



# WATTS CURRENT

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative  
Reliable. Affordable. Responsible



February 2019

## Electric Cooperatives Discuss Important Issues at Legislative Reception

Over 150 directors, managers, and staff members from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with nearly 100 state legislators and policy makers on January 15 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception at the State Historical Building in downtown Des Moines. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives, the Iowa Communications Alliance and the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Stores of Iowa, hosted the annual reception.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including items central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, the directors, managers, and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues allowing Iowa's member-owned electric cooperatives to continue providing safe, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans. 09.01.01

Electric cooperative representatives from all parts of the state will come to the state capitol in the next couple of months to visit with their legislators once again. The annual REC Day on the Hill will be held on March 20, 2019, at the capitol.



RVEC Director Karen Werner (left) and CEO Jim Gossett (right) talk to Representative Gary Worthan during the Welcome Back Reception.

### Line Patrol

Annual maintenance of our entire system has started. The linemen will be inspecting the lines for defective items, checking meters and looking for any safety hazards.

During the inspections we look for, shot insulators, blown arrestors, loose guy wires, split or bad poles, poles have nothing stapled or bolted to them and trees are not close to our electric lines. We are also looking for inadequate clearances from buildings and other driveways.

We have maintenance programs to upgrade lines and ensure that you have the most reliable and safest system possible.

Anytime you have questions about the trucks in your neighborhood, give us a call.



**RVEC WILL BE  
CLOSED  
FEBRUARY 18th  
FOR  
PRESIDENTS  
DAY.**



— **CEO Comments** —



**What is Patronage?**

*By Jim Gossett, CEO*

RVEC is closing the books for 2018 and preparing for our annual financial audit. In the coming weeks, your Board of Directors will determine the allocation of any revenue in excess of expenditures, or margin, to your electric account. This allocation of margin is called patronage. It is your share of the margin. The more electricity you use and the longer you are a member-owner, the more patronage you accumulate.

We are required by our lending institutions to meet certain financial performance standards to show that we are financially stable. However, all margins are allocated back to our membership. The amount allocated to your account for 2018 margins will be noted on your electric bill in the memo box this spring.

These funds are held in your patronage account until the Board decides to retire (refund) patronage. They evaluate the financials each year and decide when and how much to retire.

If you have any questions call our office at 712.659.3649 or for more information, visit the Patronage Capital section of our website: <https://www.rvec.coop/content/patronage-capital-credits>.

**Are You On Life Support?**

RVEC has a list of members who depend on electricity to run life support equipment. If you are on this list, you have priority during an outage or you are notified when a planned maintenance is scheduled.

If you, or someone in your family, is on life support call RVEC and verify your name is on our list.



**What Exactly is an Electric Cooperative?**

You receive this publication because you buy your electricity from an electric cooperative. That's a utility that operates like no other.

Cooperatives are consumer-owned businesses, which means that you and your neighbors actually own your electric utility. In fact, you may have noticed that the utility refers to you as a "member" rather than as a "customer." 12.16.01

The cooperative's board of directors is a group of member-owners just like you, and, in fact, you can run for a seat on the board yourself if you'd like to. When the directors' terms expire, the cooperative will hold an election—and you will get to vote. So the cooperative is governed by its consumers, and those who govern it are elected by the consumers.

Cooperatives have their roots in their local communities, so they never sell stock. That way, member-owners retain local control.

Take advantage of the opportunity to participate as an member-owner of your electric cooperative by attending its membership meetings and voting in board elections.



**VIEW YOUR KWH USAGE AND PAY YOUR BILL**

Save yourself some time.  
Go to [www.rvec.coop](http://www.rvec.coop) and pay your bill online.

## Stay Safe and Warm in Snow and Ice Storms

Power outages due to snow and ice storms are especially threatening because of extreme cold temperatures. 29.03.02



After a snow or ice storm, avoid going outside if possible. Downed power lines could be submerged in snow and ice, making them difficult to identify. When outside, treat all downed

and hanging lines as if they are energized. Stay away and immediately contact RVEC. Remember that downed power lines do NOT have to be arcing, sparking, or moving to be “live” — and deadly.

When the power is out because of a snow or ice storm, RVEC and Safe Electricity suggests these tips to help you stay safe and warm:

- Stay inside, and dress in warm, layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards, and be sure to properly ventilate. Always keep a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.
- Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- Cover windows at night.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you can't keep your home warm.

### What to do if you have a Power Outage?

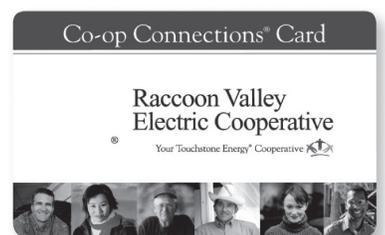
- ✓ Check your fuses or circuit breakers to rule out problems with electricity inside your home. Replace fuses or reset breakers if needed. It is the member's responsibility to repair any wires or equipment located between the meter pole and your buildings and/or equipment.

**OVER  
\$38,186  
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have you saved?**



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card today!**



**Raccoon Valley  
Electric Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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# WATTS CURRENT

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Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative  
(RVEC) is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.



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## Give your Valentine the Gift of Energy Efficiency



If you want to give your Valentine a useful and unique gift, offer to make the home more energy-efficient.

A few ideas:

- ♥ Buy a bagful of LED light bulbs and use them to replace the standard incandescent bulbs your Valentine probably has in lamps and overhead fixtures. LEDs use 75 percent less energy than the old bulbs and last up to five years.
- ♥ Change the heating and air conditioning filters, which could require climbing a ladder or removing a grate. A dirty filter can be clogged with dust, pet hair and other debris that prevents air from passing through it — and that will force your loved one's furnace or a/c to work extra hard — and waste energy — to keep the home comfortable.
- ♥ Switch the direction of all ceiling fan blades to the "winter" position. That makes the blades gently push warm air — which rises — back into the room so your Valentine will feel more comfortable without turning up the heat. 35.15.02
- ♥ Replace your Valentine's old thermostat with a programmable model that will automatically lower the heat as soon as everyone leaves the house for the day and crank it back up a little just before the family gets home.
- ♥ Buy your Valentine a casual, washable sweater or a flannel quilt to curl up in while reading or watching TV. Your gift will keep them warm and make it unnecessary for her to crank up the thermostat.

## OUTAGE INFORMATION

If you don't have power or have an emergency  
call 712.659.3649.

RVEC phones are answered  
24 hours a day 7 days a week.

## Spot Your Number

Read Watts Current and watch for your location number. If you spot it, call Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) by the 20th of the month and you will receive an electrical bill credit for \$25.00.