

● MAY 2024

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING



Plant trees in the right places

**Electric cooperatives advocate
for power reliability**

Sensational salad recipes

Win \$100 in beef certificates ▶ See Page 3

ADDRESSING RATE INCREASE FEEDBACK

BY JIM GOSSETT



Following a few months of communication and the official rate increase notice in March, your May electric bill (April usage) will include an increase in rates. Our member-owners have responded with some very good questions and suggestions. I would like to briefly address some of the feedback here.

Impacts on patronage retirement

While many understand the effect of recent inflation on our costs, several were concerned there would be an impact on patronage retirement or refunds to member-owners. Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) rates are designed so that operating margins meet our financial requirements. The allocation of excess margins from operations is budgeted to be minimal. There is no reason to charge excessively higher rates only to return your money to you later.

We also pass along the margin allocations and refunds generated by our affiliate co-ops, such as the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and Federated Rural Insurance Exchange.

A greater share of your margin allocation, and some of the larger numbers you see on the bottom line of RVEC's income statement each year, are from our power suppliers, Corn Belt Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. We typically pass along their allocations to your patronage account and pay patronage retirement dividends when they pay RVEC.

Annual meeting considerations

We also heard from several member-owners about the need for an all-member annual business meeting. Traditionally, we hold the annual business meeting in September with a meal, prizes, gifts, and presentation of financial and operations reports.

The RVEC board is listening to your comments concerning cost control.

The board asked co-op management for a detailed review of the costs and benefits of a formal annual meeting. Collectively, the board has decided member-owners are best served by continuing and building on the member appreciation meetings.

Updates for the annual meeting and director elections

We will not have an annual meeting dinner this year in Glidden. Look for more information on activities scheduled for the fall when you can also expect a packet with board election voting instructions. RVEC member-owners will continue to receive a printed annual report, and we are looking for more efficiencies there as well.

Watch this newsletter for more details about these changes, and keep your questions and suggestions coming. We want to hear from you!

Jim Gossett is the CEO of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.



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Directors

David Onken, President Glidden
Jeff Cranston Odebolt
Mark Ludwig Breda
Karen Werner Schaller
Steve Schable Carroll
Adam Handlos Glidden
Dave Schroeder Coon Rapids
Jim Gossett, CEO

RVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PROPERTY TAXES PAID

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

The table at the right is a breakdown of the property taxes paid in 2023/2024.

County	Taxes Paid
Audubon County	\$4,132
Buena Vista County	\$161
Calhoun County	\$704
Carroll County	\$48,535
Crawford County	\$56
Greene County	\$3,322
Guthrie County	\$421
Ida County	\$78
Sac County	\$23,523

NOTICE OF MEMBERSHIP MEETING

In preparation for the Annual Meeting of Members on Sept. 25, 2024, the following information is provided.

Any person, firm, corporation or body politic may become a member of the Cooperative by:

- Applying for a membership certificate in the Association.
- Agreeing to purchase from the Cooperative electric energy as hereinafter specified.
- Agreeing to comply with and be bound by the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative and the Bylaws and any amendment thereto and such rules and regulations as may from time to time be adopted by the Board of Directors, provided, however, that no person, firm, corporation or body politic shall become a Member unless and until he/she or it has been accepted for membership by the Board of Directors or Members.

No person, firm, corporation or body politic may have more than ONE membership in the Cooperative.

A husband and wife may jointly become a Member and their application for a joint membership may be accepted in accordance with the foregoing provisions of the above provisions.

No member of this Association may own more than one membership and each Member shall be entitled to one vote and not more at all corporate meetings. Votes shall be cast by member-owner and not by proxy.

Representation

The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a Board of seven (7) Directors who must reside in and receive service from the Cooperative at a location within the district which they represent. The number of Directors whose terms expire at the time of such meeting shall be elected to hold office for the

term of three (3) years, or until their respective successors shall have been elected and qualify. The election of the directors shall be by ballot and each voting member shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each director to be elected.

Meeting of members

The Annual Meeting, as specified in the Articles of Incorporation, shall be held each year at such times as determined by the Board of Directors. Special meetings of the Members of the Cooperative may be called and held as provided for in the Articles of Incorporation. All Annual Meetings shall be held at locations specified in the Notice of the meeting determined by the Board of Directors.

Nominations

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than ninety (90) days before the date of a meeting of the Members at which Directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of seven (7) Members of the Cooperative who shall be selected to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas served or to be served by the Cooperative. No officer or Member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of such committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principle office of the Cooperative at least sixty (60) days before the meeting, a list of nominations for Directors, but any twenty (20) or more Members may make other nominations in writing over their signatures not less than forty-five (45) days before the meeting and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Secretary shall also mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of Directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations and nominations made by petition.



DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Providing strategic direction for the cooperative
- Overseeing financial integrity of the cooperative
- Attending educational training workshops
- Actively representing the cooperative and its members
- Attending monthly board meetings and annual industry meetings (directors are reimbursed for expenses and mileage for each meeting they attend)

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Independent judges for Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) selected Dylan Hosenfelt as the recipient

of a \$1,000 scholarship. The co-op, along with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, awarded the scholarship to Hosenfelt, whose parents are member-owners of RVEC. He will attend Iowa State University College of Design to study architecture.

Congratulations, Dylan!

PLAN FOR A SAFE PLANTING SEASON

Farming is near the top of the list of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. One hazard faced by farm workers, while they are also feeling the pressure to get the crops in the ground, is overhead power lines. However, with proper planning and education, the risks of accidents involving electricity can be significantly reduced.

The following are safety tips for farmers and farm workers to remember:

- 1 Keep a 10-foot minimum distance around power lines. That means 10 feet above, below and to the side of power lines.
- 2 Use a spotter when moving machinery around the farm. Judging how close a piece of machinery is to a power line from the driver's seat can be difficult.
- 3 Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting equipment on trailer beds.

- 4 Avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators and other extending equipment near power lines.
- 5 Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- 6 Remember, even non-metallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay, will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

Additional electrical hazards

Overhead electric wires are not the only source of electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can cause an electric current disruption, making those neutral wires anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call us to repair it.

When dealing with electrical poles and wires, remember always to be safe and contact Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative with any questions or concerns.

OUTAGE INFORMATION

If you don't have power or if you have a power emergency, call 712-659-3649 or 800-253-6211. Our phones are answered 24/7 year-round.



It's Time for Spring Cleaning

Now is the perfect time for you to provide your email address so you stay up to date on key information.

Provide your email address by May 31 to be entered in a \$100 bill credit drawing!*

Two Ways to Enter!

Email: info@rvec.coop

Cut out this slip, write your information below, and mail it back to us at PO Box 486, Glidden, IA 51443

Name: _____

Email: _____

*By providing your email address, you consent to receive email messages from RVEC.

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative
A "Unite to Save" Cooperative
Reliable • Affordable • Responsible



RVEC Board Member Karen Werner (right), CEO Jim Gossett (second from left), and Jean Schafer, Basin Electric Power Cooperative Senior Legislative Representative (left), visit with Sen. Jason Schultz about energy issues during Iowa REC Day on the Hill on March 12.

IOWA'S RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OPS ADVOCATE FOR POWER RELIABILITY DURING 2024 REC DAY ON THE HILL

The sun was shining on more than 200 employees and elected directors from Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives (RECs). The group convened at the Iowa Capitol on March 12 to advocate for important issues during the annual "REC Day on the Hill" event.

"Our annual advocacy day at the Capitol is a powerful opportunity to meet face-to-face with our state legislators and share a local perspective on issues that impact rural Iowans and rural economic development," remarks Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Advocating on issues of reliability

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative CEO Jim Gossett and board director Karen Werner joined the statewide advocacy effort. Advocates asked elected officials to ensure reliable electric service for Iowans by supporting an "all-of-the-above" electric generation strategy. Specifically, Iowa's electric cooperatives believe it's time to update the state's 2001 advanced ratemaking principles (ARPs) to stipulate an all-of-the-above approach and include nuclear and energy storage technologies.

Also related to reliability, advocates talked with their legislators about Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) and the potential pitfalls of requiring Iowa utilities to file IRPs as part of contested case proceedings before the Iowa

Utilities Board. IRPs will increase administrative and legal fees, which must ultimately be paid by ratepayers. In other states, IRPs have served as a pathway to the premature closure of carbon-based power generation facilities, which negatively impacts electric reliability.

Additionally, co-op representatives discussed the issue of "right of first refusal," which allows incumbent, established utilities to have the first option to construct, maintain and operate electric transmission projects. Iowa's electric co-ops are best prepared to respond locally to weather-related outages because we have a proven track record of restoring power quickly and safely.

Sharing the co-op advantage

During the advocacy event, representatives educated legislators on the benefits of the not-for-profit cooperative business model, which includes local ownership, democratic governance and cost-based rates. Several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda, which provided information on economic development, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, safety innovations, energy efficiency efforts and vegetation management work.

Learn more about the legislative priorities of Iowa's electric cooperatives and Iowa Rural Power grassroots advocacy at www.iaruralpower.org.

5 WAYS TO SAVE THIS SUMMER

When summer temperatures rise, so do our energy bills. Here are a few ways you can reduce energy use and grow your summer savings.

- 1. Raise your thermostat.** The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperature, the more you'll save.
- 2. Install window coverings** like blinds or light-blocking curtains to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.
- 3. Seal leaks with caulk and weatherstripping** around windows and exterior doors. Air leaks force your air conditioner to work harder and run longer than necessary.
- 4. Run ceiling fans** for additional cooling but turn them off when you leave the room.
- 5. Lower your water heater thermostat** to 120 degrees F to reduce standby heat loss.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy





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Visit our website at www.rvec.coop



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