

DECEMBER 2024

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

Defined electric service
areas protect rural Iowans

Smart insights about
smart appliances

Holiday party recipes

Win a temperature-controlled smart mug ▶ See Page 3

PROPERTY TAXES PAID

Property taxes are used to help fund essential things such as education and city and county government. You might not be aware of it, but your cooperative pays property taxes. Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) receives a tax bill for the poles, wires, transformers and other equipment out on the line, and another tax bill for the office and warehouse. RVEC pays taxes in nine different counties that we serve.

Below is a breakdown of the property taxes paid in 2024.

| COUNTY | TAXES PAID |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Audubon County | \$ 3,990.50 |
| Buena Vista County | \$ 161.00 |
| Calhoun County | \$ 698.50 |
| Carroll County | \$ 48,906.00 |
| Crawford County | \$ 56.00 |
| Greene County | \$ 3,318.50 |
| Guthrie County | \$ 419.00 |
| Ida County | \$ 82.00 |
| Sac County | \$ 23,206.50 |



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- Karen Werner Schaller
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- Dave Schroeder Coon Rapids
- Jim Gossett, CEO

RVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

RECAPPING A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

BY JIM GOSSETT



Every December, I like to use this space to recap our shared achievements during the year. It has been a standout year for Raccoon

Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) as we advanced our mission of providing reliable, affordable and responsible electric service while supporting community growth.

Some of this year’s highlights include:

Financial performance: RVEC’s financial health is strong. The board received a “clean” audit, and our financial ratios for equity and debt service coverage are aligned with the board’s strategic goals and lender covenants. Funding a cooperative is a long-term commitment, and we’re proud to keep RVEC on solid financial footing.

Reliability: RVEC set a new reliability record this year, achieving a 99.9974% Average Service Availability Index. This reflects our investment in quality system construction, effective maintenance, quick response to outages, and, admittedly, some good fortune with weather conditions.

Safety: Safety remains a top priority. We work closely with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) for job site observations and the Rural Electric Safety Achievement

Program (RESAP) inspection. In August, the IAEC safety team conducted a thorough RESAP inspection, and RVEC again earned high marks. Look for more details on Page 5 of this issue.

Member engagement: This year, we restructured the annual meeting to a business-only format, placing greater emphasis on member appreciation events to foster meaningful interaction between members and RVEC employees and board members. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we’re looking forward to even more participation in 2025.

Affordability: Rising non-energy costs due to inflation led to a necessary rate increase in April. While justified, we understand that it’s an unwelcome change. Since our last rate increase in 2016, RVEC member-owners have experienced an average rise of less than 1% per year. This is quite an accomplishment, and we continue to seek ways to keep rates affordable in uncertain times.

In all, 2024 has been a very successful year. We’re excited to continue our commitment to reliable, affordable and responsible energy, and we look forward to sharing our plans for 2025 in next month’s column.

Jim Gossett is the CEO of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.

OFFICE CLOSINGS

All of us at Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative wish you and your family a joyful holiday season!

We will be closed on Dec. 25 for Christmas and Jan. 1 for New Year’s Day.

CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

A recent safety accreditation inspection confirmed that Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative's (RVEC) commitment to safety is paying off.



In August, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) safety and loss control team spent two days at RVEC, conducting on-site reviews, observations, line inspections of overhead and underground lines and solar site inspections. In addition, IAEC inspected the headquarters and outpost, and visited with the employee team. This thorough process was part of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) accreditation, and the results were impressive.

- RVEC earned certification under RESAP, a rigorous program designed to promote a proactive safety culture.
- The inspection revealed that RVEC meets or exceeds 192 safety requirements. Notably, there were no failures in meeting safety standards.

The on-site portion of the RESAP accreditation inspection occurs every three years to ensure safety remains

our top priority. The results from this inspection highlight the commitment of your board of directors and leadership team to maintaining a robust safety culture.

“Just because we had the three-year on-site inspection in 2024 does not mean our work for RESAP ends there. It is an ongoing, daily and annual process, with numerous updates and records submitted by specified deadlines to continually track our dedication to safety for our employees and the public,” says Brady Boell, director of safety and member services for RVEC.

RESAP, a national safety program developed in partnership with statewide and cooperative safety leaders, emphasizes continuous improvement in safety performance and culture.

“Understanding the RESAP performance measures allows us to set benchmarks and identify clear safety goals,” adds Jack Scanlan, line superintendent at RVEC. “We are proud of our safety culture, but we always strive to improve. The safety and loss control team at IAEC plays a key role in supporting our efforts and guiding us through the RESAP process.”

Beyond the RESAP accreditation, RVEC has developed and continues to maintain an annual safety



improvement plan, incorporating updates from the national program's safety measures each year.

The RESAP accreditation ranks RVEC among the top performers nationally when compared to other Iowa cooperatives of comparable size. During its report on the site findings, the IAEC inspection team commended RVEC for setting a high standard, demonstrating an exceptional commitment to safety and effectively instilling this priority within the employee team.

RVEC's goal is to provide affordable and reliable electricity while ensuring that every member of the cooperative family returns home safely each day.

“The on-site inspections and facility findings confirm that RVEC has excellent policies, procedures and practices in place to support a safe and healthy workplace and safety culture,” adds Jim Gossett, CEO of RVEC.

PATRONAGE IS YOUR PIECE OF THE PIE

During the September board meeting, the Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) board of directors approved retiring the general patronage allocated for the remaining balance of 2002, all of 2003 and part of 2004. If you were a member-owner during those years, your check was issued at the beginning of December, or if you selected the option of bill credit, you will see that on your December 2024 electrical bill. We ask you to cash your check promptly, as the checks are void after 90 days.

At the end of each year, your board of directors allocates excess margins to our patronage account by year based on the percentage of dollars you paid to RVEC during that year. In addition to giving back to our member-owners, RVEC retains funds in reserve to guard against any potential risks, as well as the statutory surplus amount required by state law and cooperative policy. Every year, the board of directors reviews the cooperative's financial position to determine when additional refunds will be made.



As a member-owner, your May electrical bill reflects the previous year's allocation amount. Always make sure we have your current mailing address so you receive your check without delay. If you have any questions, contact our office at 712-659-3649.

CELEBRATING SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to the following employees who celebrated milestone anniversaries with Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) in 2024.



Morgan Kramer, lead customer service representative, celebrated 10 years with RVEC. Morgan brings a wealth of knowledge to her position, and she is always looking out for members’ best interests.

When asked about her favorite part of working at the cooperative, she says, “Learning how to better utilize our software to be able to help our member-owners more efficiently.”

If you ask Morgan who her favorite superhero is, it is any of the original Avengers.

When Morgan isn’t working, she is usually on the sideline, cheering on one of her kids’ sporting events or spending time with my family. She also loves to watch football, especially with her kids.



Chad Lankford, meter technician, celebrated 25 years with RVEC. Chad is constantly smiling, and he is always willing to help anyone.

When asked about his favorite part of working at the cooperative, he says, “Working with member-owners ensuring their meter is working correctly by addressing any concerns they may have about their service, consumption and billing.”

If Chad could have dinner with anyone, it would be his grandpa. When he was little, he wanted to be a fireman when he grew up.

When Chad isn’t working, he is busy supporting his kids at their sporting events or spending family time camping, fishing, snowmobiling or riding ATVs.



Jack Scanlan, line superintendent, celebrated 35 years with RVEC. There has not been a single day that Jack hasn’t shown his dedication and leadership.

When asked about his favorite part of working at the cooperative, he says, “Seeing a finished project and taking pride in it.”

If you ask Jack who his favorite superhero is, it’s Underdog. When he was little, “Dukes of Hazard” was his favorite TV show.

When Jack isn’t working, he is busy with five grandkids (four boys and one girl), traveling, camping, hunting, watching Iowa State University games, and working around the farm and shop.

Director Onken Celebrates 25 Years of Dedicated Service

We are excited to celebrate a remarkable milestone for one of our directors. Dave Onken has 25 years of service on Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative’s (RVEC) board of directors.

Dave has been committed to our member-owners and the communities we serve. He has played a crucial role in shaping our vision and ensuring we remain focused on our mission – to safely provide reliable, affordable and responsible service while being a leader in our community’s prosperity and growth.

Dave’s dedication goes beyond just board meetings; he embodies RVEC’s values through his spirit of collaboration and community.

Thank you, Dave, for your dedication, leadership and vision over the past 25 years and in the years to come!



IOWA-BASED ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ANNOUNCE DETAILS FOR 2025 MOMENTUM IS BUILDING CONFERENCE

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative invites building trades professionals to the **2025 Momentum is Building (MIB) conference**, scheduled for Feb. 20-21, 2025, at the Sheraton West Des Moines. The annual conference aims to equip contractors and their staff with the knowledge and tools necessary to excel in a rapidly changing construction landscape.

A key attraction for attendees is earning continuing education credits (CEUs) in Iowa's plumbing/mechanical, HVAC and electrical codes. Attendees will also have the chance to network with industry peers, learn from leading experts in energy efficiency and the building trades, and gain insights into current energy efficiency regulations and incentives.

Sponsored by the Iowa Cooperatives for Energy Efficiency, the annual MIB conference links Iowa's construction



industry with the services and resources provided by local electric cooperatives, which serve nearly 650,000 Iowans across all 99 counties.

"Electric cooperatives have long supported energy efficiency, and one of our key goals is to help member-consumers use energy wisely," says Angela Catton, vice president of communications and development at Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative. "We invest in this conference to build relationships between cooperatives and the contractors who serve our members."

"We're excited to 'return to our roots' in 2025, bringing the conference back to the Sheraton and kicking it off by welcoming back Bill McAnally, a longtime friend of the event and a respected expert in energy efficiency, as our Opening Keynote," adds Ryan Cornelius, vice president of corporate relations at Corn Belt Power Cooperative. "We are also welcoming back our fantastic CEU providers, Dave Sullivan, Terry Moorman and Jeff Reichart."

For more than 30 years, the MIB conference has created a platform for electric cooperatives and contractors to collaborate in providing rural Iowans with safe, efficient and cost-effective home comfort solutions.

For more information or to register, visit www.MomentumIsBuilding.com. Early bird registration runs until Jan. 20, 2025.

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

Dependents of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which supplies power for RVEC.

The scholarship program is designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of a student living on electric cooperative lines. The scholarship must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter college in the fall of the

school year for which the scholarship is given. The applicant must be a student who is enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year, or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

This scholarship is awarded without regard to other awards, loans or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained. Award of the scholarship is based on the following criteria: SAT/ACT scores, GPA,

work experience, participation in school and community activities, a statement by the student explaining educational and career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Application forms can be obtained from RVEC.

Application forms are due to RVEC by Jan. 15, 2025.

For more information, contact Jill Hannasch at 712-659-3649, 800-253-6211 or jillh@rvec.coop.





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