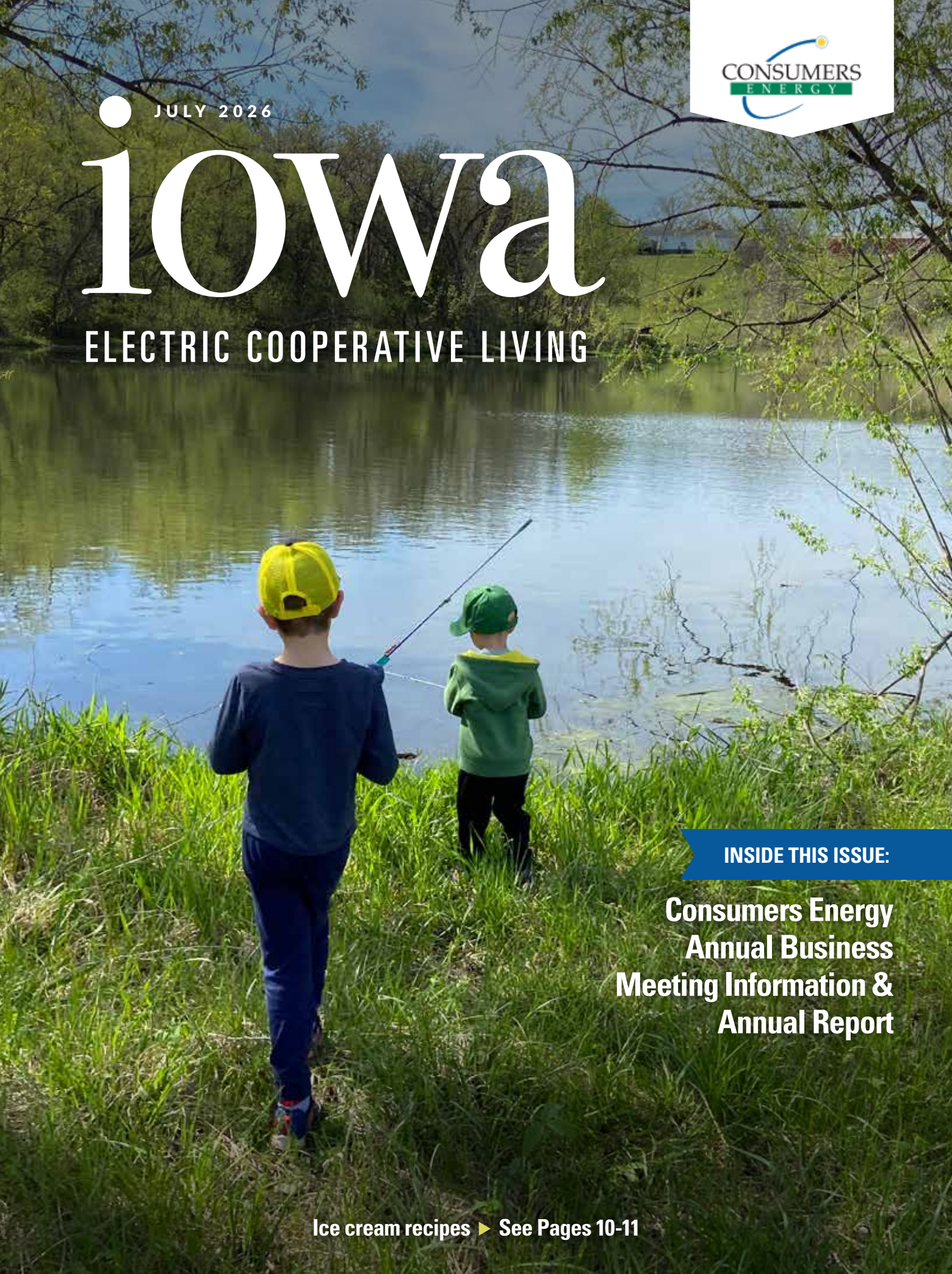




JULY 2026

# iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

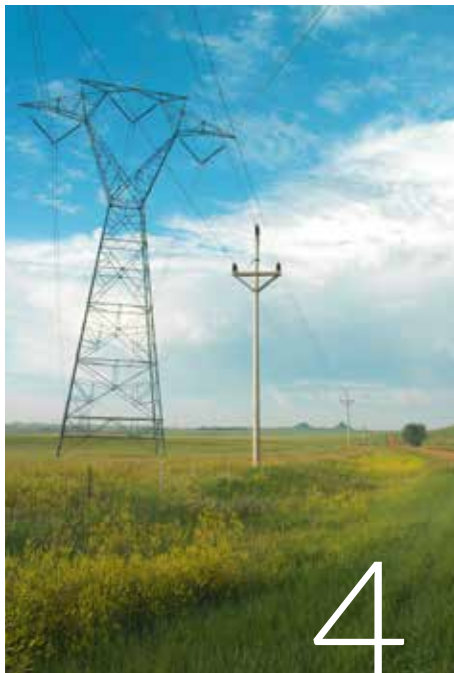


**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

**Consumers Energy  
Annual Business  
Meeting Information &  
Annual Report**

**Ice cream recipes ▶ See Pages 10-11**

# CONTENTS



VOLUME 79 • ISSUE 7

**3**

STATEWIDE  
PERSPECTIVE

Protecting members’  
interests at the statehouse

**3**

EDITOR’S CHOICE  
CONTEST

Win a Bose portable  
outdoor speaker

**14**

IN THE  
COMMUNITY

See lineworkers in action  
at the Iowa State Fair

**15**

OUT  
BACK

How George Washington  
shaped America

**EDITOR**  
Ann Foster Thelen

**DESIGNERS**  
Megan Walters  
Bree Glenn  
Lorelai O’Hara

**IAEC DIRECTOR OF  
COMMUNICATIONS**  
Erin Campbell

**IAEC ADMINISTRATIVE  
SPECIALIST**  
Cherie Moen

**IAEC EXECUTIVE  
VICE PRESIDENT**  
Leslie Kaufman

**IAEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Jim Miller, District 5 – President  
Gordon Greimann, District 6 – Vice President  
Tony Lem, District 2 – Secretary/Treasurer  
Jerry Keleher, District 3 – Asst. Secretary/Treasurer  
Travis Harris, District 1  
Steve Inskeep, District 4  
Bruce Amundson, District 7  
Kevin Wheeler, Access Energy Cooperative –  
NRECA Representative  
Terry Sullivan, Corridor Energy Cooperative –  
Managers’ Representative

*Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine (ISSN: 2770-8683) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa’s member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase **Iowa Electric Cooperative Living** is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

**Editorial Office**  
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350.

**Email Address**  
editor@ieclmagazine.com. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

**Website**  
www.ieclmagazine.com

**Postmaster**  
Send address changes to *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

**Change of Address**  
Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative’s office. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

© Copyright 2026, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. No portion of the editorial, photographic or other content of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine or its website may be reproduced without written permission of the editor.



**ON THE COVER**

Special thanks to Lacey Miller, a Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc. member-consumer, for supplying this month’s cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

# PROTECTING CO-OP MEMBERS' INTERESTS DURING THE 2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BY HALEY MOON



With new majority leaders in both chambers, new committee leadership and major issues, such as property tax reform and eminent domain, on the agenda, Iowa lawmakers entered the 2026 legislative session facing a full workload. After extending 12 days beyond the scheduled adjournment date, the General Assembly concluded its work with a marathon weekend of negotiations and final votes.

For Iowa's electric cooperatives, energy policy remained a central focus throughout the session. As lawmakers considered a wide range of proposals affecting the energy sector, electric cooperatives worked closely with policymakers to ensure the voices of Iowa's rural communities and member-consumers were part of the conversation. We are always focused on protecting affordable and reliable electric service, and we do so at the Statehouse by supporting various legislative proposals and preventing harmful policies from advancing.

## Key energy issues under consideration

One harmful proposal would have established a third-party solar program in Iowa. While supporters viewed the proposal as a way to expand solar development, electric cooperatives and other stakeholders raised concerns about potential cost shifts to consumers and impacts on grid reliability. Ultimately, the legislation did not advance, helping preserve Iowa's balanced approach to energy policy and protecting consumers from potential increases in electricity costs.

Another priority during the session was legislation aimed at strengthening protections for utility employees.

The proposal would have increased criminal penalties for individuals who assault, threaten or harass public utility workers while they are performing their duties. These employees play a critical role in keeping the lights on and restoring service during emergencies, often working in difficult and hazardous conditions. The bill received broad support in the Senate but ultimately stalled in the House. We remain encouraged by the strong bipartisan recognition of the issue and look forward to continuing efforts to advance these important protections in the future.

## Advocating for co-op members

Lawmakers also considered a large economic development package that included a proposal to require a statewide load forecasting and transmission report. Because utilities already conduct extensive forecasting through existing planning processes, we had concerns about the necessity

and scope of information requests and the cost that could ultimately affect ratepayers. Although the legislation passed, electric cooperatives were actively engaged throughout the process to advocate for practical implementation and to help protect the interests of member-consumers.

As Iowa's political landscape continues to evolve, particularly with the upcoming elections in November, electric cooperatives remain committed to working collaboratively with policymakers, community leaders and industry partners to address the challenges and opportunities ahead. By advocating for sound energy policy and protecting the interests of the communities we serve, we will continue our mission of delivering safe, reliable and affordable electricity while helping Iowa communities thrive for generations to come.

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

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

### WIN A BOSE PORTABLE OUTDOOR SPEAKER

Take your favorite music wherever summer adventures lead with the Bose SoundLink Flex Portable Speaker. Delivering rich, high-fidelity sound in a compact, durable design, this Bluetooth speaker is waterproof, dustproof and even floats, making it perfect for the lake, campground or backyard gathering. With up to 12 hours of battery life, it's built to keep the music playing long after the sun goes down.

#### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.ieclmagazine.com](http://www.ieclmagazine.com) no later than July 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 \$100 in beef certificates from the May issue was **Travis Meester**, a **Grundy County REC** member-consumer.



ENTER ONLINE BY JULY 31!



**Office:** Consumers Energy  
2074 242nd Street  
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158  
**Phone:** 641-752-1593 or 800-696-6552  
**Secure Payments Number:** 855-939-3832  
**Website:** www.consumersenergy.coop  
**Email:** info@consumersenergy.coop  
**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.  
(excluding holidays)

**Consumers Energy's Board of Directors:**  
**Denny Beckman**, District 1, President  
dbeckman@consumersenergy.coop  
**Ken Grant**, District 2, Director  
kgrant@consumersenergy.coop  
**Craig Griffieon**, District 3, Vice President  
cgriffieon@consumersenergy.coop  
**Bill Hobson**, District 1, Director  
whobson@consumersenergy.coop  
**Tony Lem**, District 3, Director  
alem@consumersenergy.coop  
**Bob Meimann**, District 2, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer  
rmeimann@consumersenergy.coop  
**Steve Quick**, District 2, Director  
squick@consumersenergy.coop  
**Jennifer Sease**, District 3, Director  
jsease@consumersenergy.coop  
**Pat VonAhnen**, District 1, Secretary-Treasurer  
pvonahnen@consumersenergy.coop

**Dates to Remember**

JULY 3	Bills due
JULY 3	Office closed for observation of Independence Day
JULY 6	Automatic payments deducted
JULY 10	Email/mail bills
JULY 27	Automatic payments deducted
JULY 31	Read meters
AUG. 3	Bills due
AUG. 3	Automatic payments deducted
AUG. 10	Consumers Energy Annual Business Meeting

**FREE PAYMENT OPTIONS**

ALL of Consumers Energy's payment options are FREE for members!



Scan the QR code for more information.

**ROUND-UP FOR RENEWABLES**

Contribute to renewable energy projects in the cooperative's service territory.



Scan the QR code for more information.

# HOW YOUR COOPERATIVE PREPARES FOR HIGH-USE SUMMER MONTHS

BY BRIDGET ITZEN

As temperatures rise and summer settles in, electric cooperatives across the region prepare for one of the busiest times of the year. Air conditioners run longer, fans work overtime, and families spend more time indoors escaping the heat. All of this means one thing for your cooperative: higher electricity demand.

This month, in our "Understanding Your Electric Rates" series, I'd like to explain how your cooperative and our generation and transmission (G&T) partners prepare for high-use summer months and why forecasting demand and power purchasing strategies play important roles in managing costs and maintaining reliable service.

**Planning for peak demand**

Electricity must be generated and delivered the moment it is needed, which means utilities spend significant time planning ahead to ensure enough power is available during periods of peak demand.

For local electric cooperatives like ours, much of that planning happens in partnership with our G&T provider and regional power organizations. Together, we monitor weather forecasts, economic trends, historical usage patterns, and projected growth to estimate how much electricity our communities will need, especially during the hottest days of the year.

Accurate demand forecasting is essential because wholesale power costs are heavily influenced by peak demand. When regional demand rises during extreme heat, utilities across the region compete for the same electricity, driving costs higher.

That is where power purchasing strategies become especially important. Our G&T provider works year-round to secure a diverse and reliable mix of power resources through long-term planning, generation

coordination, participation in regional energy markets, and advance power purchases when conditions are favorable.

These efforts help reduce exposure to price spikes and ensure adequate generation capacity is available when members need electricity most.

Peak demand typically occurs during late afternoons and early evenings when temperatures are highest and cooling systems are working hardest. Even though these periods may last only a few hours, they can significantly affect wholesale power costs throughout the year.

**How members can help**

That's why cooperatives encourage energy efficiency and wise energy use during peak times. Small actions taken across thousands of homes and businesses can make a meaningful difference. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher, delaying the use of large appliances until later in the evening, and keeping your cooling system operating efficiently can help reduce strain on the grid.

Reliability remains our highest priority. Our crews, engineers, and power suppliers spend countless hours preparing for summer demand so that when you flip a switch, power is there when you need it.

**As a cooperative, we are committed to helping members understand what goes into the rates they pay. Forecasting demand and implementing thoughtful power purchasing strategies are important parts of balancing reliability, affordability, and long-term planning for the communities we serve. Thank you for allowing us to serve you.**

*Bridget Itzen is the CEO/General Manager of Consumers Energy.*

# PRESIDENT'S & MANAGER'S REPORT

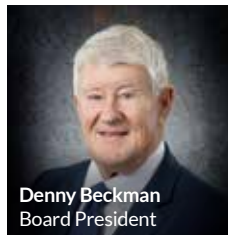
## REFLECTING ON A SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF SERVING CO-OP MEMBERS

It is our privilege on behalf of Consumers Energy's directors, management, and employees to report on some of the activities and financial position of the cooperative for 2025 and to provide information for 2026 to date.

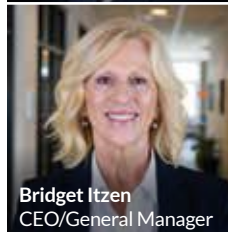
The cooperative's board of directors and management continue to focus on Consumers Energy's core electric distribution business. A cost-conscious approach is used in managing the cooperative. This has contributed to positive financial performance and margins, as reflected in Consumers Energy's 2026 year-to-date financial statements.

Consumers Energy is a cooperative, and its members are the owners of this organization. The amount a member pays for electricity and services provided by the cooperative that are not needed to operate Consumers Energy is paid back in the future to members as patronage capital credits. For the 2025 calendar year, the board chose to pay back patronage capital credits in the amount of \$619,000.

The cooperative has 24 full-time employees. We are most grateful to them for the effort and dedication they put into providing the membership with reliable electricity and energy advice. While we focus on the needs of our members, we



Denny Beckman  
Board President



Bridget Itzen  
CEO/General Manager



### CONSUMERS ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Front Row: Tony Lem, Jennifer Sease, Pat VonAhnen, Bill Hobson

Back Row: Ken Grant, Craig Griffieon, Steve Quick, Bob Meimann, Denny Beckman

also address the needs of our employees, so that the work in the office and out in the field can be performed safely and efficiently.

There are nine members serving on the cooperative's board of directors. The board annually holds 12 regular meetings and occasional special meetings. The directors also attend training seminars and meetings of affiliated state, regional, and national organizations and serve as the cooperative's delegates. Their participation in these meetings helps the cooperative have a well-informed board of directors.

The financial report listed in this annual report provides the facts of the financial

position of Consumers Energy as of Dec. 31, 2025. The 2025 audit of the cooperative's financial statements was successfully completed by our auditor, Eide Bailly LLP, in March of this year. Please contact the cooperative office with any questions you might have regarding this report.

We wish to extend our thanks to each member for the support and cooperation provided to Consumers Energy this past year.

This information will be presented to the membership on Monday, Aug. 10, 2026, at 5 p.m. at the cooperative's headquarters, 2074 242nd Street, Marshalltown.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

### MEETING TO BE CONDUCTED USING MAIL VOTING

The Annual Business Meeting of the members of Consumers Energy Cooperative will be held at the headquarters of Consumers Energy in Marshalltown, Iowa, at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2026, to take action upon the following matters:

1. The reports of officers, directors, and committees;
2. The election of three (3) directors of the Cooperative for a term of three (3) years each; and
3. All other business, which may legally come before the Meeting or any adjournments thereof.

In connection with the election of directors scheduled for this meeting, the following members have been nominated to serve as directors by the Nominating Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the cooperative pursuant to the By-Laws.

#### THREE-YEAR TERMS - One to be elected from each district

**District 1:** Jeff Edler, Kevin Gowdy, Jeff VonAhnen

**District 2:** Doug Anderson, Steve Quick

**District 3:** Brian Sardou, Jennifer Sease, Jon Taber

As noted in our newsletter, this will be a business-only meeting with no meal, gift, or entertainment. All voting and action will be conducted by mail vote. You are urged to complete and return the mail ballot. You are also welcome to attend the meeting to hear reports of officers and the election results. The results will be published on our website and in our newsletter following the meeting.

Dated at Marshalltown, Iowa, the 15th day of June, 2026.

- Pat VonAhnen, Secretary

# FINANCIAL REPORT



## BALANCE SHEET

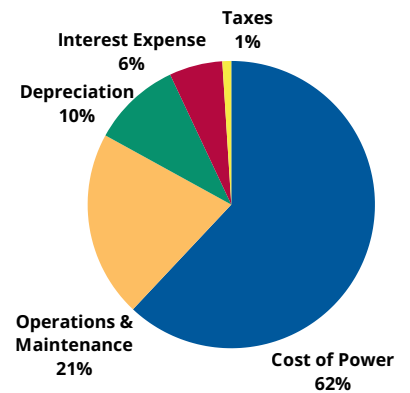
### Assets

	2025	2024
Cash & Temporary Investments	3,764,720	3,603,211
Investments in Associated Orgs	10,580,778	10,064,086
Current Assets	7,534,347	6,239,535
Other Assets	1,154,975	1,939,705
Total Utility Plant	74,575,673	72,607,993
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>28,400,236</u>	<u>26,990,016</u>
Net Utility Plant	46,175,437	45,617,977
Total Assets	<u><b>69,210,257</b></u>	<u><b>67,464,514</b></u>

### Liabilities

Current Liabilities	6,736,536	6,581,051
Long-Term Debt	29,134,432	29,161,587
Other Liabilities & Credits	39,785	279,509
Operating Margins Prior Years	22,862,115	21,603,236
Patronage Capital	7,938,402	7,832,089
Margins	<u>2,498,987</u>	<u>2,007,042</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	<u><b>69,210,257</b></u>	<u><b>67,464,514</b></u>

## 2025 EXPENSES



## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

### Operating Revenues

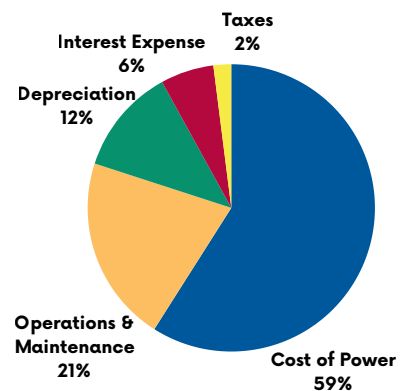
### Operating Expenses

	2025	2024
Operating Revenues	25,099,441	22,864,072
Cost of Purchased Energy	14,876,570	13,254,994
Cost of Operations & Maintenance	5,090,050	4,719,120
Depreciation	2,364,039	2,575,300
Taxes	291,087	371,944
Interest Expense	<u>1,450,319</u>	<u>1,405,890</u>
Total Expense	<u><b>24,072,065</b></u>	<u><b>22,327,248</b></u>

### Margins from Operations

Margins from Operations	1,027,376	536,824
Patronage Capital received from Associated Orgs	1,430,936	1,302,221
Nonoperating Margins	<u>40,675</u>	<u>167,997</u>
Total Margins	<u><b>2,498,987</b></u>	<u><b>2,007,042</b></u>

## 2024 EXPENSES



2025 STATS

248

new services added

8,081

services in place

1,294

miles of line averaging 6.08 members per mile

0.74

average number of outages per member in 2025

124

energy efficiency rebates totaling \$27,615 paid out to members

# DIRECTOR CANDIDATE BIOS

## JEFF EDLER — DISTRICT 1

NORTH OF STATE CENTER | FARMER



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**St. Joseph Church Pastoral Council**  
Parish Member | 2 Years | Currently Serving

**West Marshall School Board**

Member | 1 Year | Currently Serving

**Iowa Senate**

State Senator | 8 Years | Completed Service

*Committees: Health & Human Services (HHS), Local Government, Veterans Affairs, Appropriations, HHS Budget, Agriculture, Ways & Means*

**Consumers Energy Board of Directors**

President/Member | 12 Years | Completed Service

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**

Heartland Co-op, Mid-Iowa Cooperative, Iowa Regional Utilities Association

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**

I would bring a hard work ethic along with many qualifications. I served as the CE board president during a transformational time of our coop 2010-2016. I have also helped for policy for the State of Iowa as well as cochair the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest budget for the State of Iowa.

## KEVIN GOWDY — DISTRICT 1

MELBOURNE | RETIRED - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IOWA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**Logan Township Trustee**  
Trustee | 6 Years | Completed Service

**Iowa Methodist Foundation**

Executive Director | 10 Years | Completed Service

**Solid Ground Consulting Services**

Founder and Owner | 7 Years | Completed Service

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**

None

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**

1. I'm a firm believer in the Consumer Energy services and goals.
2. As a customer I've always been impressed by the service and staff that serves the co-op.

## JEFF VONAHNEN — DISTRICT 1

MARSHALLTOWN | RETIRED - EMERSON



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**St. John Lutheran Church**  
Church Elder | 12 Years | Completed Service

**Scouting America**

Assistant Scoutmaster | 30 Years | Currently Serving

**Marshall County Elections**

Temporary Election Official | 10 Years | Currently Serving

**UnityPoint Volunteers**

Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) Counselor | 0 Years | Currently Serving

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**

Members 1st Credit Union, Iowa Regional Utilities Association, Heart of Iowa Communications Cooperative, Farm Credit Services of America (loan paid off)

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**

Prior to retirement, my primary job function was diagnostic and performance analysis of control valves in many industries, including fossil and nuclear electric power generation industries. As spouse of past Director, Pat VonAhnen, I am familiar with the responsibilities of a REC Director. As a Director for Consumers Energy, I will use my knowledge and experience to help the coop navigate the challenging environment of supplying reliable and economical electrical power to our membership.

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

## DOUG ANDERSON – DISTRICT 2

BETWEEN NEVADA AND COLO | RETIRED ELECTRICAL ENGINEER – HP, ROCKWELL, MICREL, DANFOSS, AND TWO SMALL HOME-BASED BUSINESSES



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**Nevada Township**  
Clerk | 3 Years | Currently Serving

**Nevada Kiwanis**  
Member | 10 Years | Completed Service

**Nevada School Foundation**  
Board Member | 4 Years | Completed Service

**Boy Scout Troop 128**  
Assistant Scoutmaster | 4 Years | Completed Service

**Memorial Lutheran Church**  
Member | 31 Years | Currently Serving

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**  
None

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**  
I believe reliability and cost are the most important factors for electrical power service. As your board member, I will make sure that every decision the board makes considers these two factors. I've spent over 40 years within companies helping them grow and adapt through economic, social and technological changes. I understand the importance of striking a balance between short-term needs and long-term vision to assure the overall viability of an organization.

## STEVE QUICK – DISTRICT 2

HUXLEY | QUICK HARDWARE



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**Huxley Communications Co-op**  
President/Member | 12 Years | Completed Service

**United Hardware Distributing Co.**  
President/Member | 15 Years | Completed Service

**Huxley Development Corp.**  
Member | 10 Years | Currently Serving

**Fjeldberg Lutheran Church**  
Multiple Committees | 30 Years | Completed Service

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**  
Huxley Communications Co-op, United Hardware Distributing Co.

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**  
During my previous 2 terms as director, I have completed the required course study to receive the Credentialed Cooperative Director Certification. This course of study provides valuable information to better serve as a member of your Cooperative Board of Directors.

## JENNIFER SEASE – DISTRICT 3

ANKENY | DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES – CITY OF ANKENY



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**Ankeny Community Foundation**  
Treasurer | 6 Years | Completed Service

**Ankeny Jaguars Shooting Sports Foundation**  
Treasurer | 2 Years | Completed Service

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**  
None

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**  
I am excited about the opportunity to continue serving on the Consumers Energy Board of Directors. While serving on the board I have learned a lot about the electric cooperative and will continue to work to provide reliable, safe, affordable, and sustainable electricity to the members.

## JON TABER – DISTRICT 3

ANKENY | INTERNAL AUDIT MANAGER – CASEY'S



**Board, committee, and community leadership experience relevant to service as a cooperative director:**

**Latinos Unidos of Iowa**  
Treasurer | 3 Years | Completed Service

**Other cooperative affiliations or memberships:**  
None

**Candidate statement on interests, experience, and skillset:**  
As an Ankeny resident and cooperative member, I'd be honored to serve the people this co-op powers. I'm a CPA with an internal audit career, and I'd bring that financial and operational experience to support the co-op. I value staying connected to the members we serve and I'm ready to contribute my time and skills to the work this board does.

# HELP US FIND FORMER MEMBERS



Consumers Energy is holding unclaimed money due to those persons listed. This property is the result of checks from Patronage Capital Credit payouts that have been returned to the cooperative due to outdated mailing information. The owner may claim this money by contacting the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552 or [info@consumersenergy.coop](mailto:info@consumersenergy.coop).

SCOTT AKERS; ELDORA, IA	TYLER CARPENTER; ANKENY, IA	JAMES GUSTAFSON; NEVADA, IA	CASEY LAWSON; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	JULIE PALMER; TRAVERSE CITY, MI	MICHELLE SPOHNHEIMER; MIDDLEBURY, VT
CALLIE ALBERICO; MINGO, IA	MADISON CASE; ANKENY, IA	JESSICA HANCE; JOHNSTON, IA	CIVOI LEE; ANKENY, IA	ASHLEY PARKER; ANKENY, IA	SPRUCE HOSPITALITY LLC; MARSHALLTOWN, IA
JONATHAN ALBRIGHT; ANKENY, IA	MATTHEW CAUWELS; AMES, IA	JAY HANSEN; URBANDALE, IA	CORY LIMKEMAN; ANKENY, IA	TANNER PEASE; BRYAN, TX	CHAD STOCKER; ANKENY, IA
GABRIEL APPIAH; DECATUR, GA	BRIDGETTE CLEMENTE; NEVADA, IA	ABBEY HANSON; ANKENY, IA	GREG LINK; ANKENY, IA	JADE PERRY; BAXTER, IA	STACEY STOECCKER; ANKENY, IA
VICTOR ARROYO; DES MOINES, IA	NICK COBURN; NEVADA, IA	DANA HILL; WINDSOR, ME	NICHOLAS LONG; AMES, IA	SUE PERSONETT; NEVADA, IA	ANDREW SUDDUTH; ANKENY, IA
DAVID BACH; DES MOINES, IA	KAYLA COOK; FOREST CITY, IA	MELISSA HILL; DES MOINES, IA	ELLEN LONGNECKER; CAMBRIDGE, IA	JENNA PFINGSTEN; DES MOINES, IA	TEMPLE REAL ESTATE SERVICES; WAUKEE, IA
GARRETT BALLARD; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	MICHELE DAWLEY; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	CONNOR HINES; NEVADA, IA	JESUS ANTONIO LUGO LOPEZ; NEVADA, IA	RAVEN PRITCHARD; NEVADA, IA	CUTLER THAYER; NEVADA, IA
MATT BALTES; POLK CITY, IA	JUSTIN DEJONG; ANKENY, IA	RICKEY HUTSON; ANKENY, IA	KATHERINE MATTHEWS; NEVADA, IA	LA RUE RAMSEY; COLO, IA	KATELYN THOMASON; PERRY, IA
NATHAN BANGERT; ANKENY, IA	YVONNE DELAY; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	TAMERA IHLE; ANKENY, IA	MIDWEST CRITICAL POWER; BERESFORD, SD	NASSAH ROBERTS; URBANDALE, IA	FAYE THORNTON; RHODES, IA
MARCUS BANKER; BOONE, IA	LIYUANI DELGADO; ANKENY, IA	LINDSEY JEFFRIES; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	JASON MIKKELSEN; AMES, IA	COHLE ROSTOMILY; DE SOTO, IA	CASSANDRA TWICHELL; ANKENY, IA
JOANNA BARANSKA; LAKE IN THE HILLS, IL	CLAY DOUGLAS; ANKENY, IA	COURTNEY JOINT; CAMBRIDGE, IA	JACOB MOHR; NEVADA, IA	GAGE SAWYER; BOONE, IA	SARAH VASQUEZ; ANKENY, IA
BETH BELLINGER; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	EMMA DYER; ANKENY, IA	CHANTAL KENDIG; ANKENY, IA	BAILEY MONTGOMERY; ANKENY, IA	THERESA SCHIRM; HENDERSON, NV	MARTHA VENEGAS; MARSHALLTOWN, IA
GINNY BETZ; SLATER, IA	CALVIN ENFIELD; COLLINS, IA	ANTOINETTE KENNEDY; KELLEY, IA	BRADY NELSON; BOONE, IA	JENNIFER SCHOER; NICEVILLE, FL	ADDYSON VERVERILLE; NEVADA, IA
SEAN BOYLAN; BOONE, IA	LISA ERICKSON; CAMBRIDGE, IA	RACHEL KNUDSON; SIOUX CITY, IA	CODY NEWSOME; NEVADA, IA	DALLASSCHUMANN; HUMESTON, IA	RACHEL VOLNER; ANKENY, IA
RYAN BRETOI; ANKENY, IA	AMANDA FUDGE; ANKENY, IA	ADAM KOBRIGER; HUXLEY, IA	EVAN NICHOLS; ELKHART, IA	JOHN SCHWEGLER; AMES, IA	KEITH WEHRLE; LYNNVILLE, IA
EMILY BROCK; ANKENY, IA	JACOB GARVIN; ANKENY, IA	COLE KOVACEVICH; CAMBRIDGE, IA	ANGELA NICKOLAS; ANKENY, IA	PAMELA SCOTT; NEVADA, IA	PATRICIA WILKENING; STATE CENTER, IA
AILANE BURGOS; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	VERONICA GLOTO; WAUKEE, IA	KRAIG JOHNSON ENTERPRISES LLC; MARSHALLTOWN, IA	CODY NORDHEIM; OLATHE, KS	EMINA SPAHIC; ST LOUIS, MO	DUSTIN SPARKS; STATE CENTER, IA
RYAN BUTCHER; NEVADA, IA	PATRICK GRAHAM; ANKENY, IA	KYANITE DESIGN & BUILD; ANKENY, IA	OAK GROVE PORK LTD; LEIGHTON, IA	DUSTIN SPARKS; STATE CENTER, IA	GREG WILSON; AMES, IA
ASHLEY BUTCHER; ANKENY, IA	JAMEE GRUBB; ANKENY, IA	JEFFREY LARSON; CLIVE, IA	OLIVIA PACHA; DES MOINES, IA	MALEAH SPIKER; ANKENY, IA	ANDREW WOOD; URBANDALE, IA
LARRY CAIN; ELDORA, IA					

## NOTICE: CONTEST WILL RETURN NEXT MONTH



## CONGRATULATIONS, SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Every year, Consumers Energy directors and staff present scholarships to area award winners. Included are photos from local school events.



John Nelson, Director Pat VonAhnen, and Alexa Betting, Nevada High School



Education Program Coordinator Tami Kerwood and Isabelle Shields-Brommel, Ballard High School



Hunter Polley and Director Pat VonAhnen, West Marshall High School



## HOMEMADE BUTTER PECAN ICE CREAM

- 3 cups pecans  
salt, to taste
- 2 tablespoons butter, plus additional for a drizzle
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1½ quarts plus up to ¼ cup milk
- 4 eggs
- 2 cans sweetened condensed milk
- ½ pint whipping cream
- 1 tablespoon vanilla  
ice  
ice cream salt

Salt pecans to taste and drizzle with butter. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes. Melt brown sugar with 2 tablespoons butter. Add a small amount of milk, less than ¼ cup. Set aside to cool. Mix eggs, sweetened condensed milk, whipping cream, 1½ quarts milk and vanilla. Add to the brown sugar mixture, then add pecans. Pour into ice cream maker and use ice cream salt to melt ice. *Serves 20-24*

Natalie Herrington • Nevada  
Consumers Energy

## POPSIE'S ICE CREAM PIE

- 1¼ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ¼ cup sugar
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
- ¼ cup corn syrup
- ¼ cup peanut butter
- ¼ cup salted peanuts

Mix graham cracker crumbs, sugar and melted butter; press into a 9-inch pie pan. Spoon softened ice cream into crust. Mix corn syrup and peanut butter; drizzle on top of ice cream. Sprinkle salted peanuts on top. Freeze at least 2 hours. *Serves 8*

Betsy Jess • Alden  
Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative

## OATMEAL CRÈME PIE DESSERT

- 1 box Little Debbie oatmeal crème pies  
butter
- ½ gallon vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1 8-ounce container whipped topping, thawed  
chocolate syrup  
nuts, optional

Press oatmeal crème pies to cover the bottom of a buttered 9x13-inch pan to make a crust. Mix ice cream and whipped topping. Spread over pie crust and freeze. Cut into squares when ready to serve and top with chocolate syrup and nuts of your choice. *Serves 12*

Mark Martens • Wellman  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

## STRAWBERRY DELIGHT

- 1 sleeve graham crackers, crushed
- 1 cup sugar, divided
- ¼ cup margarine, melted
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 eggs
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 3-ounce package strawberry Jell-O
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 cups unsweetened strawberries, crushed
- 2 cups vanilla ice cream

Mix graham cracker crumbs, ½ cup sugar and margarine. Press into 9x13-inch pan. Beat cream cheese, ½ cup sugar, eggs and vanilla extract together. Pour over crust and bake at 375 degrees F for 15 minutes. Cool thoroughly. Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Chill until it begins to thicken. Add strawberries and ice cream and stir until smooth. Pour over filling and freeze until firm. You can use fresh or frozen strawberries. Let stand at room temperature 10 minutes before serving. *Serves 12*

Molly Depping • Dike  
Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative

## CHOCOLATE TOFFEE DESSERT

- 1 cup oatmeal
- ⅓ cup coconut
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons cocoa
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ gallon vanilla ice cream, softened

Mix oatmeal, coconut, brown sugar and melted butter together well. Bake in a shallow pan at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes. Toss lightly with a fork and cool. Put half the mixture in a 9x13-inch pan. In a small bowl, cream softened butter, cocoa and powdered sugar, mixing well. Add egg and vanilla, beat until light colored. In a large bowl, place softened ice cream and stir until smooth. Add chocolate mixture and beat until well blended. Pour ice cream mixture over crumb mixture in pan and top with remaining crumbs. Freeze. Serves 12

Linda Korver • Orange City  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

## APPLE PIE ICE CREAM

- 16 oatmeal cookies, crushed
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted, divided
- 4 large apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- 2 cups and 6 tablespoons white sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon and 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
- 3 cups half and half
- 1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste
- 8 large egg yolks
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream
- caramel ice cream topping, optional

Mix the crushed cookies with 2 tablespoons melted butter and press into a baking sheet. Bake at 375 degrees F for 5 minutes. Remove and cool completely, then crumble. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in apple slices, 6 tablespoons sugar and 2 teaspoons cinnamon. Cook until apples have lightly browned and the sugar has begun to caramelize, about 10 minutes. Remove from the pan and allow to cool completely. Pour half and half into a saucepan, add 2 cups sugar and the vanilla bean paste, stir to combine. Bring mixture to a simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally. Measure egg yolks into a separate bowl and beat until light yellow in color. Temper egg yolks by very slowly drizzling in about 2 cups of hot half and half mixture into the bowl with the egg yolks while whisking quickly. Then, pour the tempered egg yolk mixture back into the saucepan, whisking gently as you add it back in. Simmer over low heat for 5-7 minutes, until it thickens. The mixture should just barely start to stick to the back of a wooden spoon. Remove from heat, add heavy cream and 1 tablespoon cinnamon. Stir to combine, then cover and refrigerate until cool. Once completely cool, freeze the mixture in ice cream maker according to manufacturer's directions. Stir in cooled oatmeal cookie crumbles and caramelized apple mixture and transfer to a freezer container. You can also add a caramel ice cream topping, if desired. Freeze and enjoy! Yields 1 gallon

Emily McDowell • Paullina  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

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



## SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Heat sugar and water in a saucepan until sugar is dissolved. Add butter and let melt. Bring to boil over medium heat. Do not stir until it's a deep golden color, about 10-15 minutes. Remove from heat and add cream in a slow, steady stream, whisking quickly until well combined. Add vanilla and salt and stir again. Allow to cool. Store in refrigerator for up to two weeks. This sauce is great on ice cream, cheesecake, crepes or for dipping soft pretzels. Yields 1½ cups

Marcy Gherian • Alvord  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

## STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM

- 2 boxes frozen strawberries, thawed
- 2 cans sweetened condensed milk
- 6 cans strawberry pop

Thaw strawberries and stir together by hand with strawberry pop and sweetened condensed milk. As the pop fizzes, put in an ice cream freezer and freeze in usual manner. Yields 1½ gallons, approximately 48 4-ounce servings or 32 6-ounce servings

Darlene Thomas • Somers  
Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association

WANTED:

## TWISTS ON TURKEY

THE REWARD:  
\$25 BILL CREDIT FOR  
EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!

Deadline is July 31

With Thanksgiving in mind, we're looking for your "twists" on turkey for our November issue. Think beyond the full bird to brines, casseroles, appetizers and your favorite ways to use turkey leftovers. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name, recipe category and number of servings on all submissions.



EMAIL: [recipes@ieclmagazine.com](mailto:recipes@ieclmagazine.com)

MAIL: Recipes  
Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine  
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48  
Des Moines, IA 50322

# THE ART OF FORECASTING ELECTRICITY LOAD

BY JEFFREY GROENEWOLD

Summer is in full swing, and many of us are enjoying the sunshine and warmer weather – it's also a very busy season for Iowa's electric cooperatives.

Construction and capital improvement projects are underway, annual meetings are taking place, and homes and businesses are using more electricity to keep cool.

It takes a lot of electricity to meet this demand, and utilities must ensure power is available around the clock. So, have you ever wondered how your electric co-op forecasts electricity on the grid?

## Predicting power needs

Electric load forecasting is an important activity that many co-ops perform every day. When you hear things like “peak demand” or “prices are spiking,” it can sound complex and daunting. At the center of these challenges is forecasting.

Electric co-ops use a variety of analytics to predict factors like weather, sunshine, wind, cloud coverage, rain, power generation, and, yes, even the future use of electricity, including how much and when it will be used. All this information helps co-ops plan and prepare for the next day, week or month to ensure the grid runs smoothly – so we can all enjoy the summer with our family and friends. This practice is called “load forecasting.”

With the changing electric grid – from more renewable energy sources coming online to growing communities that need more electricity – load forecasting is crucial for managing the health of the power grid. Accurate forecasting is essential for grid operators to allocate necessary resources to keep the grid running successfully and allocate power generation effectively based on predictions. Proper forecasting aids in scheduling power plants and managing fuel supplies. This leads to reduced



Load forecasting informs future planning for infrastructure development, grid expansion, upgrades and interconnections.



Forecasting electricity load helps co-ops plan and prepare to ensure the grid runs smoothly and you have reliable power whenever you need it.



Co-ops anticipate electric peaks and supply disturbances with load forecasting, which also helps prevent the grid from failing.

operational costs and minimized waste in electricity production, transmission and distribution.

## Keeping the grid balanced and reliable

Maintaining stability is a primary concern for electric co-ops because the grid must constantly balance electricity supply with demand. Load forecasting enables co-ops to anticipate electric peaks and supply disturbances and helps prevent the grid from failing, which can lead to blackouts.

The integration of renewable energy sources like wind and solar adds complexity to load forecasting. Accurate forecasts help optimize the use of variable renewable energy. Combining load forecasts with renewable generation forecasts helps optimize the grid with tremendous economic benefits.

## Planning for a changing energy future

Short-term forecasts (daily or weekly) give grid operators the necessary

data to make informed decisions on what type of power generation to schedule, what electric market purchases or sales need to be made and how to mitigate risks of supply shortages or surpluses so that you can get the most affordable electricity to your home or business.

Additionally, load forecasting informs future planning for infrastructure development, grid expansion, upgrades and interconnections. With the growing demand for electricity, ensuring the grid can handle future increases in use is essential to maintaining reliability over time.

Forecasting electricity demand enables adaptation to changing power generation sources and demand patterns. It's an important piece of the puzzle for maintaining a reliable, efficient and cost-effective grid.

*Jeffrey Groenewold writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

# REA AT 90 YEARS: CELEBRATING THE LANDMARK LAW THAT BIRTHED RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

In May, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and other electric cooperative leaders joined officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Rural Electrification Act (REA), the law that helped bring power to rural America.

The REA was a New Deal-era effort that provided low-cost federal loans to build electric distribution systems in rural areas as part of the nation's recovery from the Great Depression.

The law spurred the creation of electric cooperatives across the country and laid the foundation for the USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS), which continues financing co-op infrastructure today. That support remains crucial as co-ops meet growing demand while maintaining reliable, affordable service.

"I'm thankful every day for the work that you all do," Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said during the event at USDA headquarters. "The work of co-ops together with RUS is the best of us, and that is what will keep America strong and the American dream available for all moving forward."

That partnership "is more important today than it's ever been. These investments in rural America still matter greatly," NRECA CEO Jim Matheson said. "They're critical to promoting reliability, affordability, economic opportunity and quality of life in rural America."

## History of the REA

Signed into law on May 20, 1936, the REA was one of the most significant pieces of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

When the REA was enacted, only 10% of U.S. farms and rural homes had electricity. Today, about 99% of the nation's farms have electric service.



NRECA CEO Jim Matheson talks about the tremendous, rich legacy of the REA at a May 27 event marking the law's 90th anniversary at the USDA's headquarters in Washington, D.C.  
Photo Source: Erin Sutherland, NRECA

The law transformed the Rural Electrification Administration, the predecessor to today's RUS, from a relief agency into a long-term loan program that supported the creation and growth of electric cooperatives.

"The REA allowed us to truly stitch our country together," Agriculture Deputy Secretary Stephen Vaden said. "It was our quick adoption of electric power throughout rural America that helped create the innovation and economic growth our country experienced throughout the 20th century."

Today, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 42 million Americans and continue modernizing their systems to improve reliability and control costs.

In 1994, Congress reorganized the Rural Electrification Administration into RUS, which carries out the REA's mission through programs supporting electric, telecommunications and water infrastructure.

"Investment in rural utility infrastructure ... is as important to rural life and the national economy today as it ever was," said Chris McLean, assistant administrator for the RUS Electric Loan Program.

"I dare say that few federal programs have been as successful as the Rural Electrification Act."

Some co-ops have been RUS borrowers since the 1930s, while others are among the newest borrowers in the country, McLean said.

## The partnership continues

Even after decades of progress, the partnership between RUS and electric cooperatives remains essential, speakers said at the USDA event.

"Having the USDA support rural America through utility programs for electric, broadband, water and telephone service is very important because it allows us to borrow money at a cheaper rate to keep America rolling," said Troy Amoss, CEO and general manager of Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative in Albia.

The RUS electric loan program helps co-ops build and upgrade the infrastructure needed to power a changing rural America while keeping rates affordable. The program also benefits taxpayers because co-ops repay the loans with interest.

Source: NRECA

# SEE IOWA'S BEST LINEWORKERS IN ACTION AT THE STATE FAIR

If you've ever wondered what it takes to keep the lights on, the second annual Iowa Electric Utilities Lineman Rodeo offers a front-row seat to one of the most skilled and essential professions in the utility industry.

The rodeo will take place Friday, Aug. 21, at Elwell Family Park on the Iowa State Fairgrounds. The event begins at 8 a.m., with gates opening at 7 a.m. Admission is free with paid fair admission.

Organized by the Iowa Utility Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the rodeo is supported by MidAmerican Energy, Alliant Energy, ITC and Prairie Energy Cooperative. The competition showcases the precision, expertise and commitment to safety required of lineworkers who build and maintain the electric grid.

### Putting skills to the test

Journeyman and apprentice teams will compete in four challenging

events designed to test the skills they use every day in the field. Competitions include pole climbing, cutout changes and simulated rescue scenarios. Contestants will be judged on safety, accuracy and efficiency as they complete each task.

Several Iowa electric cooperatives will be represented, including Prairie Energy Cooperative, T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative and Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative. The event provides an opportunity for cooperative lineworkers to demonstrate their expertise while connecting with fairgoers from across the state.

Scott Meinecke, director of safety and loss control for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, and Don Kelchen of ITC will serve as event emcees.

### More than a competition

In addition to the rodeo events, visitors can explore vendor and utility



exhibits throughout the day. Electric utilities, sponsors and industry partners will host tent spaces where attendees can learn more about careers in the utility industry, pick up promotional items and visit with lineworkers and other professionals.

Students and young people interested in a career in linework are especially encouraged to attend. Lineworkers will be available to answer questions about training, apprenticeships and career opportunities in this high-demand field.

Whether you're interested in utility careers or simply want to see some of Iowa's best lineworkers in action, the rodeo offers an entertaining and educational experience for the whole family.

## WANTED: RURAL IOWA PHOTOS

We're always looking for stunning images for the cover of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine. If we select your photo for a cover, we'll award you \$100.

### RECEIVE \$100 FOR A PUBLISHED PHOTO

#### How to enter:

- 1 Snap a photo capturing rural Iowa (image must be high quality, at least 1MB large; if taken on a phone, send us the largest version – bigger is better!).
- 2 Send us the original, high-resolution image file in an email to [editor@ieclmagazine.com](mailto:editor@ieclmagazine.com) with "Cover Submission" in the subject line.
- 3 Include your **name, service address** and the **name of your electric cooperative** in the email body to ensure you qualify for our contest. A **phone number** is also appreciated in case we need to contact you.

All eligible entries are reviewed and considered for each edition of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living*. Keep an eye out for next month's winner!



# FOUNDING FARMER: HOW GEORGE WASHINGTON SHAPED AMERICA AND AGRICULTURE

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

As our nation celebrates 250 years, few figures embody the promise and hope of America more than George Washington. I've always appreciated how he considered himself a farmer first and a statesman second.

I shared some stories about Washington when I was invited to give Memorial Day speeches at two local cemeteries this year. I wasn't sure if people would find this history as interesting as I do. Turns out the answer is yes!

Washington viewed agriculture as the backbone of a successful nation. While he proclaimed he'd "rather be on my farm than be emperor of the world," he was away from home for nearly nine years during the American Revolution. Then, he was gone again for another eight years (1789-1797) to serve as America's first president.

He always harbored a deep desire, though, to return to his beloved Mount Vernon. There, he could study and implement farming innovations and devote his life to the improvement of American agriculture. "Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful, and most noble employment of man," Washington stated.

## **"Freedom and property rights are inseparable"**

Washington's rural roots ran deep. He was born on a Virginia plantation in 1732. By the time he was 17, he pursued a lucrative career as a surveyor. He surveyed tens of thousands of acres during the next 50 years, from Virginia's western frontier to Mount Vernon itself.

Washington understood the importance of private property and its unique place in American society. "Freedom and property rights are inseparable," Washington wrote. "You can't have one without the other."



His favorite property was Mount Vernon, which came into the Washington family in 1674. He inherited the estate in 1761. The land was divided into five farms that encompassed nearly 8,000 acres of land during Washington's lifetime.

Washington was an exceptional farm manager. Mount Vernon included a diverse array of enterprises, from a grist mill to a whiskey distillery. It's interesting to note that whiskey-making was far and away Washington's most profitable ag business. By 1799, the year he passed away, his distillery was one of the largest in America.

He also had the mind of an accountant. He was a stickler for detailed records. "I shall begrudge no reasonable expense that will contribute to the improvement and neatness of my farms – for nothing pleases me better than to see them in good order, and everything trim, handsome and thriving about them," Washington wrote.

## **Crop rotations to composting**

For decades, tobacco was the main cash crop at Mount Vernon. By the 1760s, however, Washington knew this labor-intensive crop was an unsustainable option, due to the way tobacco plants depleted the soil and hastened erosion.

As he studied alternatives, Washington focused on crop rotations and soil

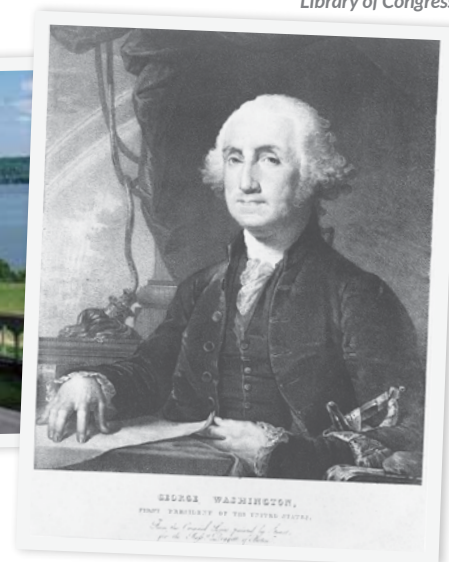


Photo Source:  
Library of Congress

regeneration – two things that are near and dear to my heart. He implemented a seven-year crop rotation of wheat, grains, pasture and other crops on Mount Vernon's farms.

Washington also focused on finding a fertilizer that would invigorate the lackluster soils at Mount Vernon. Nothing seemed to work as well as a mixture of manure and plant material that he allowed to "brew" together in a simple structure strategically located next to his stables.

Constructed around 1787, this was likely the first building in America devoted to composting.

Washington's switch from ineffective, old farming practices to new solutions was emblematic of America's pivot away from an eroding relationship with England. It's also symbolic of freedom and progress – things that continue to define the American spirit.

To Washington, America's success relied on advanced agricultural science, the sustainable harvest of the land's natural resources and a strong rural foundation. These are all worth celebrating as we honor America 250.

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



The magazine  
for members of  
Iowa's electric  
cooperatives

IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

July 2026

Visit our website at  
[www.consumersenergy.coop](http://www.consumersenergy.coop)



# SAFETY

IS THE BACKBONE OF RELIABILITY

Safety is **#1** at your **Touchstone Energy® cooperative**. This commitment to provide electrical safety has always been our priority so we can deliver reliable energy and peace of mind. That's why safety runs through everything we do.

