

# InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

April 2023

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



A WORD FROM



**Garrett Thompson**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Why an all-of-the-above strategy is necessary

government-provided tax incentives that make renewable generation sources affordable, we have seen exponential growth in renewable energy across the country, including in our area.

Recent innovations and advances in renewable technology have led to sharp decreases in cost, making it more feasible and accessible.

In recent years, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, (Franklin REC's power supplier) has adjusted our fuel mix by using more renewables in our generation portfolio. Over 25 percent of the energy delivered to Corn Belt Power's member cooperatives consists of renewable energy resources, such as wind and hydropower, up from 17 percent in 2015.

It takes this slow and logical approach to transition electric generation away from fossil fuels in such a way as to maintain the affordability and reliability of your power supply. An all-of-the-above energy approach favors the incorporation of renewable resources, like wind and solar, to work alongside traditional reliable sources of energy, such as oil and natural gas.

Often, there is minimal wind

or solar generation on the coldest or hottest days of the year. The intermittency of these resources alone will not sustain the increasing energy demands of our growing economy. Until battery storage technology advances, and the cost goes down, we must rely on dependable baseload, fossil fuel power plants to keep the lights on all the time.

That was evident in July of 2022 when the Southwest Power Pool, reached a new all-time peak load of 53,243 megawatts (MW). During that time, almost 80 percent of power generated to meet the load was made of up of either coal, natural gas, or nuclear.

I do not intend to scare you with these facts. Instead, it demonstrates the value of our abundant baseload generation sources in an all-of-the-above energy mix. If not for reliable baseload generation, made up of mostly fossil fuels, many of us would be in the dark during times of peak electric demand.

Our goal is to safely provide our member-owners with reliable, affordable, and responsible energy. We intend to do just that.

Over the last few years, there have been countless news stories about rolling blackouts and reliability issues across the country. We have even covered the topic in this newsletter. Specifically, you have read about the importance of an all-of-the-above energy strategy and how renewable energy growth has contributed to the closing of many baseload power plants across the country, potentially impacting the reliability of electric service.

The energy industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation as more renewable energy comes online and innovation and technology continue to advance. Green energy is certainly not new. Solar and wind power have been around for decades. Thanks to

*Congratulations to Chad Foster (left), member service advisor, and Chace Klein (right), crew chief, honored for their years of service to the members of Franklin REC.*

*Chad has been with Franklin REC for 25 years and Chace for 5 years.*

*Thank you, Chad and Chace—you are appreciated!*



# Grain bin requirements

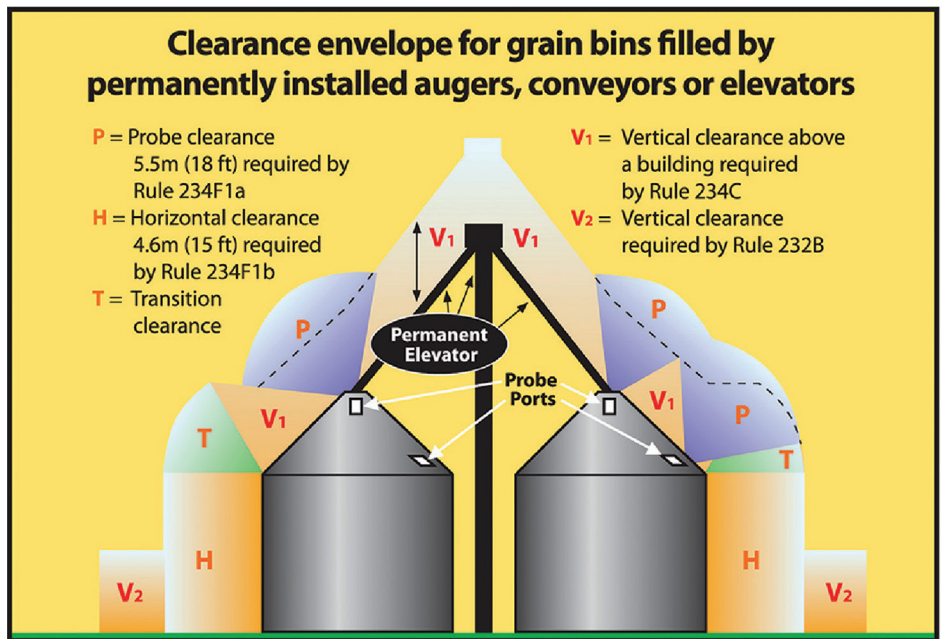
When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact Franklin REC. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors, and elevators.

The drawings at the right show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact Franklin REC or Corn Belt Power Cooperative.

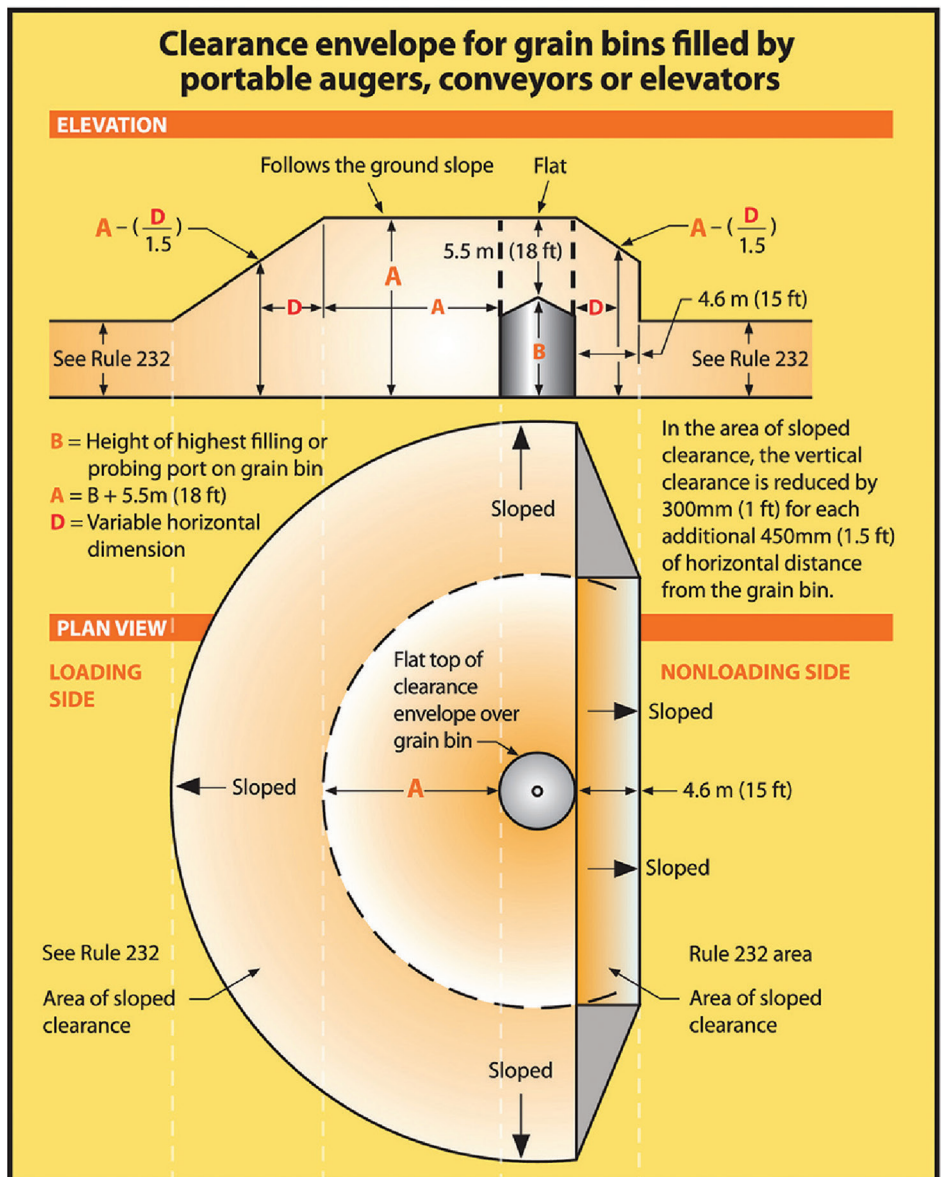


According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)C2-2017 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (The Iowa Utilities Board has adopted this language.)

**Disclaimer:** These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings refer to that publication. Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents of these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or for damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



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## Tame the humidity in your home

Condensation, “fog,” or frost on your home’s windows is a sure sign that they’re too inefficient to keep cold air out in the winter and in during the summer.

Like any excess moisture, it can eventually lead to mold and mildew. It also can damage your windows over time.

One solution: Replace drafty, single-pane windows with more energy-efficient double-pane versions. If that’s not an option right now, install storm windows to add an extra layer of glass, and try taming the humidity inside your home. Here’s how:

1. Install ventilating fans in every bathroom, and turn them on before every shower. Let the fan run until the “fog” clears out of the bathroom.
2. Use the hood fan over your stove when you cook. Cooking sends moisture into the air—along with lingering odors. Again, run the fan just long enough to clear the air.
3. Vent your clothes dryer to the outside. Periodically check the duct for leaks and for obstructions.
4. If you run humidifiers inside the home, don’t overdo it. It’s possible to add too much moisture to indoor air.



# CELEBRATE

## the Power Behind Your Power.

Lineworker Appreciation Day | April 10, 2023

## RECare MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

Franklin REC continues to extend a helping hand to those in need. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC established RECare, a program of members helping members.

RECare provides funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

### RECare Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

- I will make a one-time contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_



Return to Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative

# Strother attends Iowa Youth Leadership Academy sessions

In the fall of 2022, Lily Strother (*right*), a junior at Hampton-Dumont High School, participated in the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy in conjunction with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Lily completed the required three educational sessions to earn a \$500 scholarship to use toward her post-secondary education. The series focused on the cooperative business model, rural Iowa advocacy and civic involvement, and leadership. Lily will also be representing Franklin REC during the 2023 Iowa Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C., along with one other applicant.

Congratulations Lily, and thank you for being a youth advocate for rural Iowa!



## Linemen attend transformer workshop

Two of Franklin REC's apprentice linemen, Austin Neff (*left*) and Cole Marzen (*right*), attended the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's (IAEC) Transformer Workshop in February. Linemen from around the state of Iowa attended the hands-on educational training led by IAEC's director of safety and loss control, Scott Meinecke. Workshop participants were exposed to real-world situations without the real-world risk or danger.



Neff and Marzen were able to interact with small-scale energized transformers and work through several trouble-shooting scenarios in which transformer connections were compromised. Attending workshops allows our crew to train and educate in a safe, controlled environment before implementing their new skills on energized equipment.

## BOARD ROOM highlights

At their February meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved all new memberships
- Approved estate patronage retirements
- Approved Revolving Loan Fund interest rate
- Approved Nominating Committee report



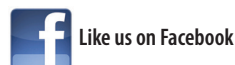
## Member satisfaction survey to be held in April

Franklin REC is a member-owned utility that aims to provide you with safe, reliable, and affordable electric service. As a member-owned entity, we rely on your feedback to ensure we are meeting your needs and providing the best service possible. Therefore, member satisfaction surveys serve as a vital component to our cooperative.

By surveying our members, we can identify areas in which we are excelling and areas in which we need to improve. The feedback can be used to make important decisions about how to allocate resources and improve operations.

In April, many of you will be randomly selected to take part in the satisfaction survey. This is an anonymous survey administered by an outside source. If you are selected, please take a moment and share with us your honest feedback. By understanding your needs, we can provide stronger service and ensure the long-term success of Franklin REC.

INTouch® is published monthly for members of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative  
1560 Highway 65 • PO Box 437 • Hampton, IA 50441  
PHONES: 641.456.2557 • FAX: 641.456.5183  
OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
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