

SEPTEMBER 2026

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Meet this year's
Shine the Light winners**

**Plug-in solar:
What you need to know**

Chicken dinner recipes

Join Franklin REC as we celebrate 90 years ▶ See Page 5

FROM YOUR BOARDROOM

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

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$27,680.49
- Appointed a Basin Electric Power Cooperative annual meeting voting delegate
- Approved a donation to Franklin REC's Shine the Light nominees
- Approved changes to Handbook – Section 4.14
- Approved tax forms 990, 990T and 1120

STANDING STRONG FOR 90 YEARS

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



This September, Franklin REC will celebrate 90 years of service to our members and the rural communities we call home.

The traditional symbol for a 90th anniversary is granite, a material known for its strength, durability and ability to withstand the passage of time. It is a fitting symbol for this milestone. For nine decades, Franklin REC has stood firm through changing times, challenging conditions and remarkable advancements in the way electricity is generated, delivered and used.

But no cooperative stands on its own.

Franklin REC was built upon the determination of rural residents who believed their homes, farms and communities deserved the same opportunities that electricity was bringing to America's cities. When investor-owned utilities determined that extending electric service into sparsely populated areas was not financially worthwhile, rural people came together and found another way. They formed cooperatives, elected directors from among their neighbors and built an electric system that belonged to the people it served.

An enduring commitment to members, communities

That cooperative spirit remains the foundation of Franklin REC today.

Our poles, wires, substations, trucks and technology may look very different than they did in 1936, but our purpose has remained remarkably constant: to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity while improving the quality of life in the communities we serve.

It is also fitting that we celebrate this anniversary in September, as another harvest begins across north central Iowa. Harvest is a powerful reminder of what keeps rural Iowa moving. It

reflects hard work, patience, resilience and faith in the future – many of the same qualities that have sustained Franklin REC throughout its history.

For 90 years, electricity supplied by the cooperative has helped power the changing needs of rural life. It has lit homes and barns, pumped water, dried grain, powered businesses, supported schools and communities, and made countless improvements possible. Behind all that progress have been the people who live and work here.

Our members are not simply customers of Franklin REC; they are the reason the cooperative exists. The strength of Franklin REC has always come from the people and communities we serve. That was true in 1936, it is true today, and it will continue to guide us into the future.

Carrying our legacy forward

As we recognize this milestone, we are grateful for the generations of members, directors and employees who helped build Franklin REC into the cooperative it is today. We also recognize that reaching 90 years is not only an opportunity to look back but is a responsibility to carry that legacy forward. To remain dependable, adapt to changing needs, and continue serving the next generation with the same determination that inspired our founders.

Like granite, Franklin REC has been shaped over time and strengthened through pressure. But our firmest foundation will always be rural Iowa: its people, its land, its communities and its enduring cooperative spirit.

We invite our members to join us Sept. 16 for our Member Appreciation Event as we celebrate 90 years together. This anniversary belongs to all of us, and we look forward to honoring our shared history and the future we will continue building together.

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



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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

CELEBRATING OUR TEAM'S MILESTONES

At Franklin REC, we know our success is powered by the dedicated people behind the scenes. This month, we're proud to celebrate three employee anniversaries and recognize the contributions they make each day.

Please join us in congratulating Emily Rush, Jens Hovenga and Christy Mason on their work anniversaries with Franklin REC. Their dedication, hard work and commitment to serving our members and communities help make our cooperative stronger every day. We appreciate all they do and thank them for the positive impact they continue to have.

Congratulations on these well-earned milestones!



EMILY RUSH

Accountant

15 YEARS OF SERVICE



JENS HOVENGA

Warehouseman

12 YEARS OF SERVICE



CHRISTY MASON

Administrative Assistant

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE 90 YEARS

Don't miss Franklin REC's 90th Anniversary Celebration on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 5 - 7 p.m. at the Geneva School.



This come-and-go, open house-style event is the perfect opportunity to enjoy a delicious ribeye steak sandwich meal grilled by the Franklin County Cattlemen, followed by anniversary cake and ice cream. Throughout the evening, we'll have door prize drawings every 15 minutes and will wrap up the celebration with a fun game of BINGO.

Spend the evening visiting with neighbors, Franklin REC board members and employees while celebrating 90 years of serving our members and communities.

We hope you'll join us! Every attendee will receive a \$5 bill credit and be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card.

FRANKLIN REC ALTERNATIVE FUND

Franklin REC's voluntary Alternative Energy Program allows members to support the development of renewable energy projects with contributions to the fund. The funding for the program, provided by our members, supports the development of alternative energy production facilities in Iowa. These contributions not only provide the opportunity for alternative energy to be purchased but also assist in the development of nontraditional generation in Iowa.

This is a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that is automatically added to monthly bills in \$1 increments. To enroll in the Alternative Energy Program, complete the form below.



ALTERNATIVE ENERGY FUND AUTHORIZATION FORM

One-time Contribution \$ _____

Payments made payable to Franklin REC.

Monthly Contribution \$ _____

This amount will be automatically applied to your monthly electric bill. You may opt-in or opt-out of the program at any time.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip Code _____

Billing Account Number _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Clip this portion of the magazine and return to Franklin REC, PO Box 437, Hampton, IA 50441 or email franklin@franklinrec.coop.

LET'S TALK DEMAND

BY CHAD FOSTER



When you see the word demand on your electric bill, it can feel a little confusing at first. The simplest way to think about demand is that it isn't about

how much electricity you use, it's about when you use it.

More specifically, demand is the highest amount of electricity your home uses at any one time during your billing period. It's that brief period of time when several energy using appliances or pieces of equipment are operating simultaneously, causing your home's electric usage to spike.

A simple way to picture it is to think about your household's evening routine. You get home from work, the air conditioner kicks on, you start making supper in the oven, throw a load of laundry into the washer and turn on the evening news. When all these energy using items are operating at the same time, your electric usage is "stacking." That period of higher usage is what creates your peak demand.

Leveling the load, managing demand

Load leveling can help offset that

spike. This simply means spreading your electric use throughout the day whenever possible. Instead of running several high-energy appliances at the same time, like the oven and clothes washer in the example above, try shifting one task a little earlier or a little later. You're still using the same amount of electricity; you're just avoiding having everything run at once.

You may also have heard the term baseload demand. This is the steady amount of electricity your home is always using to power things like your refrigerator, Wi-Fi router, clocks and other devices that run continuously in the background. This is your home's normal, everyday level of electric use.

The key takeaway is, managing demand isn't about using less electricity, it's about using electricity more intentionally. Small changes in timing can help reduce those peaks, which helps keep costs more predictable for both your household and the cooperative.

Monitor use in SmartHub

If you'd like to better understand your own usage, Franklin REC's free SmartHub app is a great resource. SmartHub allows you to view your



home's electricity use by the hour, monitor your daily peak demand and identify patterns in your energy use. It's a simple way to see how shifting the use of even one appliance can make a difference.

To get started, visit www.franklinrec.coop and click "Login to Pay My Bill" at the top of the page. SmartHub is available on your computer, tablet or smartphone, making it easy to access your account wherever you are.

As always, if you have questions or would like help understanding your electric usage, we're here to help.

Chad Foster is the member service advisor for Franklin REC.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY STARTS HERE

High school students in Franklin REC's service area are invited to participate in the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, a two-part webinar series focused on leadership, advocacy and electric cooperatives.

The live Zoom sessions will be held on Sunday, Oct. 4, and Sunday, Oct. 18, from 7 - 8 p.m. Students who attend will be eligible for \$500 and \$1,000 college scholarship drawings and will receive a free co-op gift box. Additionally,

Franklin REC will award a \$50 gift card to each local student who attends both sessions.

Students can also discover how to represent Franklin REC on the electric cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in 2027.



Register today at
www.iowaYouthTour.com.



A SAFE HARVEST STARTS WITH AWARENESS OF POWER LINES AND EQUIPMENT

Harvest season is one of the busiest times of the year, requiring long hours, large equipment and constant attention. While technology like GPS and auto-guidance has improved efficiency, nothing replaces awareness. Taking time to look around, plan ahead and recognize potential hazards helps ensure everyone makes it home safely.

At Franklin REC, we know safety is a shared responsibility. Whether you're working in the field or traveling rural roads, everyone plays a role in making harvest safer.

Stay alert around power lines

Large farm equipment can easily come into contact with overhead power lines. Before heading to the field, identify electrical hazards and never assume technology will recognize them.

Keep these safety tips in mind:

- 1 Know where overhead and underground power lines are located.
- 2 Lower augers, grain truck beds and other extensions before moving equipment.
- 3 Keep equipment and materials at least 10 feet from power lines.
- 4 Use a spotter when working near power lines.
- 5 Never attempt to move a power line. Contact Franklin REC if a line appears damaged or unsafe.

Remember, damp or dirty materials like wood, rope, hay and tree limbs can conduct electricity.

If equipment contacts a power line

Stay inside the equipment unless there is an immediate danger such as fire. Call 911 and Franklin REC, warn others to stay away and wait until the line has been de-energized.



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Credit: DarcyMaulsby

If you must exit:

- Jump clear with both feet together.
- Never touch the equipment and ground at the same time.
- Hop away with both feet together until you're at least 30 feet away.

Share the road

Farm equipment travels frequently between fields during harvest. Drivers can help by:

- Slowing down and being patient.
- Giving equipment plenty of space.
- Passing only when it is safe with a clear view of oncoming traffic.
- Allowing extra room for wide turns.

A few extra minutes of patience can prevent a serious accident.

Don't let fatigue take over

Long harvest days increase the risk of mistakes. Stay hydrated, take short breaks and get enough rest to remain alert. A few minutes to recharge can make a big difference.

Additional safety reminders

- 1 Report any contact with power lines or utility poles to Franklin REC, even if no damage is visible.
- 2 Contact Franklin REC before installing grain bins near overhead lines.
- 3 Never use metal poles to break up bridged grain.
- 4 Hire qualified electricians for farm electrical work.

Thank you, farming families

Agriculture is an important part of the community we are proud to serve, and we appreciate the farmers and agricultural families who help feed our community, support our local economy and care for the land. At Franklin REC, we know harvest season requires commitment, patience and perseverance. Thank you for the early mornings, late nights and countless hours spent working to bring in another successful harvest.



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The magazine
for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives

September 2026

Visit our website at www.franklinrec.coop

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