

JANUARY 2025

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Franklin REC seeks
director candidates**

**How electricity demand
impacts co-ops**

Recipes: Bread winners

Save the date for Franklin REC's annual meeting ▶ See Page 4

CONTENTS



6



8



10

VOLUME 78 • ISSUE 1

3

STATEWIDE PERSPECTIVE

Board president reflects on statewide service

3

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a stainless steel bread machine

14

ENERGY MATTERS

Understanding battery storage options

15

OUT BACK

Finding beauty in the broken

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Cindi Miller, a Guthrie County REC member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

A GRATEFUL FAREWELL: REFLECTING ON MY STATEWIDE SERVICE

BY KENNY VANDENBERG



Last month, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) held its 2024 Annual Meeting in West Des Moines, with the theme of “Powering Lives, Empowering Communities.”

With a statewide leadership transition in 2024, it was a year of new beginnings at IAEC. But amidst change, we remain steadfast in our cooperative mission to help Iowa’s electric cooperatives power lives and empower communities every day.

The annual meeting was a bittersweet time for me as it signaled the end of my six-year tenure on the IAEC board, where I most recently served as board president. It has been an honor to represent the electric cooperatives of District 1 on the statewide board, and I found myself reflecting on the many things that our statewide trade association has accomplished in the past six years, including:

- Sending two crews of volunteer linemen to rural Guatemala (in 2019 and 2024) to bring the advantages of electricity to underserved areas.
- Maintaining a credible reputation while defending local co-op governance with legislators and regulators.
- Welcoming Leslie Kaufman as IAEC’s new executive vice president and general manager in July 2024.

None of these accomplishments would have happened without the foresight of the IAEC board along with support from Iowa’s electric co-ops and the statewide staff.

The power in stepping outside of one’s comfort zone

I want to thank the current board members as well as past board members who have helped me along the way over the past six years. There are not enough words to thank the IAEC staff for their help, knowledge and willingness to go above and beyond.

Serving on the IAEC board was the furthest thing from my mind all those years ago, but a few individuals challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and expand my knowledge of the electric industry. If it weren’t for their encouragement, I wouldn’t be here looking back on what was accomplished. I owe these folks a huge thank you for believing in me and giving me a little push.

So, as I pass the baton to new statewide directors at the start of a new year, I challenge each of you to step out of your comfort zone, try new things and get involved in your community. You will be amazed at what you will learn and the lifelong friendships that will develop.

I wish you and your family a blessed year!

Kenny Vandenberg is the outgoing board president for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and currently serves as board president of Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative.

- Keeping safety as our top priority, with fiscal responsibility also a priority.
- Seeing great participation in IAEC’s educational and safety training opportunities for co-op staff and directors.
- Witnessing cooperation among cooperatives and restoring power in the wake of two derechos.
- Meeting the COVID pandemic challenges head on and creating more ways to connect with Iowa’s electric cooperatives virtually and digitally.
- Launching our first statewide Shine the Light contest in 2021 to celebrate our cooperative commitment to community.
- Introducing our Cooperative Leadership in Iowa Program in 2023 to equip emerging leaders at Iowa’s electric cooperatives.

EDITOR’S CHOICE CONTEST

WIN A STAINLESS STEEL BREAD MACHINE!

The KBS stainless steel smart bread machine has 17 settings for making bread, jam, yogurt, cake, pizza dough and more! Plus, it features an automatic fruit and nut dispenser. It bakes up to a 2-pound loaf, with three crust settings in light, medium and dark. An ultra-quiet 710-watt motor makes kneading quick and even, strong and durable, so the dough is soft and elastic. A unique ceramic bread pan uses safe nanotechnology to achieve a nonstick effect.



ENTER ONLINE BY JAN. 31!

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month’s contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than Jan. 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 the iRobot Roomba from the November issue was **Edward Mosbach**, a **Prairie Energy Cooperative** member-consumer.

FROM YOUR BOARD ROOM

During the November meeting Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$71,424.46
- Approved 1 Source Solar operations and maintenance provider contract for solar arrays
- Approved AlsoEnergy as software provider for solar arrays

ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES AND PROGRAMS



Franklin REC invests in energy-efficiency programs to benefit the member-owners we serve.

For more information visit the Energy Center tab of our website at www.franklinrec.coop.



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ENSURING RELIABLE POWER: A COMMITMENT TO RESILIENCE AND RESPONSIVENESS

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



Reliable electricity is Franklin REC's daily priority. Sustaining a resilient electric distribution system requires

extensive planning with ongoing maintenance, inspections and system upgrades.

Iowa's electric cooperatives proactively test poles for possible deterioration and adhere to aggressive vegetation management plans to reduce outages and minimize damage to infrastructure.

During the past 10 years, Iowa's electric cooperatives have kept the lights on 99.96% of the time despite blizzards, ice storms, derechos, tornadoes and other extreme weather events. The average member served by an Iowa electric co-op experiences one outage per year, lasting approximately 138 minutes.

If a co-op does experience extensive damage to the grid, resulting in major, widespread outages, they work with neighboring co-ops for mutual aid to restore power to members as quickly and safely as possible.

A recent threat to reliability comes from misguided federal energy policy, which prioritizes intermittent power sources, such as solar and wind, over dispatchable sources such as coal and natural gas.

Iowa's electric cooperatives believe in a diverse power generation strategy to ensure reliability.

Our "all-of-the-above" generation portfolios include dispatchable sources of power because we can control the output and ramp up generation when needed to match sudden increases in electric demand. Learn more about this issue at www.IARuralpower.org

Garrett Thompson is the general manager/CEO at Franklin REC.

SAVE THE DATE

Save the date for Franklin REC's annual meeting! On April 1, you'll have the exclusive opportunity to vote as a cooperative member-owner, helping shape the future of our co-op. Your voice matters, and each vote makes a difference in guiding our community-driven organization forward. Don't miss this chance to participate!

2025 Annual Meeting
Tuesday, April 1



FRANKLIN REC SEEKS NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Franklin REC is currently seeking nominations for its board of directors. This is a unique opportunity for members of the cooperative to contribute to the future of the organization. Serving on the board allows individuals to represent their fellow co-op members, ensuring their voices are heard and the cooperative continues to thrive.

How can you become a nominee?

If you're ready to take on a leadership role, here are the qualifications to become a nominee for Franklin REC's board of directors:

- Be an active Franklin REC member in good standing.
- Be committed to the cooperative's values and mission.

- Have a primary residence within Franklin REC service territory.
- Must not have been an employee of Franklin REC within the last five years.
- Cannot be a close relative of a current employee.
- Have no felony convictions in the past 10 years.
- Be willing to attend all board and special meetings.
- Must not have any conflicts of interest with the cooperative or its business.

If you meet these qualifications and are passionate about serving your community, we encourage you to step forward and become a nominee for Franklin REC's board of directors.



Your voice and vision could help shape the future of our cooperative.

Ready to lead?

If you're interested in becoming a director nominee, please contact your district's nominating committee member; this information can be found in a separate mailing from Franklin REC. You may also contact us at 641-456-2557 to learn more.

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRIP TO D.C.

At Franklin REC, one way we invest in the next generation of rural Iowa leaders is by participating in the national electric cooperative Youth Tour program. We're looking for a high school sophomore or junior student with a passion for government and public service to apply for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to our nation's capital in June.

One student will be selected from eligible candidates to attend the 2025 Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., from June 15-21 along with 40 other

student leaders from Iowa. The Iowa Youth Tour group will join with nearly 2,000 other students from across the country as they learn more about electric cooperatives and American history while coming home with a greater understanding of their role as American citizens. Students will also learn about U.S. government and meet with their members of Congress. On the trip, students take in the sights of D.C. as they visit monuments, museums and historical landmarks. Students who go on Youth Tour often call it the trip of a lifetime!


We are currently accepting Youth Tour applications through Feb. 24. Eligible students must be a high school sophomore or junior, or home-schooled equivalent student, who lives in Franklin REC's service territory. If the student attends a school outside our service area, their parent/guardian must be an active member of Franklin REC.

The application process consists of completing our application form, which includes an essay question. We will conduct in-person interviews with finalists. You can download the application at www.franklinrec.coop/youth-tour or stop by our office for a printed copy. If you have additional questions regarding the Youth Tour, please contact Christy Mason at cmason@franklinrec.coop.



Apply for Youth Tour 2025 by Feb. 24!
Scan the QR code to find the Youth
Tour application.





THE EVER-CHANGING, FAST-GROWING DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY

BY SCOTT FLOOD

When rural electric cooperatives first strung power lines from farm to farm less than a century ago, most members had but a handful of light bulbs to power. With time, they added appliances like refrigerators, but we're sure they couldn't begin to imagine the number and variety of electrical devices in today's homes and garages.

Across the U.S., people use a growing amount of electricity at work, home, and with the growth of electric vehicles (EVs), even on the road.

The demand for electricity increased by 2.5% in 2024 and is expected to grow by 3.2% this year. That was after co-ops saw a 4.8% increase in

2022. Through 2029, the nation's peak demand is projected to grow by 38 gigawatts. That would be like adding another California-sized state to our nation's power grid.

Factors driving demand

The rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) is driving the development of massive data center facilities, often placed in electric co-op service territories to take advantage of inexpensive land and fewer neighbors to complain. By 2022, these facilities accounted for 2.5% of the nation's consumption of electricity – and by 2030, they'll use 7.5% of all electric power.

Data centers and facilities like warehouses require a large, steady supply of electricity 24 hours a day. That means the electric co-ops supplying them can't rely on intermittent sources of electricity, such as solar or wind energy, to handle the additional load. Instead, they need more of what's known as baseload or always-available power, much of which is currently generated by burning fossil fuels. The more we depend on technology, the more we'll need reliable baseload generation.

Baseload power is essential

Yet that's a problem because at the same time Americans are using more

electricity, power providers are being forced to shut down reliable sources of baseload power such as coal and nuclear power plants. Many large coal plants have been converted to use cleaner-burning natural gas, but others have been deemed too costly to convert and are prematurely being shut down. More than 110 gigawatts of always-available generation – enough to power about 35 million homes – is forecast to retire by 2033.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration’s forecast expects coal-fired generation to drop to half of today’s levels by 2030. Renewable energy will capture a growing share of the supply, but as noted, much renewable energy is not reliable enough to provide baseload power.

Demand will steadily increase

As electricity powers a growing share of life’s tools and conveniences, overall demand is expected to continue its steady growth through 2050. A great example is the efficiency of electric heat pumps. Federal and other subsidies and tax advantages are powering significant growth in their share of the home heating market.

In other words, at the same time everyone is using more electricity than ever, the supply of the most reliable source is drying up. Add in the uncertainty created by public policy debates around energy and climate change, and you can begin to understand why 19 states face a high risk of rolling blackouts between now and 2028.

The energy industry studies demand closely because construction of all types of generation is costly and lengthy – often taking more than a decade from groundbreaking to entering service.

As renewables become more efficient and cheaper to produce, their share of the power mix will only continue to grow. Someday soon, battery technology may reach the point where large-scale storage of renewable generation becomes possible, but until then, we’ll need more of those always-available power sources.

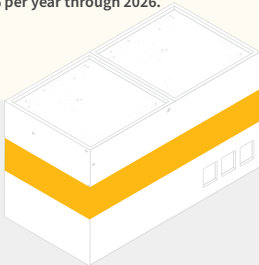
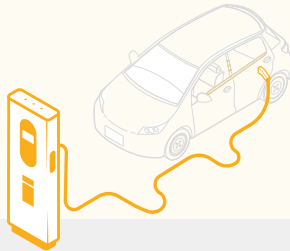
Scott Flood writes on a variety of energy-related topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Soaring Demand

After decades of flat or declining electricity demand, the U.S. is in the midst of a boom in power use. Recent government data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts (GW) between now and 2028. This trend would ordinarily be great news for the power industry. But government policies aimed at shutting down fossil-fuel-based generation and years-long delays in permitting and siting for new transmission lines are turning this power boon into a capacity crisis. Here are the primary demand drivers:

Electrification

Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are expected to increase overall U.S. energy consumption by 1% per year through 2026.



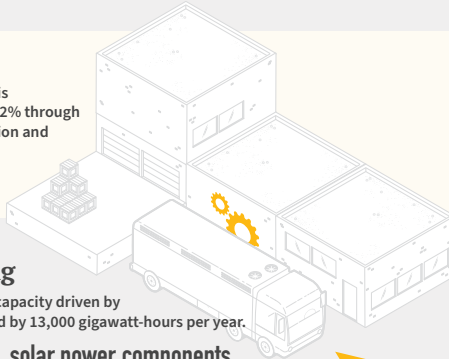
↑
65%

Data Centers

Driven by explosions in artificial intelligence, cryptocurrency and cloud computing, total U.S. data center load is projected to increase by 65% by 2050.

Economic Growth

Residential power consumption is expected to increase by 14% to 22% through 2050 due to increases in population and steady economic growth.



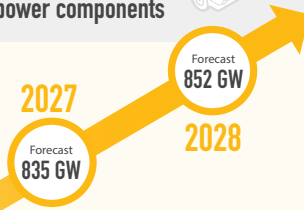
Manufacturing Growth/Onshoring

New, expanding and “onshored/reshored” manufacturing capacity driven by federal incentives is expected to increase industrial demand by 13,000 gigawatt-hours per year.

Key products: EVs, batteries, semiconductors, solar power components

Total Demand

Analysts predicted in 2023 that U.S. peak demand will increase by at least 38 GW over the next five years, nearly double the growth rate predicted in 2022.



BREAD WINNERS



ORANGE BREAD

- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- juice from 1 orange
- water
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 egg
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts, optional

Scrape orange rind to make zest, and squeeze juice from orange adding enough water to make 1 cup of liquid. Cream shortening, sugar, vanilla and egg. Add juice and remaining ingredients. Mix thoroughly. Bake in greased and floured loaf pan at 350 degrees F for 1 hour. *Yields 12 slices*

Carol Reeves • Sheldon
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

QUICK CARAMEL ROLLS

- 2 8-ounce cans refrigerated crescent rolls
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons water

Leaving crescent rolls in a roll, cut each can into 12 pieces. Place four across and six down in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Mix butter, brown sugar and water. Cook in microwave until it reaches a boil, stirring every minute – do not overcook! Pour mixture over crescent rolls. Bake at 350 degrees F for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and the edges are bubbly. Invert onto a serving platter.

Steph Messner • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

QUICK YEAST BREAD

- 1¼ cups warm milk
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 4 cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon quick yeast

Mix milk, butter, egg, sugar and honey. In a separate bowl, mix flour, salt and yeast. Mix dry ingredients together with liquid ingredients. Knead and then place in a warm place until doubled in size. Knead again for 5 minutes. Divide into two and place in greased small loaf pans to rise for 1 hour. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes, until brown. *Serves 4-6*

Alice Draper • Eldora
Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative

PISTACHIO BREAD

- 1 yellow cake mix
- 1 3-ounce box instant pistachio pudding
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¼ cup oil
- ¼ cup water
- 4 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ cup nuts
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix cake mix, pudding, sour cream, oil, water and eggs until smooth. Pour half of batter into two greased bread pans. Mix sugar, nuts and cinnamon. Pour mixture on top of batter. Cover with remaining batter. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes.

Kim Swanson • Lockridge
Access Energy Cooperative

CHALLAH

- 1 cup warm water
- 2¼ teaspoons active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon granulated white sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup honey
- 6 tablespoons grapeseed oil
- 4½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 large egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon water

In a large bowl, whisk together the warm water, yeast and granulated sugar. Set aside for 5-10 minutes, or until foamy. Add the eggs, honey and oil. Whisk well. Add mixture to a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook. Add the flour ½ cup at a time and the salt while mixing on a medium-high speed. Mix for 5-7 minutes, or until a very smooth dough forms. If using a hand mixer fitted with a dough hook, combine the ingredients until a shaggy dough forms, about 2 minutes on medium-low speed, then remove from mixing bowl and knead by hand for about 10 minutes. Grease another large bowl with oil. Place the dough inside the bowl, cover with plastic wrap. Proof for about 1 hour. Lightly flour a clean surface and rolling pin. Place the dough on the surface and punch it down four times with your hands. Cut the dough into six equal dough balls. Using a rolling pin, roll out six long pieces, then roll them into strands with your hands. Use three strands to make each braided loaf. Place the loaves on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, cover with plastic wrap and proof for one hour. In a small bowl, combine the egg yolks and water with a fork. Remove the plastic wrap from the loaves and brush them with egg wash. Bake at 325 degrees F for 15 minutes. Raise oven temperature to 425 degrees F and bake for 5 minutes. Remove from oven and cool on a wire rack. *Yields 2 loaves*

Addilyne Switzer • Beaman
Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative

KILLARNEY IRISH BROWN BREAD

- 3¼ cups wheat flour
- ¾ cup white flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2½ cups buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup (or honey)
- 4 teaspoons butter, melted

Mix the flours, soda and salt into a bowl. Make a well in the center and add the buttermilk, golden syrup and butter. Use a large spoon to mix gently, just until dry ingredients are incorporated. Shape into a round on a baking sheet that has been lined with waxed paper. Cut a cross in the top with a sharp knife. Bake at 400 degrees F for 40 minutes, until the top is slightly cracked and crusty. To check if done, tip the loaf and tap the base – it should sound hollow. Cool on a wire rack. *Serves 12*

Chris Daniels • Casey
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Visit www.ieclmagazine.com and search our online archive of hundreds of recipes in various categories.



CRANBERRY BRAN BREAD

- 1½ cups bran flakes
- 2 cups flour*
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup nuts, chopped
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup plus 2 teaspoons orange juice, divided
- 1 cup cranberries, halved
- 2 cups powdered sugar

Mix bran flakes, flour, baking powder, soda, salt, sugar, nuts, egg, vegetable oil, 1 cup orange juice and cranberries. You can substitute cranberries for ½ cup cranberries and ½ cup pomegranates. Bake in a greased loaf pan at 250 degrees F for 1 hour or until done. Mix 2 teaspoons orange juice with powdered sugar and drizzle over baked loaf.

**An alternative to 2 cups white flour would be ¼ cup brown rice flour, ½ cup milled flax seed, ½ cup almond flour, ¼ cup soy flour and ½ cup Nestrum Honey and Wheat cereal.*

Betty Sorden • Webster
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

WANTED:

SPRING-INSPIRED RECIPES

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

Deadline is Jan. 31

Submit recipes that use fresh, seasonal ingredients such as asparagus, spring greens, rhubarb and more! Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name, recipe category and number of servings on all submissions.



EMAIL: recipes@ieclmagazine.com
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

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

IOWA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES: ENSURING AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE POWER

Editor's Note: This article in Part 2 of a two-part series showcasing the impact of Iowa's electric cooperatives throughout all the state's 99 counties.

Iowa's electric cooperatives have a rich history of local ownership and member-driven governance, playing a pivotal role in bringing electricity to rural communities.

In the 1920s, while urban areas had widespread access to electricity, approximately 90% of rural residents lived without it. This lack of electrification made farm life arduous, with no indoor plumbing, reliable refrigeration, or safe lighting and heating. Investor-owned utilities at the time deemed it unprofitable to extend power lines to sparsely populated rural areas.

Recognizing this disparity, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935 through Executive Order 7037 as part of his New Deal initiatives. The following year, Congress passed the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, providing federal loans to support the installation of electrical distribution systems in rural regions.

These efforts enabled rural communities to form not-for-profit electric cooperatives, facilitating access to affordable and reliable electricity. By 1950, 80% of American farms had electricity, and by 1960, this figure rose to 99%.

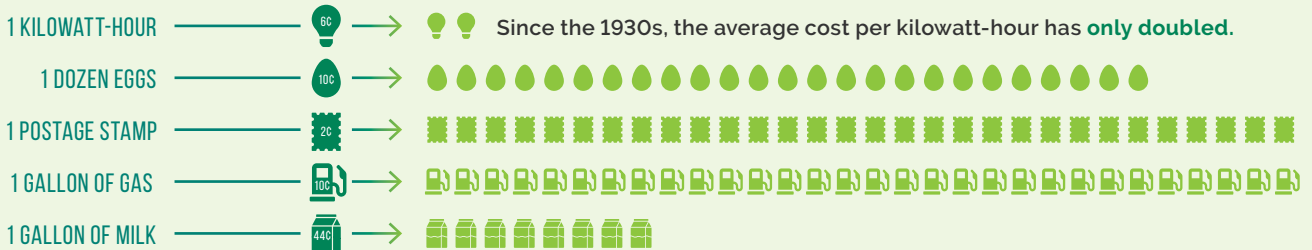
Doing more with less

Serving predominantly rural areas, Iowa's electric cooperatives manage extensive infrastructure with fewer customers per mile compared to investor-owned utilities. To address this challenge, co-ops structure rates to recover costs and collaborate with organizations like the Hawkeye Insurance Association and the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives to achieve economies of scale in supplies, insurance and technology solutions. This collaborative approach helps maintain affordability for members.

COST COMPARISON:

1930s

TODAY



In Iowa, the average household served by electric cooperatives spends about

\$5.25 PER DAY FOR ELECTRICITY

THAT'S CHEAPER THAN BUYING A SANDWICH OR SPECIALTY COFFEE DRINK!

The average household served by Iowa's electric cooperatives spends about \$5.25 per day on electricity, highlighting the cost-effectiveness of their services. Co-ops also offer energy efficiency programs, audits, rebates, and incentives to help members use energy wisely and reduce expenses. As member-owned entities, co-ops prioritize cost-based rates over profits, ensuring that financial decisions align with members' best interests.

Commitment to reliability

Ensuring reliable electricity is a top priority for Iowa's electric cooperatives. They conduct regular maintenance, infrastructure inspections and adhere to proactive vegetation management plans to minimize outages.

During the past 10 years, Iowa's electric cooperatives have kept the lights on 99.96% of the time despite

blizzards, ice storms, derechos, tornadoes or other extreme weather events. The average member served by an Iowa electric co-op experiences one outage per year, lasting approximately 138 minutes.

If a co-op does experience extensive outages, they work with neighboring co-ops for mutual aid to restore power to members as quickly and safely as possible.

During the past 10 years, Iowa's electric cooperatives have kept the lights on

99.96% OF THE TIME

DESPITE BLIZZARDS, ICE STORMS, TORNADOES, DERECHOS OR OTHER EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS.



Advocating for a balanced energy approach

A recent threat to reliability comes from misguided federal energy policy, which prioritizes intermittent sources of power like solar and wind over dispatchable sources like coal and natural gas.

Iowa's electric cooperatives believe in a diverse power generation strategy to ensure reliability. Our "all-of-the-above" generation portfolios include dispatchable sources of power because we can control the output and ramp up generation when needed to match sudden increases in electric demand.

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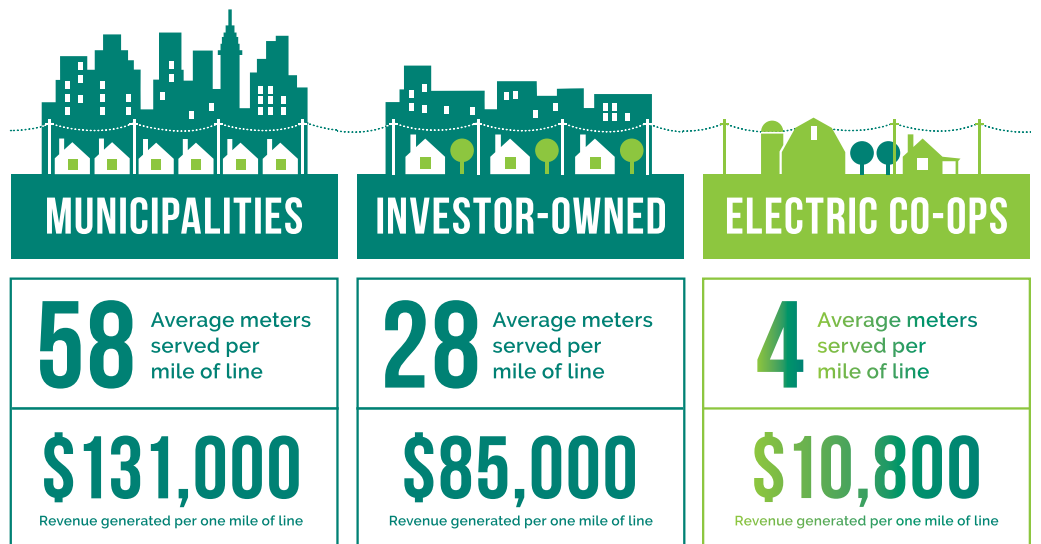
The average Iowa electric co-op member-owner experiences

1 OUTAGE

lasting an average of **138 MINUTES** PER YEAR

A legacy of service

From their inception, Iowa's electric cooperatives have been instrumental in transforming rural life by providing essential electric services. Their commitment to member-owners, focus on affordability, reliability and community collaboration continue to drive their mission, ensuring that the needs of rural Iowans are met with dedication and innovation.



FRANKLIN REC OPERATIONS: YEAR IN REVIEW

BY SCOTT HAGENSON

In 2024, Franklin REC's line crew had another busy and productive year. Once again, Mother Nature significantly impacted our work schedule. However, an unusually warm winter allowed crews to build power lines in January and February – activities that are typically postponed until spring.

When spring storms arrived, our crews shifted focus to repairing storm-related damages. The dry summer weather and mild fall provided an opportunity to complete several key projects.

Line crew updates

Franklin REC's six linemen oversee approximately 800 miles of power lines. This year, we welcomed two new apprentice linemen to the team. Along with maintaining the electric system, these dedicated linemen keep our equipment serviced, clean and safe.

One major equipment upgrade this year was the purchase of a skid loader. This versatile machine has become an invaluable addition, enabling crews to set poles, dig holes and handle various tasks more efficiently.

Key accomplishments in 2024

✔ Service changes and additions:

Crews removed 40 idle services at the request of members and built 9 miles of new single-phase overhead power lines, along with 2 miles of new three-phase line, as outlined in our work plan. These upgrades addressed aging infrastructure and

voltage issues caused by increased demand in certain areas. Additionally, nine overhead services were converted to underground at members' requests, and six new services were installed with underground wiring and transformers.

✔ Beeds Lake feeder line reroute:

Mid-summer, crews began rerouting a three-phase feeder line on the west side of Beeds Lake. The original line's location in a low, tree-filled area made it difficult to maintain. The project combined overhead and underground solutions and was approved by the board of directors as an improvement outside the work plan. The team completed the project successfully and to a high standard.

✔ Breaker maintenance:

Line breakers play a critical role in maintaining electric reliability and ensuring safety. In 2024, 45 line breakers were tested. The process involved having an outside contractor inspect and repair internal components while our crews removed, transported and reinstalled the breakers.

✔ Pole inspections and replacements:

By regulation, every mile of our power lines is patrolled annually, with detailed inspections conducted on 10% of the system. This year, these inspections identified 44 poles that needed replacement.

Tree management and system maintenance

Trees remain a significant challenge for the co-op, especially with the growing

impact of the Emerald Ash Borer. This year, the board allocated funds for outside contractors to assist with tree management alongside our crews. While progress has been steady, this will continue to be a priority in the coming years.

Our crews also inspected all underground switching cabinets and transformers, responding to 425 Iowa One Call requests for underground locates – an increase that reflects the ongoing transition to more underground infrastructure.

Looking ahead

In March 2024, Franklin REC's board of directors approved a \$3.2 million bid from Tjader & Highstrom Utility Construction to rebuild 25 miles of three-phase line. This project, part of our 2022-2025 work plan, will strengthen feeder lines across the system and is slated for completion by Oct. 1.

Commitment to members

Franklin REC remains committed to providing safe, reliable service to our members. The dedication of our board of directors, management and staff makes this possible. If you have any questions, concerns or feedback regarding your service, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to serving you in 2025.

Scott Hagenson is the line superintendent for Franklin REC.



UNCLAIMED PROPERTY – IT COULD BE YOURS

Franklin REC, located at 1560 Highway 65, PO Box 437, Hampton, Iowa, 50441, is holding unclaimed property resulting from a refund due to the persons listed below. The owner may claim this property by contacting us at the address above, emailing kringleb@franklinrec.coop or calling 641-456-2557. If the cooperative does not hear from the owner within six (6) months, we are allowed to retain this property in accordance with Iowa law or deliver this property to the State Treasurer’s Office for disposition as abandoned property.

Some of the names listed were sent checks that were never cashed or returned to the office. If you are holding a check, please contact the Franklin REC office. If you know the owner or are a family member of the owner, please have them contact the co-op and ask for Karen.

ABBAS, DUANE R	ACKLEY IA	HENKE FARM	WATERLOO IA	NEWELL, CORY	ACKLEY IA
ADELMUND, JENNIFER & LARRY	NEW HARTFORD IA	HISH, JASON	PRINCETON MN	NOVESHEN, KELLI M	AMES IA
BARKELA, DENNIS	SHEFFIELD IA	HISLOP, SCOTT	MAPLETON MN	PALMA, CARLOS & KIMBERLY	HAMPTON IA
BERTRAM, ROBERT E & DELLA M	JANESVILLE IA	HODAK, GERGA & ALLYSON	IOWA FALLS IA	PARKS, REX	HAMPTON IA
BOGENRIEF, JOY	SOUIX CITY IA	HODGE, KEN	ACKLEY IA	PETERSEN, RALPH R	FALKVILLE AL
BRANDT, RONALD AND SHARON	ACKLEY IA	IOWA WIRELESS SITE IA01	URBANDALE IA	RETLEFF, APRIL	ROWAN IA
BRUNS, LAVERA R	LATIMER IA	JACKSON, CHARLES R JR	ROCKWELL IA	RESER, DONALD	MESA AZ
BUTT, JERRY, C/O BRIAN BUTT	POLK CITY IA	JAMES, LAURA	ROCKWELL IA	ROBERTSON, NATHAN	HAMPTON IA
CONRIN, DOROTHY A	MASON CITY IA	JOHNSON, APRIL	ALDEN IA	ROCHA, PENNY K	ALEXANDER IA
DEAN, JAMES D	CEDAR FALLS IA	JOHNSTON, AMANDA	APINGTON IA	ROEGNER, LEOLA	HAMPTON IA
DEVRIES, PATRICIA K	HAMPTON IA	KANEB PIPELINE OPERATING PARTNERSHIP	COLUMBUS OH	ROELFS, ORVILLE	ACKLEY IA
DIRKSEN, TODD	HAMPTON IA	KEISTER, G B (GB KEISTER FARM TRUST)	EDINA MN	RUST, ROGER	HAMPTON IA
DODD, LLOYD	HAMPTON IA	KOPPEN, PEGGY H	BOONE IA	SBA INC – IA04381	BOCA RATON FL
DOW, JOSH	IOWA FALLS IA	KOTHENBEUTEL, DARYL F	CLEAR LAKE IA	SCHULTE, ENGELINA	SAINT PAUL MN
DURING, SARAH	MASON CITY IA	KOTHENBEUTEL, JANICE	ROCKWELL IA	SCHUMACHER, DENNIS (JR) OR JUDI	OMAHA NE
EDGINGTON, FLOYD JR	SHEFFIELD IA	KRABBE, JOSHUA	ALEXANDER IA	SENEY, KEVIN	CHARITON IA
EIDE, JEREMY	ALDEN IA	LAUDNER, KARL	SHEFFIELD IA	SHOWALTER, JOHN OR KATHY	HAMPTON IA
EISENTRAGER, DEAN E	HAMPTON IA	LENDERS ASSET MGMT	LITTLETON CO	SNYDER, JOAN	MESERVEY IA
ENDEVOUR FARMS (JEFF NICHOLAS)	CLEAR LAKE IA	LERDAL, MIKE	THORNTON IA	SUDTELGTE, JACOB J	IOWA FALLS IA
ENGELS, MAT	SWALEDALE IA	M & P FARMCO INC	MONTICELLO IA	SWIFT, GLADYS	IOWA FALLS IA
ETNYRE, JASON	ALGONA IA	MALLOY, DALLAS	IOWA FALLS IA	TAYLOR, DOROTHY	GENEVA IA
FOUST, BENJAMIN M	OVERBROOK KS	MCCOID, D'EARL	HAMPTON IA	TUPPER, DEBORAH S	CHARITON IA
GABBARD, MICHELLE R	LYLE MN	MCDOWELL, SAM & REBECCA	PAHRUMP NV	VOSBURGH, LELIA J	CLEAR LAKE IA
GARZA, JUAN	BRITT IA	MCPHERSON, TRACEY	ALDEN IA	WATKINS, HILARY	IOWA FALLS IA
GERDANE LIVESTOCK FARM	HAMPTON IA	MEYER, ALAN W	IOWA FALLS IA	WEBER, GEORGIA L	IOWA FALLS IA
GRAFTON, COLLEEN	POULSBO WA	MEYER, ELMER R	IOWA FALLS IA	WEISS, DAN	VICTORIA BC, CANADA
GREVE, DONALD	ROCKWELL IA	MEYER, GLENN E	IOWA FALLS IA	WHITLEY, SANDERS W	TUSCUMBIA AL
HALLER FARM ACCOUNT	JAMESTOWN OH	MILLER, ELIZ. (ELIZABETH M PRICE)	GRANVILLE OH	WILLIS, SARAH	CLEAR LAKE IA
HAMILTON, GLEN (ELLA)	BOX ELDER SD	MILLER, HOWARD P	SUN CITY WEST AZ	WINSLOW, FRANK	BELLEVILLE IL
HANSEN BROTHERS FARMS	VIENNA VA	MOSER, JIM AND LINDA K	GERING NE	WOLCOTT, ARTHUR W	MANLY IA
HARTSON, DARYL	FREDERICKSBURG IA	MYERS, STEVE	HAMPTON IA	ZWECK, CHASIDY	MASON CITY IA
HEINS, MARTHA E	CLEAR LAKE IA				

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Did you know you can see your energy usage on your smartphone, desktop or tablet?

Through the SmartHub app, you can monitor and download your daily energy consumption 24/7 and see how it is trending over time. SmartHub also allows you to access account information, check balances, make payments and view your service history.

The SmartHub app is also available from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Visit www.franklinrec.coop for more information.

CELEBRATING COOPERATIVE WORKIVERSARIES



Congratulations to Scott Hagenson on celebrating two years with Franklin REC. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

CONGRATULATIONS, SCOTT!

UTILITY-SCALE VS. RESIDENTIAL BATTERY STORAGE

BY JENNAH DENNEY

In an ever-changing energy landscape, electric cooperatives are on the cutting edge of delivering reliable, resilient power to the local communities they serve. Co-ops utilize a variety of generation and grid technologies to provide power, including battery energy storage – but not all battery storage systems are the same, and understanding the key differences between each is important. It's also important to recognize that the technology and cost-effectiveness of battery storage options are still being developed.

Utility-scale battery systems are designed for large-scale energy storage to support the electric grid, requiring high initial investments but offering significant long-term savings and benefits. In contrast, residential battery systems cater to individual homes, providing more energy independence and savings while still representing a significant investment.

Utility-scale battery storage

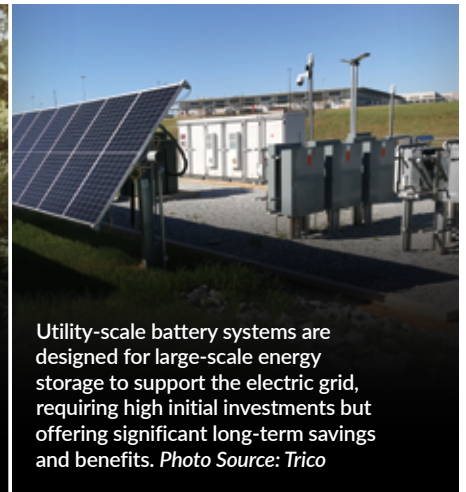
Utility-scale storage systems are large installations designed to store vast amounts of electricity. Typically connected to the grid, these systems can store power generated from both baseload and renewable energy sources, with capacities ranging from several megawatt-hours (MWh) to gigawatt-hours (GWh).

While most battery storage system projects are developed with a primary application in mind, they can also be optimized for multiple applications, which adds significant additional value.

Utility-scale storage systems could play a crucial role in grid stabilization by absorbing excess energy during periods of low electricity demand and releasing it during peak demand, which is particularly



Often paired with residential solar panels, residential battery storage systems allow homeowners to store excess energy generated during the day for use later at night or during power outages. *Photo Source: LG*



Utility-scale battery systems are designed for large-scale energy storage to support the electric grid, requiring high initial investments but offering significant long-term savings and benefits. *Photo Source: Trico*

beneficial in rural areas where demand can fluctuate significantly.

Electric cooperatives can also deploy utility-scale storage systems at electric substations to enhance grid resilience and ensure a steady supply of electricity as needed. In the event of a power outage, utility-scale storage systems can provide backup power to critical infrastructure, such as hospitals and emergency services.

Residential battery storage

Residential battery storage systems are compact installations designed for individual homes, typically ranging from a few kilowatt-hours (kWh) to tens of kWh in capacity. Often paired with residential solar panels, these smaller systems allow homeowners to store excess energy generated during the day for use later at night or during power outages, providing a level of energy independence.

By utilizing stored energy, homeowners can reduce their energy bills and ensure a steady supply of power, even during grid disruptions and outages, enhancing the resilience of rural households. However, the initial cost of purchasing and

installing a residential storage system can be expensive, which may deter some homeowners.

Electric co-ops are increasingly recognizing the benefits of residential battery storage. These systems not only support grid stability and resilience but also help reduce costs for co-ops and their members. Some co-ops offer energy storage programs and rates, which means homeowners can contribute to a more efficient and reliable energy system. This benefits the entire community.

As electric co-ops navigate the complexities of modern energy supply and battery storage continues to evolve, the strategic deployment of both utility-scale and residential battery energy storage systems can potentially play a transformative role.

By understanding the unique advantages and challenges of each type of system, co-ops and their members can make informed decisions that enhance grid reliability, reduce costs and improve resilience for their communities.

Jennah Denney writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

FINDING BEAUTY IN THE BROKEN

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

Time is a funny thing, isn't it? We spend time. We kill time. We lose track of time. We invest time. And yet time keeps passing – something we're keenly aware of at the start of each new year.

Now's the time when many people resolve to start fresh, leaving the past behind. Just think of all the New Year's resolutions that abound. I'm going to eat healthier! I'm going to exercise more! I'm going to spend less time on social media! I'm going to save more money! (Do any of these sound familiar?)

Yet how many of these big goals become big accomplishments? It depends on who you ask. According to the Baylor College of Medicine, 88% of people who set New Year's resolutions fail them within the first two weeks. (Been there, done that.) Psychology articles in magazines like *TIME* and *Forbes* state that only 8% of people stick with their resolutions the entire year.

Maybe we need a different perspective to make the most of the year ahead. Perhaps we all could use fewer resolutions and a little more kintsugi. What's that, you ask? This remarkable Japanese art form finds beauty in the broken. While it dates back hundreds of years, it's a compelling metaphor for modern life.

Kintsugi is built on the idea that in embracing flaws and imperfections, you can create an even stronger, more exquisite piece of art. In kintsugi, the artist fixes broken pottery with gold. Instead of repairing the item like new, this technique highlights the "scars" as a part of the design.

From broken bowls to books

This concept captured my attention during a "Come to the Quiet" retreat at the Woodlawn Christian Church in Lake City in March 2024. Lorene Knobbe, a Lake City native who lives in Davenport, displayed

a gorgeous kintsugi bowl to help us visualize one of the lessons.

Lorene, a retired elementary school teacher, now provides spiritual direction through her ties to the Benet House Retreat Center at St. Mary Monastery in Rock Island, Illinois. She serves as a facilitator for church retreats and similar events.

As she held her kintsugi bowl on that cold winter afternoon in Lake City, she encouraged everyone to think of your life as a book with chapters and stories. Some of your chapters are filled with fun, exciting stories. Other chapters are dark and painful. None of the chapters can ever be erased, though. All of them will always be part of you – just like the cracks in the kintsugi bowl.

That isn't necessarily comforting, especially if you're struggling to reach New Year's resolutions, or you're overwhelmed by a trauma-shattered life.

The good news? You don't need to try to hide the cracks as you put the pieces back together. Instead, highlight those repaired seams, which add strength, beauty and immeasurable value.

Reframing life's experiences

Kintsugi isn't just for broken pottery or shattered ceramics. Kintsugi can be found in people whose bodies are injured or failing. While these folks can't do what they once did, their spirit can become more beautiful, helping the rest of us see the divine more clearly.

Kintsugi is also reflected in people who have learned to "rewire" their brain to focus on the positive instead of the negative. These amazing souls routinely express gratitude, knowing that there's always something to be thankful for.

The chapters of these authentic life stories are filled with resilience and hope. They can also inspire the most practical resolution for the year ahead – embrace the principles of kintsugi. What a powerful way to reframe life's experiences and write new chapters in our story, all by finding beauty in the broken.

Darcy Dougherty Maulsby lives near her family's Century Farm northwest of Lake City. Visit her at www.darcymaulsby.com.



A kintsugi bowl that was shared during the "Come to the Quiet" retreat in Lake City.



IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

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