

● MARCH 2025

# iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING



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**Seafood recipes**

**Win a \$100 gift card for landscaping ▶ See Page 3**

# CONTENTS



6



8



10

VOLUME 78 • ISSUE 3

3

STATEWIDE PERSPECTIVE

Energy issues key in 2025 Legislative Session

3

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a \$100 gift card for landscaping

14

SAFETY MATTERS

Grain bin safety notice

15

OUT BACK

The power of the assist

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Rene Carson, a Consumers Energy member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

# ENERGY ISSUES AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BY HALEY MOON



Energy policy remains a top priority for Iowa lawmakers in the current state legislative session. Since the 91st General Assembly began on Jan. 13, legislative leaders

and Gov. Reynolds have emphasized key issues that could impact how electricity reaches Iowans in their homes and businesses. As always, Iowa's electric cooperatives are actively engaged in these discussions to ensure the voices of co-op member-consumers are heard and that the best interests of rural Iowa are considered.

The following are key legislative issues under discussion and their potential impact on your local electric cooperative:

## Service territory protections

Protecting the state's defined electric service areas remains the top priority for Iowa's electric cooperatives. This law, established nearly 50 years ago, is essential for cooperatives to invest in local economic development, maintain affordable rates and ensure reliable service. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives remains vigilant in safeguarding these protections from legislative proposals that could undermine them. Learn more at [www.ProtectRuralIowa.com](http://www.ProtectRuralIowa.com).

## Third-party solar developments

Proposals in the legislature aim to establish third-party community solar programs in Iowa. These arrangements are different from the community solar programs available from some Iowa electric co-ops. You may have received information at your home or heard of neighbors being approached about subscribing to or leasing land for non co-op community solar projects.

While electric cooperatives support a diverse energy generation mix, there are concerns that these entities do not adhere to the same consumer protection

standards required of public utilities. Additionally, these projects could disrupt assigned service territories that are crucial for co-ops. If you have questions about solar energy or are approached by one of these third-party entities, please contact your local cooperative for more information.

## Governor's energy priorities

Gov. Reynolds has outlined several energy-related priorities aimed at shaping Iowa's future in energy generation, transmission and distribution. These initiatives cover a wide range of topics, including how investor-owned utilities plan for and set rates and invest in new energy projects, ways the state of Iowa can examine the potential of nuclear energy, and making funds available for water infrastructure projects.

One issue of particular importance to electric cooperatives is the Right of First Refusal (ROFR). ROFR grants Iowa-based electric utilities the first opportunity to construct and maintain regional transmission projects within the state. Electric cooperatives support ROFR, as it enables Iowa's utilities to continue working together on critical

infrastructure projects that help maintain reliable electricity service.

Iowa's electric utilities employ thousands of Iowans to design, maintain and repair power lines in the state to ensure power continues to flow during our most extreme weather conditions. They invest in our communities and utilize Iowa companies as suppliers while working with landowners to protect Iowans' interests. Learn more at [www.IowaElectricHomeTeam.com](http://www.IowaElectricHomeTeam.com).

## Staying engaged in the legislative process

As the legislative session progresses, your local electric cooperative directors and staff are actively engaging with lawmakers to advocate for policies that protect and strengthen rural Iowa's energy future.

For more information on these issues or to stay updated on legislative developments, please contact your local cooperative.

*Haley Moon is the senior manager of policy and advocacy for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.*

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

### WIN A \$100 GIFT CARD FOR LANDSCAPING!

Planting season will soon be here! Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25% of a typical household's energy use, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. To help with your spring landscaping projects, we're giving away a \$100 gift card from a local garden center or nursery.

#### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.ieclmagazine.com](http://www.ieclmagazine.com) no later than March 31. You must be a member of one of Iowa's electric cooperatives to win. There's no obligation associated with entering, we don't share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified.

The winner of the stainless steel bread machine from the January issue was **Lisa Liles**, an **Access Energy Cooperative** member-consumer.



ENTER ONLINE BY MARCH 31!

## TRACK ENERGY USE WITH SMARTHUB

Did you know you can see your energy usage on your smartphone, desktop or tablet?

Through the SmartHub app, you can monitor and download your daily energy consumption 24/7 and see how it is trending over time. SmartHub also allows you to access account information, check balances, make payments and view your service history.

The SmartHub app is also available from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Visit [www.rvec.coop](http://www.rvec.coop) for more information.

## REMEMBER TO SPRING AHEAD

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 9. Turn your clocks ahead 1 hour.



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Keaton Hildreth, interim CEO

RVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# POWERING LIVES, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

BY KEATON HILDRETH



Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) is guided by the mission to safely provide reliable, affordable

and responsible service while leading the community's prosperity and growth. As interim CEO, I want to express my gratitude for the trust placed in me during this transition period. I am honored to serve RVEC and its member-owners. My primary focus is to assist member-owners, employees and the board of directors in making decisions that align with the best interests of the cooperative and its membership.

### Member-driven to serve our communities

RVEC is more than just a provider of electricity; it's a member-driven organization committed to fostering the prosperity of our communities. Our mission remains at the heart of every decision. As we navigate this transitional period, I want to assure you that my goal is to strengthen the cooperative, support the employees and continue to provide the high-quality service you expect and deserve.

I am fortunate to work alongside an incredible team of dedicated employees who bring unmatched expertise, professionalism and care to their roles. Their innovative spirit, deep infrastructure knowledge and strong connection to the communities we serve are invaluable assets to RVEC. They embody the cooperative principles in every task, from ensuring system reliability to advancing energy efficiency and maintaining safety standards. They represent the cooperative spirit and remain steadfast in their

commitment to serving you, our valued member-owners.

In addition to supporting RVEC's employees, I am committed to working closely with the board of directors to uphold the cooperative's values and guide it toward a bright future. The board's careful approach to selecting a permanent CEO ensures that the next leader will align with the cooperative's vision and values, enabling RVEC to continue serving you with excellence.

We are also looking ahead to several opportunities to enhance our services and infrastructure during this time. We remain dedicated to exploring innovative solutions, investing in system upgrades and promoting energy efficiency to benefit our member-owners. By focusing on these priorities, we will continue to adapt to changing needs and provide even greater value to our membership.

### Open communication is a key to success

As always, we welcome your feedback, questions and ideas. Open communication is key to our success, and your input helps shape the direction of the cooperative. If there is anything I can do to assist you or answer your questions, please contact me.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. Together, we will build on RVEC's strong foundation, navigate this transition confidently, and achieve even greater success for the cooperative and the communities we proudly serve.

*Keaton Hildreth is the interim CEO of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.*

# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE ELECTRIC GRID

Electricity is essential in everyday life. It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, our lives can be disrupted even briefly.

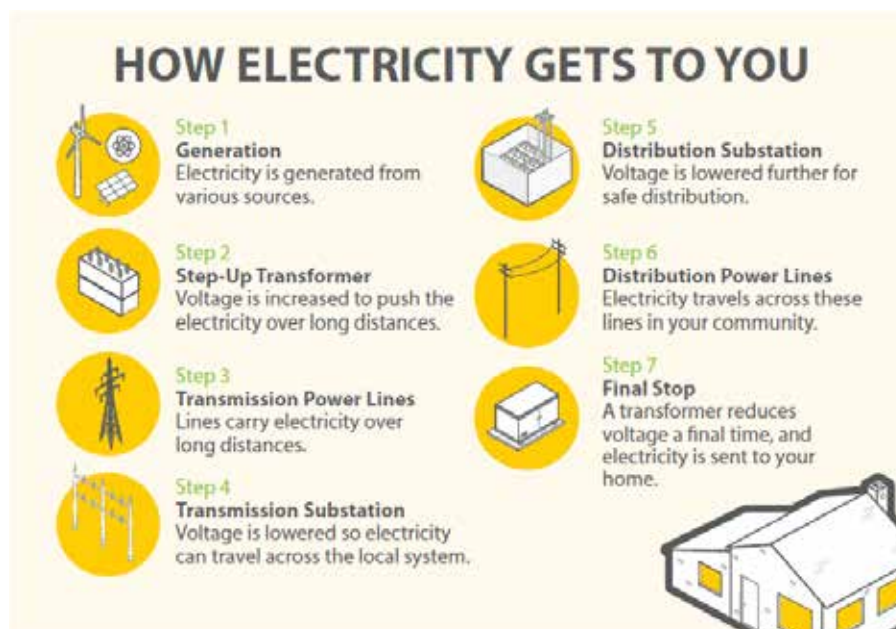
The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity constantly change. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we start our day and in the evenings when we cook dinner and use appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

Electric providers must plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when needed. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to ensure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real-time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that spans the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to transferring electricity between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain the balanced



electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

## The journey of electricity begins at power plants

Power plants are factories that make electricity using various energy sources, such as natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives, Corn Belt Power Cooperative (Corn Belt Power) and Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin). We work closely with Basin and Corn Belt Power to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community. We need a transportation system to get electricity from the power plants.

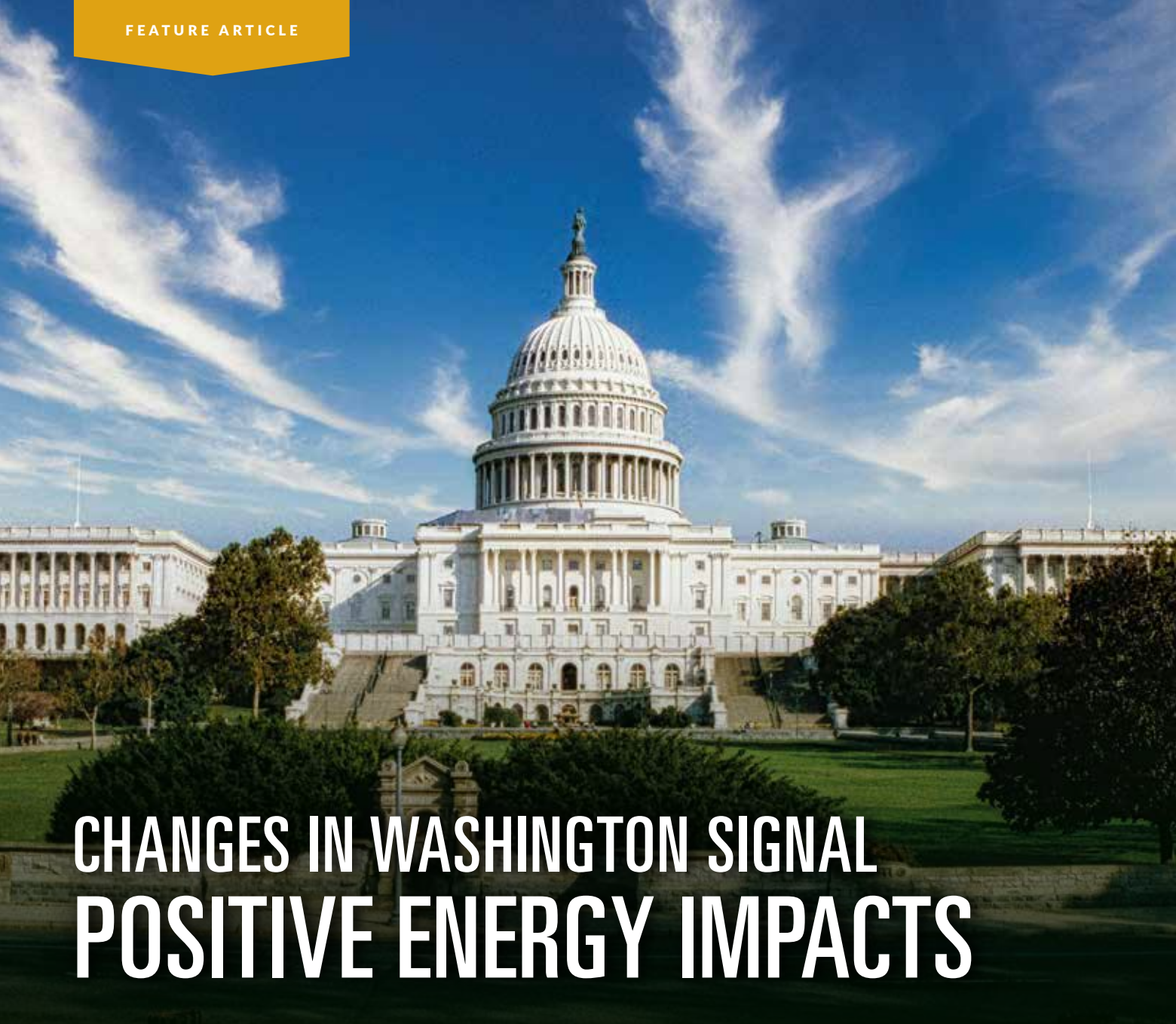
High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. Massive towers support these lines and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric

substations. Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the electricity voltage is adjusted. They are crucial in managing power flow and ensuring electricity is safe for homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you – to power everyday life.

RVEC is proud to be your local, trusted energy provider. From when it's created to when it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine – and one of our nation's most outstanding achievements.



# CHANGES IN WASHINGTON SIGNAL POSITIVE ENERGY IMPACTS

BY SCOTT FLOOD

The 2024 election centered on widespread frustration with America's economy and immigration. While energy policy didn't receive as much time in the campaigning spotlight, the second Trump presidency is likely to result in significant changes in how our nation approaches its ever-growing demand for electric power. For electric cooperatives, it appears those changes will be positive.

"America is at an energy crossroads, and the reliability of the electric grid hangs in the balance," explained Jim

Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), in a message expressing the association's desire to work closely with President Trump and Congress to protect energy affordability and reliability. "Critical generation resources are being retired faster than they can be reliably replaced. At the same time, electricity demand is skyrocketing as power-hungry data centers and new manufacturing facilities come online. Smart energy policies that keep the lights on are more important than ever."

## **A critical juncture in energy policy**

Shortly after the election, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) warned that many regions face an elevated risk of electricity shortfalls in the face of extreme weather such as prolonged cold snaps. NERC, the nation's grid watchdog, reiterated that older power plants are being retired at the same time Americans are using more electricity. While solar and wind farms have been sprouting up, they can't deliver the always-available electricity that coal- and gas-fired plants have

long provided. Hurricanes Helene and Milton compounded the problem by damaging critical grid infrastructure.

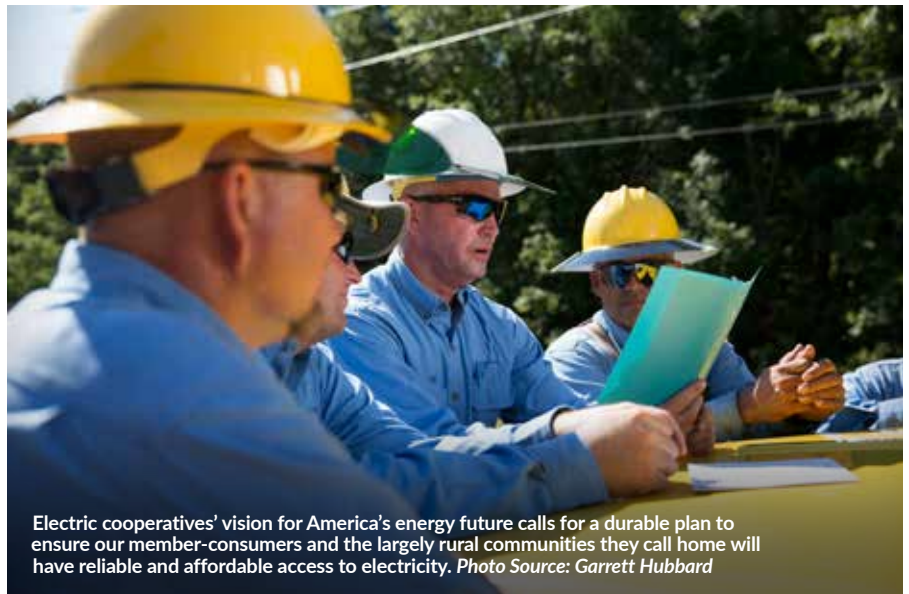
The first Trump administration scaled back many of President Obama's initiatives to replace fossil fuels with "clean power," so observers expect President Trump's team to overturn many of the Biden administration's energy-related policies. NRECA has been urging officials to eliminate regulatory burdens such as the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) power plant rule – which many believe exceeds the EPA's legal authority – and to encourage the U.S. Department of Energy and other agencies to take steps that will eliminate bureaucratic roadblocks and bolster the long-term reliability of the nation's grid.

### Advocating for reliable, affordable power

Electric cooperatives' vision for America's energy future calls for a durable plan to ensure our member-consumers and the largely rural communities they call home will have reliable and affordable access to electricity in the face of the nation's skyrocketing demand.

Electric cooperatives are comfortable taking a leadership role in this effort because we have worked hard with elected officials and their staffs to advocate for our members. Policymakers from both parties have consistently commended electric cooperatives as reputable energy providers and engines of economic development that play a vital role in transforming the local communities they proudly serve.

Solidifying a positive and resilient energy future for co-op communities involves a long list of issues and elements. For example, NRECA is pressing Congress and the Trump administration to take concrete steps to overhaul outdated permitting laws that delay or frustrate efforts to build the new infrastructure tomorrow's energy needs demand. We need to address public lands and conservation regulations that make it challenging to operate powerlines, maintain rights of way and reduce potential wildfire



Electric cooperatives' vision for America's energy future calls for a durable plan to ensure our member-consumers and the largely rural communities they call home will have reliable and affordable access to electricity. Photo Source: Garrett Hubbard



Electric cooperatives are pressing Congress and the Trump administration to take concrete steps to overhaul outdated permitting laws that delay or frustrate efforts to build the new infrastructure tomorrow's energy needs demand. Photo Source: Robb McCormick Photography

threats. Electric cooperatives are also working to support their member-consumers by maintaining federal programs and tax credits that bolster electric reliability and affordability.

While President Trump has earned a reputation for demanding swift action on his priorities, we need to remember that change doesn't happen quickly in Washington. For example, undoing the EPA power plant rule will require a robust regulatory process that will take some time to ensure this repeal can withstand expected legal challenges. While the exact path we'll take is still coming into focus, our top priority is the interest of the local communities

we serve and the everyday Americans who call them home.

We will continue to strengthen our voice by making sure our representatives at the federal and state level are aware of our concerns and the importance of ensuring reliable, affordable electricity for all Americans.

The strength of the electric cooperative movement and the clout we have when we work together are unsurpassed, positioning us for continued success as we work with the new administration.

*Scott Flood writes on a variety of energy-related topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*



## MAINE BAKED FISH

- 4-6 white fish fillets, any type
- 1 can cream of shrimp soup  
milk
- 1 can small shrimp, drained and rinsed  
buttered breadcrumbs

Place fish in a buttered, flat baking dish. Thin the shrimp soup with milk and pour over fish. Add canned shrimp over soup layer. Cover lightly with breadcrumbs. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes. Serves 4-6

Jane Person • Batavia  
Access Energy Cooperative

## BLACKENED WALLEYE

- 2-4 walleye fillets
- 1 stick butter  
Zatarain's blackened seasoning, to taste

Rinse the walleye fillets in cold water, pat dry. Place in plastic or metal bowl in the refrigerator. Melt butter in a small pan, then remove from heat and let cool briefly. Pour melted butter over the chilled fillets. Toss with tongs to ensure they are coated entirely. Shake Zatarain's blackened fish spice over the fillets, stir and add spice until the fillets are coated well. Outside, heat a cast iron skillet over a propane fish fryer until smoking hot. Use tongs to put a few fillets into the hot pan. Leave room between fillets. Cook for 2-3 minutes on each side. Remove and enjoy. Serves 2-4

Allyson Bailey • Hamilton  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## CAROL'S MOCK LOBSTER

- 3 quarts water
- 1 tablespoon mixed pickling spices
- 2 bay leaves
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup vinegar
- 1 pound frozen haddock or cod fillets, thawed
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon paprika  
lemon butter, as desired

Bring water to boil on high heat. Place pickling spices in a cheesecloth bag and place in boiling water. Add bay leaves and vinegar. Reduce heat to medium and add fillets. Cook for 2-3 minutes, until the fish turns white. Remove and place fillets on oven broiler rack. Brush with butter and sprinkle with paprika. Broil 3 inches from broiler unit for 7-8 minutes. Don't turn over. Serve with lemon butter. Serves 4

Nancy Pelzer • Ames  
Consumers Energy

## "NORWEGIAN" FISH BOIL

- 8-10 6-ounce haddock fillets, or any white fish
- 3-5 pounds small red potatoes
- 1 bag pearl onions

Rinse fish and tie fillets in cheesecloth. In a large pot, boil potatoes and onions for approximately 20 minutes. Add fish and boil for an additional 10 minutes. Remove and serve on a large platter. This goes well with coleslaw and lefse. Serves 8-10

Janmarie Olson • Holland  
Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative



## SALMON WITH TOMATOES AND FETA

- 4 4-ounce salmon fillets
- Old Bay seasoning, to taste
- 1½ cups cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¾ cup lemon juice
- ¾ cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon parsley flakes

Place salmon fillets on individual pieces of foil, pulling the foil up around the sides to form a boat. Sprinkle salmon with Old Bay seasoning. Mix the remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Spoon mixture over the salmon in the foil. Wrap the foil around the salmon and topping, closing the edges. Place in baking dish and bake at 350 degrees F for 30-35 minutes. Serves 4

MacKenzie Dreeszen Rutter • Ankeny  
Consumers Energy

## OYSTERS BURGUNDY

- 10-15 medium oysters
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon green onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons parsley, chopped
- ½ teaspoon garlic, minced
- breadcrumbs
- Parmesan cheese
- paprika

Place oysters and lemon juice in a casserole dish; add salt and pepper to taste. Blend butter, green onion, parsley and garlic. Spread mixture over oysters. Sprinkle top with breadcrumbs, cheese and paprika. Bake at 350 degrees F for about 10 minutes or until crumbs are brown. Serves 4

Cheryl Schiller • Donnellson  
Access Energy Cooperative

## SALMON LOAF

- 1 15.5-ounce can salmon
- ½ cup milk
- ¾ cup soft breadcrumbs
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons onion
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon parsley
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- dash pepper

Drain salmon, reserving liquid. Pour milk over breadcrumbs and let stand for 5 minutes. Then add salmon, liquid reserved from salmon, eggs, onion, lemon juice, parsley and seasonings. Spread in greased pan and bake at 350 degrees F for 40-50 minutes, until firm. Serve plain or with sauce of your choice.

Ardine Dillingham • Hartley  
Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Visit [www.ieclmagazine.com](http://www.ieclmagazine.com) and search our online archive of hundreds of recipes in various categories.



## SHRIMP TACOS

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 cup green cabbage
- ½ cup red cabbage
- 1 pound shrimp, raw
- 1 tablespoon taco seasoning
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 6-8 medium tortillas
- avocado, optional
- tomatoes, optional

In a bowl, combine mayonnaise, sour cream, garlic, cilantro and lime juice for a cilantro lime sauce. Finely shred cabbage and add cilantro lime sauce. Mix well and set aside. Season the shrimp with taco seasoning. Heat oil and butter in a skillet. Once hot, add shrimp and cook for 2 minutes per side until opaque. Warm the tortillas, add a bed of slaw mix and top with shrimp. Add any other ingredients to your liking such as avocado or tomatoes. You can also substitute hoagie buns for tortilla shells and make a po'boy sandwich. Serves 4-5

Crystal Hammes • Libertyville  
Access Energy Cooperative

**WANTED:**

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# IOWA'S REA POWER PLANT MUSEUM RECEIVES NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

BY MADISON ALERT



The history of electric cooperatives is woven into the fabric of rural America, where a shared sense of purpose has always united individuals in pursuit of a brighter future. Before electrification, rural life was defined by darkness, isolation and relentless challenges. Yet, even in the most trying times, these communities possessed a determined spirit – a vision that would forever change the course of American history. Fueled by grit and willpower, that spirit laid the foundation for one of the most profound and transformative movements in our nation's past: rural electrification.

On May 11, 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 7037, establishing the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). This pivotal moment in history created the Rural Electrification Act, a federal loan program that sought to bring the power of electricity to

rural America. While investor-owned utilities resisted, farmers of rural America saw an opportunity and flooded the newly formed program with applications, signaling the dawn of the electric cooperative movement.

## Embracing the call for rural electrification

Northern Iowa embraced the call for electrification. Newspapers like the *Hampton Chronicle* served as champions for electrification, urging community support with articles like the March 12, 1936, piece, "Are You Interested in Rural Electrification?" It was a call for unity to bring light to the countryside. And so, Iowa farmers gathered, forming cooperatives that would forever change the landscape of rural life.

The cost of this dream was shared among farmers committing to pay a monthly fee, roughly \$5, for 100 kilowatt-hours of electricity.

It was a leap of faith for many as skepticism and doubt lingered. However, the cooperative spirit ran deep, and farmers' collective perseverance soon proved naysayers wrong.

On Feb. 10, 1937, northern Iowa farmers joined together to incorporate the generation cooperative Federated REA. Days later, REA Deputy Administrator John Carmody announced the decision to fund Federated REA to serve Franklin, Hardin, Wright, Butler, Grundy and Hancock counties in Iowa. The \$222,000 loan laid the groundwork for Iowa's Reeve Power Plant south of Hampton.

## A dream becomes reality

The Reeve Power Plant is situated on six acres next to the Rock Island Railroad, which helped ensure that construction materials and fuel could be easily transported to the site. The

winning construction bid of \$51,875 by a local contractor allowed work to begin on Sept. 1, 1937, signifying construction of the power plant was full steam ahead. Concrete was mixed and poured by hand; innovative methods of steam and tarps helped overcome the freezing temperatures of Iowa's winter.

By January 1938, the Reeve Power Plant was fully enclosed, and in mid-March, the first two engines – massive Nordberg powerhouses – were tested and successfully fired up. Then, on March 23, 1938, at 8:30 a.m., the dream became a reality. The Reeve Power Plant began operations, delivering 24-hour electric service to its six rural counties. With that, Federated REA became the first cooperative west of the Mississippi River to generate and distribute farmer-owned electricity, marking the beginning of a new era. In less than seven months, rural electrification had arrived. In the years that followed, two additional engines were added, and crews

braved challenging weather and the struggles that came with expanding.

In 1947, Federated REA merged with the Central Electric Federated Cooperative Association in Pocahontas to form Corn Belt Power Cooperative (Corn Belt Power). This new cooperative structure responded to the soaring demand for electricity, utilizing the Reeve Power Plant to manage overflow from its primary generation facility. During this period of peak demand, energy brownouts became a common occurrence, with sections of the service territory experiencing reduced electricity usage to balance the grid. Concurrently, rural electrification had reached over 90% of U.S. farms, a remarkable achievement that underscored the success of the cooperative business model.

In 1950, Corn Belt Power transitioned the Reeve Power Plant to standby mode after a new generation source was commissioned to meet the grid's growing needs. Despite this change, the site continued to house a substation, providing vital support to the cooperative's members in the region and maintaining its role in the legacy of rural electrification. After serving its membership for decades, the generation plant was finally taken out of commission in 1974.

**Maintaining historical significance**

In 1988, the plant was donated to the Franklin County Historical Society, and through the efforts of countless volunteers, the REA Power Plant Museum was born. The museum, which opened to the public in 1990 as a Historic Place on the National Register, stands as a powerful reminder of the hard work, sacrifice and unity that made rural electrification possible. In 2002, the museum earned recognition as a point of interest within the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area.

In December 2024, the Reeve Power Plant was designated as a National Historic Landmark, honoring its legacy as the last remaining original plant built following the 1936 Rural Electrification Act. This recognition commemorates the plant's physical



structure and celebrates the remarkable spirit of innovation and perseverance it represents.

With many thanks to the Franklin County Historical Society and volunteers like Rick Whalen of Hampton, the historic site remains a testament to rural America's transformation. This dedication helps to preserve the spirit of hope, resilience, and effort that made electrification possible, ensuring the story continues to inspire future generations.

Museum exhibits showcase the challenges and triumphs of a bygone era, while displays highlight life before and after electrification. Visitors can also see artifacts like the original three-cylinder engine, circuit panels, transformers and the iconic concrete blocks engraved with "REA." The museum offers a living history of rural America's transformation, powered by the cooperative spirit and the collective will of those who dared to dream of a brighter future.

*Madison Alert is the communications specialist/key accounts representative for Franklin REC.*





# Energy Trail Tour 2025

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) and Corn Belt Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer.

This 3-day adventure will allow you to experience, firsthand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are then returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Enjoy interactive walking tours through a hydroelectric and coal-fired energy generation facility and other stops along the way. Meet other cooperative member-owners while traveling together across the Dakotas on board a motor coach bound for the North Dakota's Energy Loop. Two lucky couples from RVEC will be selected at random from those who sign up.

YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our choice of dates:

June 18-20    1st   2nd (please circle)  
 June 25-27    1st   2nd

I/we  have  have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person \_\_\_\_\_

Second Person \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by April 25.*

## WINTER MORATORIUM ENDS

The winter moratorium ends April 1, 2025. If your account(s) are past due, you will need to come in or call the office to make arrangements by March 31, 2025, to avoid disconnection of your electrical service.



## PLAN BEFORE YOU BURN DITCHES

Burning ditches in the spring is a common way to clear weeds and grass. Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative urges you to remember safety when you plan a controlled burn. Be sure to know where utility poles are located to avoid damaging electrical equipment.

Here are some things to think about to prevent burn-related damage to power poles:

- Plan before you begin.
- Check the weather forecast for wind.
- Burn when the related humidity level is 40% or higher.
- Clear all vegetation and weeds at least 4 feet around the base of any utility poles.
- Wet the base of any poles in the vicinity with water.

# COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Iowa Utilities Commission requires that all non-rate regulated utilities post the following notice to its membership: If a member-consumer has a problem with his/her service, please write or call the office headquarters:

**Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative**  
 P.O. Box 486  
 Glidden, Iowa 51443  
 712-659-3649

If the member-consumer's complaint is related to the Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative's (RVEC) service rather than its rates, and the cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the:

**Iowa Utilities Commission**  
 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69  
 Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
 515-725-7300 or 877-565-4450  
 customer@iuc.iowa.gov



# NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Program information may be made available in language other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and

TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. 38.27.07 To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form, AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
 Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- (2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or  
 (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

# CONTRIBUTE TO RECare

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) has established RECare, a program for members helping members. RECare provides funds that are distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist low-income member-owners.

You may make a one-time contribution, or you may make a monthly pledge that will be added to your monthly electric bill. You may also contribute part of a matching fund if a matching fund is available. Please inform RVEC who will match your donation to maintain the appropriate records. Even a dollar a month will help others in need!



**YES,** I want to be part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

- I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.
- I will contribute \$ \_\_\_\_ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount will be added to my monthly electric bill.
- My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is to be matched by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

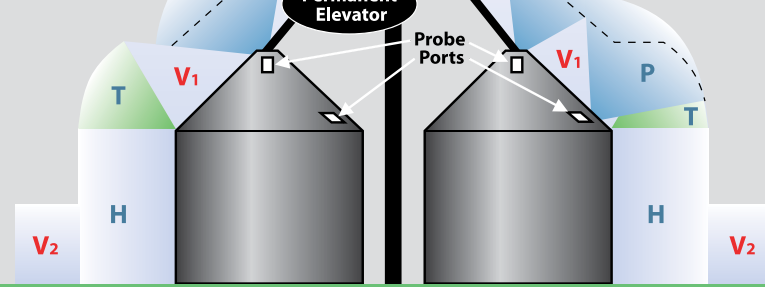
City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

### Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by permanently installed augers, conveyors or elevators

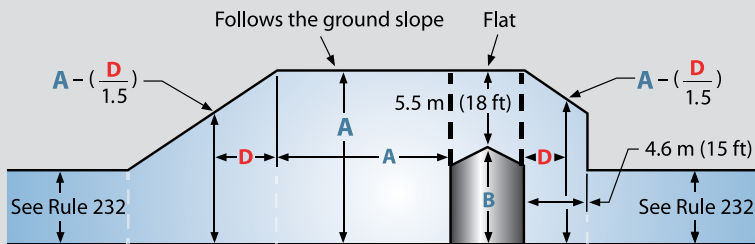
- P** = Probe clearance  
5.5m (18 ft) required by Rule 234F1a
- H** = Horizontal clearance  
4.6m (15 ft) required by Rule 234F1b
- T** = Transition clearance
- V<sub>1</sub>** = Vertical clearance above a building required by Rule 234C
- V<sub>2</sub>** = Vertical clearance required by Rule 232B



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### Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors or elevators

**ELEVATION**

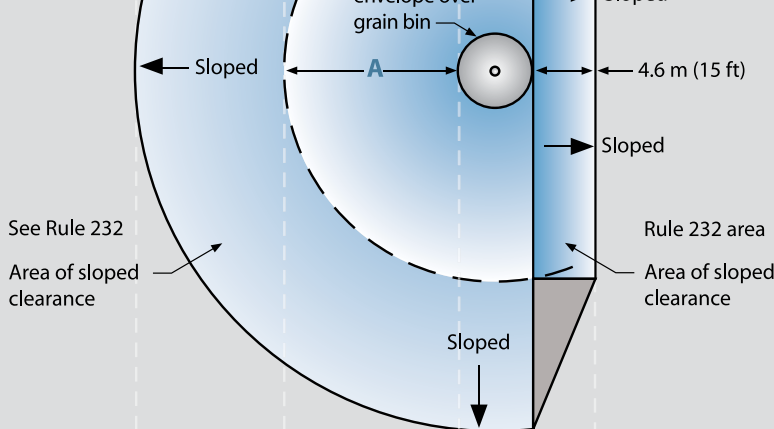


- B** = Height of highest filling or probing port on grain bin
- A** = B + 5.5m (18 ft)
- D** = Variable horizontal dimension

In the area of sloped clearance, the vertical clearance is reduced by 300mm (1 ft) for each additional 450mm (1.5 ft) of horizontal distance from the grain bin.

**PLAN VIEW**

**LOADING SIDE**



**NONLOADING SIDE**

## MAINTAIN PROPER CLEARANCE AROUND GRAIN BINS

The state of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators. According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 - 25.2(3) b: An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2017 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after Sept. 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after Dec. 24, 1997. The Iowa Utilities Commission has adopted this language.

Your local electric cooperative is required by the Iowa Utilities Commission to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants and city and county zoning officials. The drawings on this page show the required clearances, but your co-op's policies may be more restrictive. If you have any questions concerning these regulations - or what needs to be done before you begin placing a new grain bin or moving an existing one - please call your electric co-op for help.

These drawings are provided as part of the Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings, refer to that publication.

Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.

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# THE POWER OF THE ASSIST

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

Any March Madness fans out there? While it's easy to focus on the superstars in these big games, a talented volleyball player at our local high school got me thinking about teamwork in a different way.

Norah Riedesel is an 18-year-old senior at South Central Calhoun (SCC) High School. This fall, she reached a major milestone of 1,500 career assists. Her accomplishment reminded me of a morning last July when I was in Ames for Iowa Swine Day. (Stick with me – you'd be amazed at what you can learn at farm meetings.)

The keynote speaker, Ross Bernstein, presented "The Champion's Code: Building Relationships Through Life Lessons from the Sports World to the Business World." One of his stories revolved around his youth in southern Minnesota and his passion for hockey. He mentioned his favorite player, Wayne Gretzky, who racked up 894 regular-season goals and 1,963 assists during his storied career.

"When you make a goal, you make one person happy. But an assist makes two people happy," Bernstein said. "Wayne understood the power of the assist."

That wisdom popped back into my head when I decided I should reach out to Norah. "Here's someone who really understands the power of the assist," I thought.

## We win or lose together

Norah told me she started playing volleyball in fourth grade. She played right back (a defensive position) during her freshman and sophomore years of high school and became a setter during her junior and senior years.

"There are a lot of things that go into setting," Norah explained. "The biggest skill you need is the ability to make quick decisions on the spot. The first thing I think about is the other team's defense. Every team



Norah Riedesel (front row, third from the right), a senior at South Central Calhoun (SCC) High School, has played a key role on the SCC volleyball team.



has their weakness, so it's important to get the ball to hitters who can put the ball in that weak spot."

Assists are an integral element of teamwork, she added. "The phrase 'bump, set, spike' didn't come from nowhere. Without a good pass, there's probably not a good set. Without a good set, hitters aren't in the position to score."

That's exactly the mindset that led Norah and her fellow SCC Titans to the regional final game last fall. Had they won, they would have competed in the state volleyball tournament.

While Norah's high school volleyball career has ended, the power of the assist is a lesson that will serve her well in life. (She's headed to college to earn her doctorate of physical therapy degree and specialize in sports physical therapy.)

## Success beyond sports

Norah is a real-life example of how the power of the assist reflects the talent and heart of a person. The assist combines skill and intention. It embodies your willingness to intentionally give up a chance for personal gain to create the possibility for a teammate to shine.

The assist doesn't just exist in sports. Ever heard of Reggie Young? This

American guitarist (1936-2019) was a leading session musician who performed on various recordings back in the day. His power of the assist made countless artists, including Elvis Presley, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Merle Haggard, sound even better.

The power of the assist also influences the arts. Think of the director who guides the actors in a movie or theater production to excellence. In the publishing world, there's the detail-oriented editor who polishes writers' prose to make these stories more clear, concise and compelling.

The power of the assist is a big responsibility, as Norah reminded me, but it can unleash exceptional results. Even better, it's a mindset that anyone can cultivate. What will your next great assist look like?

*Darcy Dougherty Maulsby lives near her family's Century Farm northwest of Lake City. Visit her at [www.darcymaulsby.com](http://www.darcymaulsby.com).*



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