

● AUGUST 2026

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**2026 Shine the Light
nominees announced**

**Understanding your
electric bill**

Cool and crisp recipes

Franklin REC's approach to large electric loads ▶ See Page 4

FROM YOUR BOARDROOM

During the June meeting, Franklin REC directors considered the following:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$80,843.85
- Approved Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' membership dues for 2026-2027
- Approved a donation to the Cooperative Family Fun
- Approved changes to Tariff – Section 10.3

FRANKLIN REC'S APPROACH TO LARGE ELECTRIC LOADS

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



Over the past several years, communities across the country have seen growing interest from industries that require large amounts

of electricity, including data centers, advanced manufacturing facilities and other technology-driven operations. As discussions about these projects continue, members have asked how a large electric load would impact Franklin REC and the cooperative's existing members.

First and foremost, Franklin REC's responsibility is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service to all members. Any large-load project must be evaluated through that lens.

Infrastructure, reliability considerations

One common misconception is that existing members would be asked to pay for the infrastructure needed to serve a large industrial customer. That is not the case. Large-load projects are required to fund the infrastructure necessary to serve their load, including transmission facilities, substations, distribution infrastructure and any generation resources required to support the project. These costs are not shifted to Franklin REC's existing members.

Another question we often hear is whether new power plants would need to be built to serve a large load. In many cases, the answer is no. Franklin REC, Corn Belt Power Cooperative and our generation partners continually evaluate available capacity across the electric system. Any project would be thoroughly studied to ensure sufficient power is available before service commitments are made.

Members also ask whether serving a large customer could divert power from homes, farms or local businesses during periods of high demand. The answer is no. Franklin REC would not

shut off service to existing members or implement rolling outages in order to keep electricity flowing to a specific customer. Reliability standards remain in place for all members, and the cooperative continues to plan and operate the system accordingly.

Cost-of-service evaluations

Another important protection involves rates. Franklin REC regularly conducts cost-of-service studies that evaluate the actual cost of serving each member class. These studies help ensure that residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial members each pay rates that reflect the cost of providing service to their respective groups. Large-load customers are evaluated separately, and any rate structure developed for a project would be designed specifically around the costs and requirements associated with serving that load.

In addition, large-load contracts often include long-term commitments, minimum billing requirements and other protections designed to ensure that the costs associated with serving the project remain with the project itself rather than shifting to existing members.

Our commitment to members

As with any major decision, Franklin REC's board of directors would carefully evaluate the long-term impact on the cooperative and its members before moving forward with a large-load project.

As discussions around large-load development continue, Franklin REC remains committed to evaluating every opportunity carefully and transparently. Our focus will always remain on protecting reliability, maintaining fairness among member classes, and ensuring that any new load provides value to the cooperative and its members while paying its own way on the electric system.

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



Office

1560 Highway 65 • P.O. Box 437
Hampton, IA 50441

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Closed Saturdays, Sundays and holidays

Telephone Number

641-456-2557
Calls answered 24/7

Secure Pay-by-Phone Number

1-855-940-3953

Website

www.franklinrec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FRANKLIN REC HOSTS DISCUSSION WITH U.S. SEN. CHUCK GRASSLEY

Franklin REC recently hosted U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley during a visit to the area. The discussion focused on issues impacting rural communities and the electric utility industry, and fellow local electric cooperatives also joined for the conversation.

Topics included electric reliability, the uncertainty surrounding future generation resources, and the challenges of ensuring dependable and affordable power for rural consumers.

Cooperative representatives emphasized the importance of maintaining an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy that utilizes a diverse mix of generation resources to support reliability, affordability and energy security. As energy demand continues to grow, a balanced approach to generation helps ensure that electric cooperatives can continue to provide dependable service to the communities they serve.

Federal funding programs

The conversation also highlighted U.S. Department of Agriculture funding programs that electric cooperatives utilize to support economic development in rural communities. Through loan and grant opportunities, cooperatives can help local businesses expand, create jobs and invest in projects that strengthen the local economy. These programs



provide valuable resources that help rural communities remain vibrant and positioned for future growth.

Additionally, participants discussed the Federal Emergency Management disaster assistance programs and the importance of disaster preparedness and recovery resources for rural areas. Access to these programs can help communities and utilities respond more effectively following severe weather events and other emergencies.

Advocating for our co-op and members

Franklin REC values opportunities to engage with elected officials and industry partners to share the perspectives of the cooperative and its members. Discussions such as these help ensure that the unique needs and challenges facing rural electric cooperatives and rural communities remain part of ongoing conversations at the state and federal levels.

SHARING SUCCESS WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Franklin REC is proud to support the West Fork Agriculture and FFA Department with a contribution toward its new greenhouse project.

The greenhouse will be constructed adjacent to the existing agriculture building on the West Fork School campus, providing students with valuable hands-on learning opportunities. The facility will

allow students to grow a variety of horticultural crops, experiment with different growing environments and gain practical experience in a real-world agricultural setting.

Through a partnership between Franklin REC, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, funding was provided to help make this



project a reality. This investment reflects the cooperatives' shared commitment to supporting education and creating opportunities for students to develop skills that will benefit them in the future.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

August is typically one of the warmest months of the year, and that means air conditioners across our community are working overtime to keep homes comfortable. During periods of extreme heat, many members may see an increase in their electric bill and wonder what factors contribute to the cost of electricity.

At Franklin REC, we believe understanding your electric bill is an important part of being an informed member. While the total amount due may seem like a single number, it actually reflects several different costs associated with delivering reliable electricity to your home or business.



Energy use impacts your bill

The largest factor is often the amount of energy you use. Electricity is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and the more energy your household consumes, the higher your bill will be. During the summer, air conditioning is typically the largest driver of increased energy use. When temperatures climb into the 90s or higher, our cooling systems run longer and more frequently, consuming significantly more electricity than they do during milder weather.



Operational and infrastructure costs

Transmission costs also play a role. Before electricity reaches your home, it must travel across a network of high-voltage transmission lines that

connect power plants to local distribution systems. Transmission equipment requires ongoing maintenance and upgrades to ensure reliability, especially as electricity demand continues to grow.

Closer to home, Franklin REC maintains the local electric distribution system – utility poles, power lines, transformers, substations and other essential equipment that safely delivers power to members. Maintaining this equipment is covered through the monthly facility charge. This is a flat monthly fee all members pay based on their electric service size, regardless of how much electricity they use. This fixed fee ensures all members pay a fair share of the basic operational costs required to keep the power grid reliable and ready to serve your home or business. Whether a member uses a little electricity or a lot, we must maintain infrastructure and have crews, equipment and resources available to provide electricity around the clock.



Wholesale power costs

Summer temperatures can also influence costs in less obvious ways. When the demand for electricity is high across a region, wholesale power prices can increase. Utilities and grid operators must ensure enough generation is available to meet peak demand, and those costs can be reflected throughout the electric system.



Ways to lower your energy use

The good news is that simple steps to lower energy use can make a meaningful difference. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher when you're away, replacing dirty HVAC filters, using ceiling fans, sealing air leaks and avoiding the use of major appliances during the hottest parts of the day can help reduce energy consumption and lower your bill.

Franklin REC's mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity while being transparent about the factors that impact energy costs. We understand every dollar matters, and we are committed to making smart investments that keep the lights on and support the communities we serve.

If you ever have questions about your electric bill or co-op programs designed to help you save, please reach out. We're here to help you make informed decisions that work for your household.

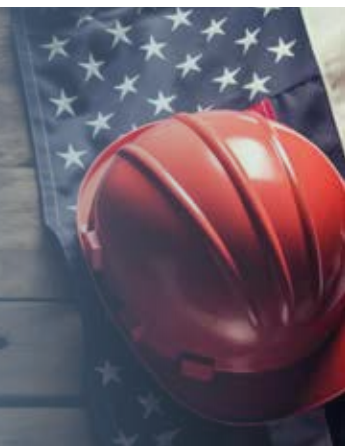
Thank you for allowing Franklin REC to serve you.

LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSURE

- Franklin REC offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of Labor Day.
- Beginning Tuesday, Sept. 8, office hours will transition to 7 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

If you experience a power outage or have concerns regarding your electric service, our phones are answered 24/7 at 641-456-2557.

We wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable Labor Day weekend!



CAREER CENTER TO OPEN THIS FALL

BY VALERIA GONZALEZ



Beginning this fall, the Franklin County North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) Career Center will open its doors as a hub for innovative concurrent enrollment opportunities, allowing high school students to earn both college and high school credit simultaneously.

The Career Center will serve juniors and seniors from Belmond-Klemme, Hampton-Dumont-CAL and West Fork High Schools, providing hands-on career and technical education pathways that help students gain valuable credentials while potentially saving an estimated \$10,000 in future college tuition costs. By earning college credits and industry-recognized certifications before graduation, students can accelerate their educational and career goals while reducing future student debt.

Educational pathways

Students will have access to three career pathways: welding, construction and health sciences. Those enrolled in the welding and construction programs will earn a NIACC welding or building trades diploma.



The Franklin County NIACC Career Center is located at 1276 Olive Ave. in Hampton.

Students participating in the health sciences academy will earn their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential, providing a strong foundation for careers in healthcare. The CNA pathway also fulfills foundational coursework and many prerequisites for advanced programs such as nursing, physical therapy assistant, medical assistant, licensed practical nursing and other healthcare professions.

In addition to serving high school students, the Career Center will offer continuing education opportunities for community members, including English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) classes, and a variety of community enrichment and hobby courses.

Local public-private collaboration

The Franklin County NIACC Career Center is the result of a strong partnership among NIACC, local school districts, and regional business and industry leaders. These collaborations are essential for developing a skilled workforce and creating sustainable talent pipelines that align with local economic needs.

Through expanded Career and Technical Education opportunities, the Career Center will play a key role in strengthening the regional workforce, supporting economic growth, and preparing students and community members for future success.

Valeria Gonzalez is the director of the NIACC Career Center - Franklin County.

SAVE THE DATE: FRANKLIN REC'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Wednesday, Sept. 16
5-7 p.m.
Old Geneva School

Franklin REC is pleased to invite members to a special celebration in honor of our 90th anniversary.

As a thank you to our membership, we will host a Member Appreciation Event on Wednesday, Sept. 16, at the Old Geneva School, 704 Washington Ave., Geneva, IA, from 5-7 p.m.

Members are encouraged to join us for an evening of community connection with Franklin REC employees and board members. The event will feature complimentary food, opportunities to connect with your cooperative team and chances to win prizes.

This celebration is our way of showing appreciation for the members who make Franklin REC's work possible every day.

Additional event details will be shared in upcoming mailings - watch your mailbox for more information. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you.

If you RSVP and join, you will receive a one-time \$5 bill credit, plus a chance to win a gift card in a random drawing!



IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

The magazine
for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives

August 2026

Visit our website at www.franklinrec.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.



Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections®