

living with energy IN IOWA



Guthrie County REC
A Taxpayers Energy Cooperative

JULY 2017

Don't build without a plan: Consider an energy efficient All Star Home ▶ See page 5

2017 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.



Visit our website at www.guthrie-rec.coop

It was the **trip of a lifetime** – and for some students, maybe the start of a **career in public service or politics**

IN THE NEWS



Cooperative's roots run deep

To honor its partnership with cooperatives across the United States, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) planted a commemorative tree at its Arlington, Va., headquarters that is nourished by soil collected from each of its more than 700 member cooperatives.

Guthrie County REC proudly sent its soil from the headquarters in Guthrie Center to represent our members. Visit NRECA's page at www.facebook.com/NRECA.coop to watch the dedication ceremony that was held June 26. ⚡



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www.guthrie-rec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

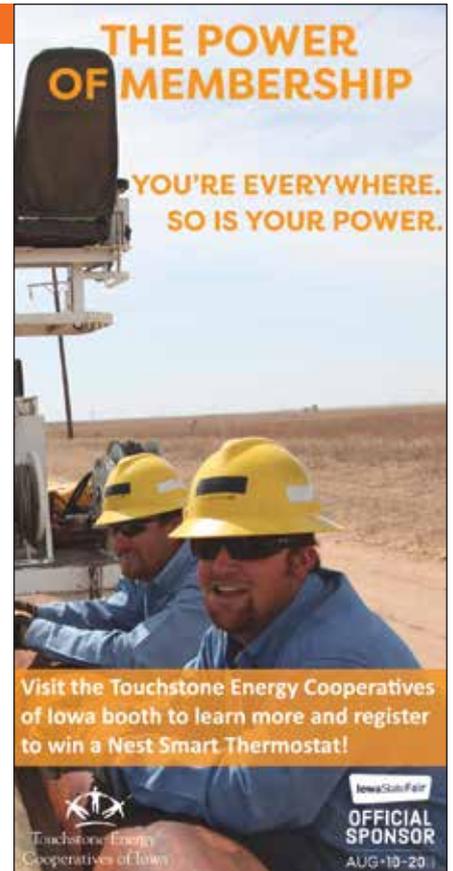
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Come see us at the Iowa State Fair!

If you're planning to attend this year's Iowa State Fair on Aug. 10-20, remember to stop by the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of Iowa display in the Bruce L. Rastetter 4-H Exhibits Building. Staff from co-ops across the state will be able to answer your energy efficiency questions.

You'll also want to register to win a Nest Learning Thermostat. The smart thermostat programs itself by learning the temperatures you and your family like and then automatically follows those preferences. The thermostat turns itself down when nobody's home to save energy. You can connect the thermostat to Wi-Fi to control temperatures from your smart phone, tablet or laptop. One winner of the thermostat will be chosen, at random, following the close of the fair. Finally, you can show your cooperative pride by marking your local cooperative on a giant map of Iowa.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa put members first. That's the



power of membership. Not-for-profit electric co-ops belong to the members they serve and focus on members' needs and local priorities. For more information on saving energy and the value of cooperative membership, visit www.touchstoneenergy.com. ⚡

OPERATIONS UPDATE

New line installed near Exira

Line crews recently completed the replacement of about 4 miles of line west of the Exira substation in Audubon County. Upgrading these 3-phase lines was part of our yearly work plan in which we assess what work will need to be done within annual budget guidelines. Every year, as part of our old-to-new program, we take a look at aging lines and put a plan in place to systematically upgrade them. This portion of the project took about a month to complete.

On average, the overhead lines in our system need to be changed about every 15-20 years. As you can imagine, with 1,392 miles of line



across the Guthrie County REC system, replacement of aging equipment is something we plan for every year to varying degrees.

We've been lucky so far this season to not have had any outages due to severe weather. New lines and poles are certainly able to better withstand strong storms than the old ones. It's another reason we upgrade aging infrastructure to ensure the power we deliver to you is reliable. ⚡

Follow the path to efficiency independence

BY COZY NELSEN

This month is all about celebrating America's independence and enjoying our freedoms as a country. While the red, white and blue are certainly something we can be proud of, my job is to also think about how we can add the color green into the picture. If you think about it, energy efficiency practices, or "going green," not only benefit you, but also your fellow Americans.



Your cooperative is always willing to help you find savings on your electric bill, and we're more than happy to provide advice on easy ways you can save electricity. It doesn't mean you have to live in the dark, but what if you installed a smart thermostat to learn your family's schedule and be able to modify heating or cooling temperatures on its own throughout the day? What if you set the timer on the dishwasher to run during the overnight hours rather than right after dinner? New laundry detergent formulas allow for washing clothes in cold water; what if you tried it for a month to see if you noticed any difference?

The point is, you can take charge of your own energy use, regardless of the date on the calendar. Small steps can lead to a big difference for you and your neighbors, whether across the road or across the country. ⚡

Cozy Nelsen is the CEO of Guthrie County REC.

Greater efficiency means less energy is used for the production of American goods and services. For our members, that can mean saving money. If your neighbors also commit to using less energy, the overall cost of the electricity you receive from Guthrie County REC could be lower. To continue the domino effect, on a national level energy efficiency has the potential to boost the economy by allowing consumers and businesses to invest in other areas. And, greater energy efficiency may slow the rate at which domestic energy is depleted, and therefore reduce or diminish our need for foreign energy.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

If you win this contest, you might get your August power bill paid!

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (of which Guthrie County REC is a member) is celebrating its 75th anniversary, and it wants to make this a memorable event for a lucky member-owner at one of Iowa's electric cooperatives. So, it's going to pay the August 2017 power bill (up to \$150) for the randomly chosen winner of this month's Editor's Choice Contest!

Visit the magazine's website at www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com to

review the rules and to complete the entry form no later than July 31, 2017. If you don't have a computer, go to a library, senior center or other facility that offers computers for the public to use. And stay tuned: In October, we'll have a special mail-in contest just for those few folks who don't have a home computer! ⚡



Don't build without a plan: Consider an energy efficient All Star Home

If you're thinking about building a new home and you're interested in receiving cash back for energy efficient features, contact Guthrie County REC before any work begins.



As part of our rebate structure, Guthrie County REC offers an All Star Home bonus rebate worth \$500 for energy efficient home construction. To qualify, the home must have:

- High performance insulation and windows;
- Geothermal or air source heating system;
- Electric heat pump water heater, geothermal assisted electric or solar assisted electric water heater; and
- ENERGY STAR® appliances for clothes washer, clothes dryer, dishwasher and refrigerator.

Efficient construction must be verified by one of the following methods:

- Proof that the home is built according to the ENERGY STAR Home program, which requires a signed ENERGY STAR Home certificate;
- Proof that the home has received a HERS (Home Energy Rating Service) rating of 55 or less, with a signed HERS report; or
- A copy of All Star Home Checklist with a signature from the home builder.

For more information, call our office at 888-747-2206. You also can visit www.guthrie-rec.coop; click on Energy Efficiency, then Rebates, to find the link to All Star Home Bonus/New Construction listed under 2017 Residential Rebates. ⚡

Your bill includes a wealth of information

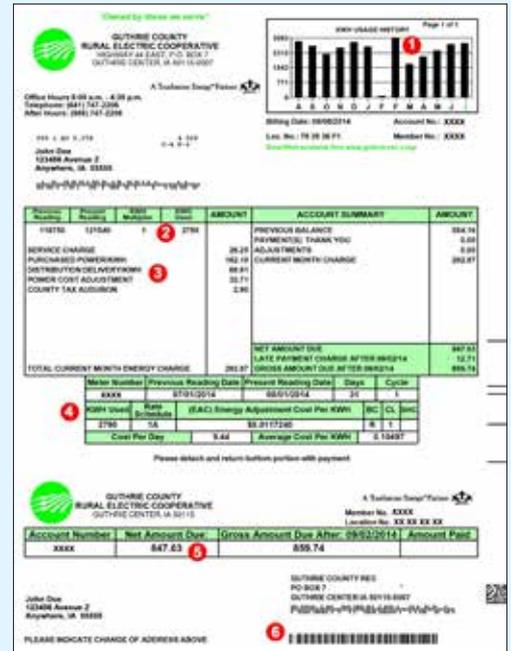
Understanding the electric bill you receive each month is an important first step in lowering your energy costs. If you take a moment to review when you're using the most electricity throughout the day, week or month, you can then start making some simple changes that will shrink your bill – but not your wallet.

The first thing to know about your electric bill is that Guthrie County REC uses an automated reading system that reports usage to our billing system daily. This helps eliminate any human error that can result in incorrect bills and eliminates estimated consumption that doesn't accurately reflect real use.

More than the billing amount, your bill contains a lot of details about how the amount you owe is calculated. It also gives you a snapshot of how much electricity you've used during the last 13 months, so you can compare seasonal peaks or other anomalies. For instance, did you host overnight guests for Memorial Day, and was the month of May warmer than normal? Be aware of anything out of the norm that may affect your billing amount.

The picture (right) shows a typical

- 1 Your electric usage during the previous 13 months.
- 2 The kilowatt-hours used for the month the bill covers.
- 3 Total Current Monthly Energy Charge
 - Service Charge: A fixed monthly charge covers the costs for billing and collections, metering and meter reading.
 - Purchased Power/kWh: The cost of your electricity alone for the month.
 - Distribution Delivery/kWh: The cost to distribute electricity to you.
 - Power Cost Adjustment (PCA): This adjustment is made monthly, based on the fluctuating fuel costs for generating power.
 - County Tax: The county you live in collects a tax on your electric service.
- 4 Summary of your account, including average cost of electricity per day and per kWh.



- 5 Net Amount Due: This is the total charge for all the services you receive through Guthrie County REC over the billing period.
- 6 This bar code is used by the post office for sorting by area.

electric bill from Guthrie County REC. You'll notice a series of circled numbers on this example. Check the

definitions and information for each entry to help you understand your bill more completely. ⚡

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

There's a new option for e-mail notification of payments

Guthrie County REC has a new option that will e-mail members when their check payments have been processed. If we have your e-mail address on file, you automatically have been signed up to receive this e-mail notification. If you don't wish to receive these notifications, simply opt out by calling the Guthrie County REC office at 888-747-2206 or changing your preferences in the SmartHub online payment application. ⚡



YOUR MAIN STREET IS OUR MAIN STREET.
 Your co-op was formed locally, and it's still managed by your friends and neighbors. Our employees go out of their way to make communities stronger by coaching youth sports teams, volunteering on school committees, participating in church activities and even serving in various elected offices.

Visit www.guthrie-rec.coop to find out more about the power of membership.

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