

Powering Lives, Empowering Communities: The Impact of Iowa's Electric Cooperatives

Empowering Communities

For over 85 years, electric cooperatives have contributed greatly to the local communities we serve by providing stable careers, paying taxes, returning surplus capital to members, and investing in student programs.

Electric cooperatives directly support almost 2,000 full-time jobs in Iowa. These jobs offer Iowans dependable careers with competitive wages and benefits in an exciting industry. Many co-op employees choose to raise families in small-town environments and are actively involved in their communities.

Collectively, Iowa's electric cooperatives pay almost \$29 million in local and state taxes each year. These taxes help fund local emergency services, road maintenance, healthcare, and public schools throughout the area.

Because electric co-ops are member owned, our members build equity in the local co-op each year based on their electric use. Surplus capital is returned to members over time when local boards determine it is financially feasible. To date, Iowans have received more than \$300 million in retired capital credits from their electric cooperatives. Consumers Energy has returned over \$7,500,000 to members over the past 86 years. For more information on patronage capital credits, see the article on page 8-D.

We invest in the next generation of Iowans through several educational and leadership development programs

continued on page 8-B ►

WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

THIS MONTH'S CONTEST:

Submit your answers to the word game on page 8-E. The answers will be published in the January newsletter.

◆ ◆ ◆

Winners for the month of October:
Mark & Elaine Hammer, Baxter
Autumn & Laramie Ogden, Ankeny

Special thanks to Teddy S. & Mackenzie O. for helping their parents with this contest!!

Here's how to enter:

1. Answer the question or challenge posed each month.
2. Send answers to Consumers Energy with:
 - Name
 - Service Address
 - Account Number
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address

Submit via email or mail:
Email to: kglenney@consumersenergy.coop
Subject line: Contest

Mail to: Consumers Energy
Attn: Contest
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

3. Winners' names will be drawn at random and published in upcoming issues of *The Connection*.

December 2024

Dates To Remember:

December

- 2 Read Meters
- 3 Bills Due
- 3 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 11 Email / Mail Bills
- 24-25 Office Closed Christmas Holiday**
- 26 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 31 Office Closed at 11:30 New Year's Eve Holiday**

January

- 1 **Office Closed New Year's Day Holiday**
- 2 Read Meters
- 3 Bills Due
- 3 Automatic Payments Deducted

Powering Lives (continued)



for students. Over the past 65 years, Iowa’s electric cooperatives have sent more than 2,500 students from Iowa high schools to Washington, D.C., for the annual Youth Tour program. On the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, students learn more about their role as American citizens and the cooperative business model. (See page 8-E.) Electric co-ops also support local students through educational programs, online learning opportunities through Iowa Youth Tour, and college scholarships. (See page 8-F.) More information about educational opportunities and scholarships can be found at the co-op’s website: www.consumersenergy.coop.

For more information on opportunities through Consumers Energy, contact the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552 or info@consumersenergy.coop.

Bridget Itzen

Bridget Itzen,
CEO/General Manager

Space Heater Safety

- Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working condition.
- Make sure the heater is clean and in good condition.
- Never allow pets or children near an electric heater. Accidental contact could cause serious shock or burns.
- Turn off your space heater and unplug it before leaving or going to bed.

For more information on space heater safety, scan this code → or visit: www.safeelectricity.org/public-education/tips/space-heaters/

Safe Electricity.org

Iowa Builders and Contractors:
REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



February 20-21, 2025
Sheraton West Des Moines

Momentum is Building is in February 2025!

Sponsored by the Iowa Cooperatives for Energy Efficiency, this conference is for Iowa builders and contractors to earn CEUs, learn about energy efficiency techniques, and network with peers.

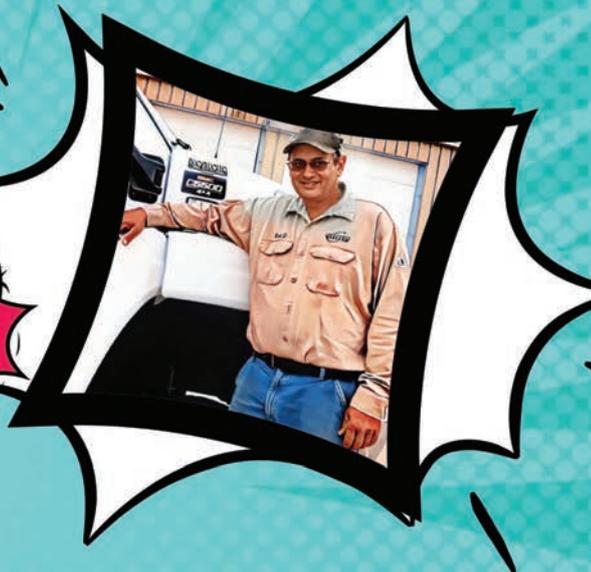
Consumers Energy is offering partial sponsorships for local contractors to attend!
The cooperative will pay for half of the registration fee for one attendee per company. Registration includes all sessions & breaks, lunch & the exhibitor reception on Thursday, and breakfast on Friday.

Please contact the Member Services Department at
800-696-6552 or **info@consumersenergy.coop**
to register through Consumers Energy
or for more information.

Total registration fee is \$400; Consumers Energy will pay \$200 toward registration.
Must be registered with Consumers Energy by January 15 for partial sponsorship.

**RICK
DOLASH**

**EMPLOYEE
SPOTLIGHT**



JOB: LEAD LINEMAN



DREAM VACATION: CANADA



FAVE MOVIE: SECONDHAND LIONS



FAVE SONG: BEER BARRELL POLKA



FAVE ACTIVITIES: HUNTING, FISHING, & TRAPPING

CONSUMERS ENERGY BOARD APPROVES PATRONAGE CAPITAL RETIREMENT FOR 2024



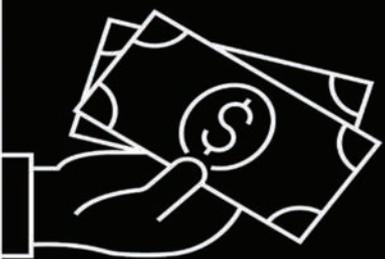
At Consumers Energy's board meeting on October 31, 2024, the Board of Directors approved the retirement of \$522,000 of patronage capital credits. *This patronage capital retirement will show as a credit for each member's portion of this retirement on electric bills received in December 2024.*

The retirement of patronage capital credits is a tangible demonstration of member ownership in Consumers Energy. As a cooperative that belongs to the members it serves, Consumers Energy operates as a not-for-profit utility. Any "profits" made by the cooperative are referred to as margins. At the end of each year, the margins are allocated to each member's patronage capital credit account in proportion to the amount of electricity purchased after all statutory and reserve requirements are met. From the time the margins are generated until they are returned, this money is put to work within the cooperative, minimizing debt financing and strengthening our financial position.

Your elected Board of Directors must first consider the financial condition of the co-op and the needs for capital funds for coming years before distributing patronage capital credits. The patronage capital credit amount is determined by the board and is set at a level that maintains the financial integrity of the co-op. The board evaluates Consumers Energy's equity goals, the patronage capital credit rotation plan, the cost of borrowing money, plant growth, and storm reserves.

Please contact Consumers Energy at 800-696-6552 with questions about your portion of the retirement for 2024 or the patronage capital retirement process.

Consumers Energy's Board of Directors: Front row – Bill Hobson, Pat VonAhnen, Tony Lem, Denny Beckman. Back row – Arden Greiner, Jennifer Sease, Steve Quick, Craig Griffieon, Bob Meimann

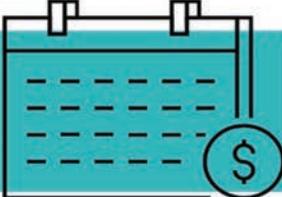


HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.



1. Members pay their electric bills, and we track their business with us each month.



2. The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover operating revenue as capital credits.



3. When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) capital credits to the members.



4. We send members their share of capital credits as a bill credit or check.

CHRISTMAS WORD GAME

Use only the letters in MERRY CHRISTMAS to find a word for each definition. Send in your answers for your chance to win the monthly newsletter contest! Details are on page 8-A.



- 1 Twelve months
- 2 Alike
- 3 Large town
- 4 Warmth
- 5 Grows on your head
- 6 Part of a flower
- 7 Money
- 8 Divide with someone
- 9 Water vapor
- 10 Male sheep
- 11 A seat
- 12 Our planet
- 13 Bashful
- 14 Holds up a sail
- 15 Long-tailed rodent



Youth Tour is an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors explore monuments and museums, meet with members of Congress, and make lifelong friends with other students from all over Iowa and across the country.

You'll discover leadership lessons from our nation's history and be immersed in the cooperative spirit that built our nation ---
ALL EXPENSES PAID
 by Consumers Energy.

Answers to Brain Teasers

These brain teasers were published as last month's newsletter contest. Here are the answers!

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>B E D</p> <p>Bedsread</p> | <p>HEAD</p> <p>Big head</p> |
| <p><i>FREQUENCY</i></p> <p>High frequency</p> | <p>CYCLE</p> <p>CYCLE</p> <p>CYCLE</p> <p>Tricycle</p> |
| <p>over over</p> <p>Leftovers</p> | <p>ban ana</p> <p>Banana split</p> |



For more information, contact Billing & Education Coordinator, Tami Kerwood at 800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.

CONSUMERS ENERGY'S
2025 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Academic Scholarship

To be eligible, applicant must be a dependent of Consumers Energy member.

Graduating from high school in 2025?



Apply for the Consumers Energy scholarship for \$1,000 to pay toward your post secondary education!



SCAN HERE TO VISIT WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO OR TO APPLY!



Lineworker Scholarship

To be eligible, applicant must be a resident of the State of Iowa.

Are you pursuing a career in the powerline industry?

Consumers Energy offers a \$1,000 scholarship to residents of the state of Iowa for this type of education in the electric industry!



SCAN HERE TO VISIT WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO OR TO APPLY!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT BILLING & EDUCATION COORDINATOR, TAMI KERWOOD AT 800-696-6552 OR TKERWOOD@CONSUMERSENERGY.COOP.

HOLIDAY FUN WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words associated with holiday fun in the puzzle below? Use the word bank to check your work.

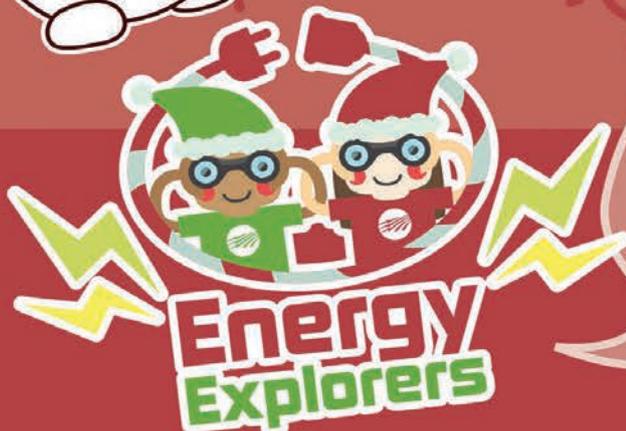


WORD BANK

Jingle bells Santa Claus Snowman
Candy cane Mittens Hot Chocolate



N H C H P B D H S V G Z H T M
A C C F Z Z A T F N V D Q Z Y
M H L V Y M J N P D E T V F S
W P W H F W I H K S C T G B K
O Z K D Z L N O K K H Q T C F
N F I O U R G T F C L P E I L
S S V S U A L C A T N A S C M
Z C V P C E E H R P W U A Z Z
F C F J C H B O G C Y N G V E
G M V X D L E C V N D T S F W
Y A X V N U L O H Y V C L U A
H G V L L X L L C M J M C I U
P J Y F E R S A Q E Y G H C A
D W O R D T N T Y H X Q L E S
U W H R U E V E B Y B F L W R



HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM THE ENERGY
EXPLORERS!

CONSUMERS ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1 - Marshall, Jasper, & Tama Counties:
Denny Beckman
President
dbeckman@consumersenergy.coop

Bill Hobson
Director
whobson@consumersenergy.coop

Pat VonAhnen
Secretary-Treasurer
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District 2 - Story County:
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Director
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Bob Meimann
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
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Steve Quick
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District 3 - Polk County:
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Tony Lem
Director
alem@consumersenergy.coop

Jennifer Sease
Director
jsease@consumersenergy.coop

Energy Efficiency Cost per kWh:
\$0.000361

To report an outage, call 800-696-6552.

For the most accurate outage updates, check SmartHub or www.consumersenergy.coop for messages, the statewide outage map, or call Consumers Energy.

WAYS TO PAY YOUR CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL



Automatic recurring monthly payments



Online or the app
www.consumersenergy.coop



In person



By phone 24/7
855-939-3832



By mail



By dropbox

 2074 242nd Street | Marshalltown, IA 50158

 641-752-1593 | 800-696-6552

 855-939-3832

 641-752-5738

 www.consumersenergy.coop

 info@consumersenergy.coop

OFFICE HOURS
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
MONDAY - FRIDAY



REBATES

- Consumers Energy offers members rebates for new electric equipment purchases and energy-efficiency upgrades.

PATRONAGE
CAPITAL
CREDITS



PATRONAGE CAPITAL CREDITS

- Funds are allocated to members based on electric usage.
- Members receive funds when the cooperative retires margins.

For information on ways to pay or programs and services offered, contact the Member Services Department.