

living with energy

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Guthrie County REC

A Tradewind Energy Cooperative

MAY 2017

Grassroots efforts in action: Iowa's electric cooperatives visit the Capitol ▶ See page 4

Is it time to make your home smarter?



Visit our website at www.guthrie-rec.coop

Take a realistic view when replacing windows for energy savings

Plant the seeds of safety on the farm

Discover 101 ways to save energy and money at your place

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

Complaint Procedure

Guthrie County REC strives to provide you with the best service at the lowest possible cost. But sometimes you may have questions regarding your electrical service or billing – or possibly a complaint.

If you have a complaint about Guthrie County REC’s service rather than its rates, you can reach a representative of the cooperative by contacting us during normal business hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 641-747-2206 or 888-747-2206. You can also write to Guthrie County REC, 1406 State St., P.O. Box 7, Guthrie Center, IA 50115-0007.

If your complaint is not resolved, you may ask for help from the Iowa Utilities Board, Customer Service, 1375 E. Court Ave., Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; 877-565-4450 or customer@iub.iowa.gov.

OFFICE CLOSING

Guthrie County REC will be closed Monday, May 29, in observance of Memorial Day. We wish all of our members a safe and happy holiday!



Guthrie County REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Office
1406 State Street • P.O. Box 7
Guthrie Center, IA 50115-0007

Office Hours
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Telephone Number
641-747-2206 or 888-747-2206
Calls answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Website
www.guthrie-rec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Grassroots efforts in action: Iowa’s electric cooperatives visit the Capitol

Guthrie County REC CEO Cozy Nelsen was at the Iowa State Capitol March 22 for the annual REC Day on the Hill. Sponsored by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, REC Day on the Hill brings together electric cooperatives from across Iowa to the Capitol for an opportunity to meet face-to-face with elected officials. These meetings help lawmakers understand important issues facing Iowa’s electric cooperatives and also give cooperatives a chance to thank legislators for their efforts on behalf of electric co-op members.

While there, Nelsen discussed the following with elected officials:

- **Utility owned solar:**
We are supportive of environmentally responsible power and are focused on incentives, rather than mandates. Solar energy must be deployed in a way that works for all member-owners, not just some.
- **Line personnel safety:**
We support any and all

legislation that’s focused on the safety of our line personnel.

- **Skilled workforce policies:** A skilled workforce is important to the future of our rural communities. We support policies that will attract and retain skilled workers in the state of Iowa. ⚡



SAFETY MATTERS

Use caution when burning ditches

Every year about this time, Iowa farmers and other land managers use controlled burns to put nutrients back into the soil and revitalize the land. Guthrie County REC would like to remind anyone who is burning to use caution in ditches where power poles are located, because these fires can cause extensive damage to cooperative property and result in electric service issues.

In addition to endangering power poles, you should also be aware of anchor guy assemblies or underground cabinets in the vicinity of the burn. Call the cooperative office at 641-747-2206 if you have questions about what equipment is located in the area you plan to burn. ⚡

Plant the seeds of safety on the farm

Now is a season of hope as farmers plant their seeds in the soil and the green tinge of young shoots begins to cover the rich fields. As those seeds get planted, Guthrie County REC urges farmers and their families to use safe practices to avoid a visit to the emergency room.

“Spring is a hectic time on any working farm,” said Guthrie County REC CEO Cozy Nelsen. “But it doesn’t have to be a tragic time as well. Working on a farm can pose risks, but there are things that everyone can do to minimize those risks.”

Here are some tips for a safe spring:

- Fix minor problems on equipment before they become major.

- Wear your seatbelt when operating equipment, and don’t wear loose or baggy clothing.
- Use proper safety equipment, such as earplugs or goggles.
- Avoid walking into grain storage areas and silos. It’s possible to become trapped under flowing grain. If someone else is trapped, don’t rush to rescue the person – you could become trapped as well. Call for help immediately.
- Stay alert and focused on the task.
- Be prepared for any kind of weather. Check the forecast for



any possibility of lightning or severe thunderstorms and plan accordingly. Also wear sunscreen, even on cloudy days, when your skin is exposed outside for long periods of time.

Make sure that all family members know how to get help in the event of an emergency by calling 911 or the poison control center. Be prepared to state exactly where you are and what the problem is. Remember to stay on the line until the operator says it’s OK to hang up. In addition, anyone who cares for younger siblings or elderly relatives should take a CPR and first aid class. ⚡

CO-OP VIPs

Honor Mom on Mother’s Day

Mother’s Day is Sunday, May 14, and the office staff at Guthrie County REC took a moment to reflect on the lessons and values taught to them by their mothers.

CEO Cozy Nelsen credits her mom for instilling in her the belief that she could do anything she set her mind to. As a single parent, Nelsen’s mother made every effort to provide her daughters with more than she had in life.

“I admire my mom, because even with her struggles she reinforced in me that there was not anything that I could not achieve,” Nelsen said. “She has been, and will always be, my number one supporter.”

Office manager Lori Hix said her mom gave her some sage advice in the form of a simple word.

“Your grandma was a very strong woman and you remind me of her, so stay strong and you will learn to say *no*,” Hix said. “Always believe in yourself.”

Billing clerk Dea Kress took cues from her mother when starting a

family that helped shape her parenting style today.



“My mother has always been a hardworking person who has always put her kids before herself,” Kress said. “She has taught me many skills that I feel have made me the mom I am today. I know if I need

help she is always there for me.”

Hard work and a commitment to family are two qualities member service clerk Marlene Chalfant and communications clerk Rebecca Schwartz learned from their mothers.

“What I admire the most about my mom is that she was a hard worker on the farm, but still found time to attend my school events,” Chalfant said. “Also, she was a babysitter for my children and has been able to be in their life.”

“I admire my mom’s big-heartedness,” Schwartz added. “She is the most selfless person I know. She has always put her family first and has always been my biggest supporter. I know that she is always there if I need her.” ⚡

EDITOR’S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a water-saving showerhead!

Many water-saving showerheads give you a chill, because the needle-like jets of warm water only hit a small area of your body, while the drafty air in the shower surrounds the rest of you. The Delta 75152 solves that problem! Enter the contest by May 31, 2017, at the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website: www.livingwithenergyiowa.com. ⚡



SAVING ENERGY

Outdoor shops and barns can be energy-efficient too

For a new structure, choose a sustainable design and efficient building methods that minimize the impact on the environment and consider sun exposure and drainage. Upgrading an existing structure? Install LED lightbulbs, add insulation where necessary; install a ceiling fan, and plant trees for summer shade and a winter windbreak. ⚡

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Check these smart landscaping ideas for an energy-efficient home

It's possible to achieve as much as a 30 percent reduction in cooling and heating costs through careful landscape planning. For example, during warm-weather months, deciduous shade trees and other plantings can reduce air-conditioning costs by keeping direct sunlight from striking and heating up your home's roof and exterior walls – as well as prevent reflected light from carrying heat into the house from the ground or paved surfaces. Additionally, the shade created by trees and the effects of grass and shrubs will reduce air temperatures next to the house. You can even plant a "channel" to funnel cooling spring and summer breezes into the house.

The same deciduous trees you've planted on the south and west sides of your home that block the summer sun will drop their leaves in the fall, allowing the warm winter sun to help heat your home. Trees that don't shed their leaves seasonally and evergreen plantings on the north side and west sides will slow the cold winter winds, reduce air filtration (and the resulting "chilly feeling" throughout your home) and help cut your heating bills.

In fact, natural windbreaks created by dense evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and west of your home – along with a wall, fence or earth berm – can deflect or lift winter winds over the house. However, be careful not to plant evergreens too close to your home's south side if you want to collect passive solar heat from the winter sun.

For more resources on energy-efficient landscaping, visit <https://energy.gov/energysaver/landscaping-energy-efficient-homes>.

IN THE NEWS

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Guthrie County REC supports the annual efforts of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to reduce electrically related fatalities, injuries and property loss. This year's campaign theme is "Decoding the National Electrical Code (NEC) to Prevent Shock and Electrocutation," which features resources to help protect against common electrical hazards.

First published in 1897 and now updated every 3 years, the NEC includes the latest in safety technology and is the standard for safe electrical installations and inspections – and it's used to protect people and property from avoidable electrical hazards. Guthrie County REC is committed to educating our members about important upgrades that can help prevent shock or electrocution to them or their family members.

Each year, approximately 2,400

The National Electrical Code (NEC) is updated every 3 years to include the latest in proven safety technology.

2017 ↑
2014
2011
2008
SAFER

children suffer severe shocks and burns from sticking items into the slots of electrical receptacles. Additionally, an estimated annual average of 70 electrocution fatalities are associated with consumer products. Further, there are reported cases of electric shock drowning that occur in marinas and swimming pools each year.

Education is key to raising children to be aware of electrical dangers. Visit www.esfi.org to find a multitude of educational resources related to this year's theme. ⚡

• MAY IS BEEF MONTH. •
BEEF

Thanks to cattle farmers like brothers Brian and Mike Bauer, in 2015, Iowa's cattle industry contributed in excess of \$6.9 billion in business activity to Iowa's economy.

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