However, net metering creates a financial subsidy that

## What happens to excess energy generated by a member-owner?

overcompensates solar facility owners for excess energy by shifting costs to members without solar generation.

**Net metering and fairness** Net metering often becomes controversial because of the rate paid for the excess energy. With traditional net metering – where the DG owner is given a kilowatt-hour (kWh) credit to apply against the kWhs delivered by the utility to the DG owner – the DG owner is receiving the full retail electricity rate for the excess generation. This also is the rate paid for energy used from the co-op. When your electric co-op charges full retail rate for electricity, it covers our costs for the power that is generated and the fixed costs of the poles, wires, meters, transformers, maintenance, and additional infrastructure needed for a safe and reliable grid.

Compensating member-owners through net metering means that these member-owners are being paid the same rate as the co-op; but these DG owners are not providing the same services as the co-op. This means that under net metering, DG owners avoid paying their fair share of the fixed costs. Net-metered member-owners use the grid for both consuming co-op generated electricity and delivering excess energy to the co-op's grid yet pay very limited amounts for those services. Net metering causes a shift in fixed costs from those with DG to those who don't have DG.

**Net metering discussions not unique to Iowa** Policymakers across the U.S. are continuously examining the concept of net metering to determine if it's sustainable and fair with an increased penetration of solar energy and other DG on utility systems. You'll

## Is distributed generation economical?

Many factors determine if a distributed generation system will be an economical investment, including:

- Type of technology (wind, solar, etc.)
- Size of system
- Location of system (e.g., solar that is on the ground, on the roof, etc.)
- Is the equipment new or used?
- Will the power be generated to serve load or to be an independent power producer?
- Type of business structure (sole proprietor, corporation, etc.)
- Eligibility for tax and other incentives
- Cost for interconnection

Considering a distributed generation system for your home or business requires doing a significant amount of research, starting with your goal:

- Offsetting your personal electrical consumption?
- Manage future electrical costs?
- Creating a new revenue stream?
- Going off the grid?
- Being an environmental steward?
- Providing a backup power source?

likely continue to hear more about net metering as it goes hand-in-hand with DG discussions.

If you have questions about net metering or DG, I encourage you to visit with Matt Mahoney, our energy services manager, at [mjm@butlerrec.coop](mailto:mjm@butlerrec.coop) or 888.267.2726, ext. 122.

# Wergin Good Farm Neighbor Award presented to Tupper family of Ionia

On a cold, windy early spring day, Larry and Joanne Tupper's family and friends gathered to support them as they accepted the Wergin Good Farm Neighbor Award from Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig.

Tupper's operate Poppe Farms in Chickasaw County, south of Ionia, along with other family members. They raise wean-to-finish hogs, feed cattle, and grow corn and soybeans on the farm purchased by Joanne's parents in 1952, and her brothers, including Butler County REC board president Gary Poppe, were involved in the operation for years, as well.

Larry and Joanne's son Michael was the Butler County REC 2013 Youth Tour attendee and was also his Future Farmer of America chapter's president in 2015.

Environmental stewards, the Tupper's farm includes grass waterways, minimum till, and no till for soil and water protection. In addition, they plant a cover crop of rye, which also is a feed source for their cattle.

As if their farm doesn't keep them busy enough, the community-minded Tupper's are involved in numerous organizations including 4-H, the extension council, FFA, Cattlemen and Pork Producers, and their church, among other groups.

In his comments, Secretary Naig stated that the "United States has the safest, most affordable, and most abundant food supply.... Everyone benefits when farms do well."

Tupper's were also presented with a Burr Oak tree from Frasier Nursery in Vinton. The Burr Oak is native to all 99 counties in Iowa.

This is the 207th Wergin Good Farm Neighbor Award and the second award in Chickasaw County. It is supported by the Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and The Big Show were on hand for the presentation, as well. Congratulations Tupper family and Poppe Farms on your well-deserved award!



*The Tupper family with Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig (far right).*

## Nominate a local volunteer by June 30:

*3 volunteers will each receive \$3,000 for their local charity!*

Do you know someone in our community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference? Nominate them for the Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win \$3,000 for their local charity or nonprofit.

"We're truly excited to participate in this statewide effort to celebrate our cooperative commitment to community," remarked Craig Codner, CEO of Butler County REC. "There are so many incredible volunteers throughout this area who deserve to be recognized, and it's a privilege to shine the light on their service."

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this is the sixth year of the Shine the Light contest, which celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced in September, and each will receive a \$3,000 donation for their charity or nonprofit.

The winners will also be featured in the September issue of Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine and on social media.

### How to nominate

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity from Butler County REC, you're a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians. Nominees from previous years can be nominated again for another chance to win.

Go to [www.IowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.IowaShineTheLight.com) by June 30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules. Nominators will need to provide basic



contact information and answer this question in 500 words or less: How has your nominee made a difference in the community and how might their local charity/nonprofit use the \$3,000 donation?

Help us shine the light on our community volunteers; nominate a deserving neighbor, friend or relative by June 30!



Holly



Will



Camden



Amelia

## Scholarships awarded to area students

Butler County REC is proud to announce the names of our four scholarship winners:

### *Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship, \$2,500: Holly Haugstad*

Holly, a senior at Aplington-Parkersburg High School, has been involved in numerous activities at her school and in her community, including music, speech, tennis, and church activities, all while being on the A Honor Roll for her entire high school career. She plans to attend Northwestern College, Orange City, and study accounting.

### *Butler County REC Technical/Trade scholarships, \$500: Will Deike, Camden Tott*

Will is a senior at Waverly-Shell Rock High School. He has been a part of numerous volunteer opportunities—the food pantry, cards for nursing home residents, tie blankets for hospital patients—along with participating in Future Farmers of America (FFA). He is also a member of the Iowa Central Student Anglers Club in which he has competed in bass tournaments throughout Iowa. Will plans to attend Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon, as a student in the powerline program.

Camden, a senior at Dike-New Hartford High School, participated in football, basketball, and track; was an FFA member; a part of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes; and involved in student government and was senior class president. He has been on the honor roll each year of high school and was an all-academic during his sport seasons. He also is a service dog trainer/handler. Camden will attend Iowa State University and pursue a degree in electrical engineering.

### *Youth Tour Finalist, 2025, \$500: Amelia Thompson*

Amelia is a senior at North-Butler High School, Greene. She was a five-year student council participant; in National Honor Society, serving as president for two years; on prom committee; and played volleyball and golf. In addition, she was on the academic honor roll among other honors. In her community, she was on the library teen board and participated in church activities. Amelia plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to earn a degree in elementary education with reading and science endorsements.

*Congratulations! Butler County REC wishes you the best!*

Butler County REC will be closed Friday, July 3.  
Our phones are answered 24/7: 888.267.2726

*Have a Safe and Happy Fourth of July!*

When you approach  
a vehicle with  
flashers on:



**MOVE OVER**  
**SLOW DOWN**

## Grill safely this summer

Summer grilling season brings people outdoors, but it also introduces electrical safety risks that are easy to overlook.

- If you're using an electric grill, make sure it's plugged into a properly rated outdoor outlet. Ground fault circuit interrupter outlets, or GFCIs, are especially important in outdoor spaces, as they help prevent shocks during wet weather.
- Avoid using indoor extension cords outside. Outdoor-rated cords are designed to handle heat and moisture. Even then, try locating your outdoor appliances and lights as close as possible to outlets. And if you must use extension cords, place them where people won't trip over them.
- Be mindful of lighting and additional appliances on decks and patios. Plugging too many devices into a single outlet can overload the circuit, increasing the risk of overheating.
- Keep all electrical connections away from water sources, including pools, sprinklers, sinks, and wet surfaces. If cords or outlets become damaged, stop using them until they can be repaired or replaced.

A few precautions can help ensure your outdoor cooking setup stays safe all season long.

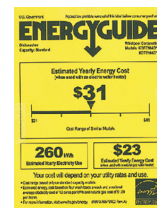


## Rebates for appliances

Shopping for new appliances? Visit our website at [butlerrec.coop](http://butlerrec.coop) or contact us at 888.267.2726 for information on our rebates for new, ENERGY STAR rated appliances installed at members' locations:

- Clothes dryer - \$50**
- Clothes dryer, heat pump - \$100**
- Clothes washer - \$50**
- Dishwasher - \$25**
- Freezer - \$25**
- Refrigerator - \$25**

Be sure the Energy Star logo is located in the bottom right corner of the Energy Guide.



## 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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