Franklin REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

JULY 2026

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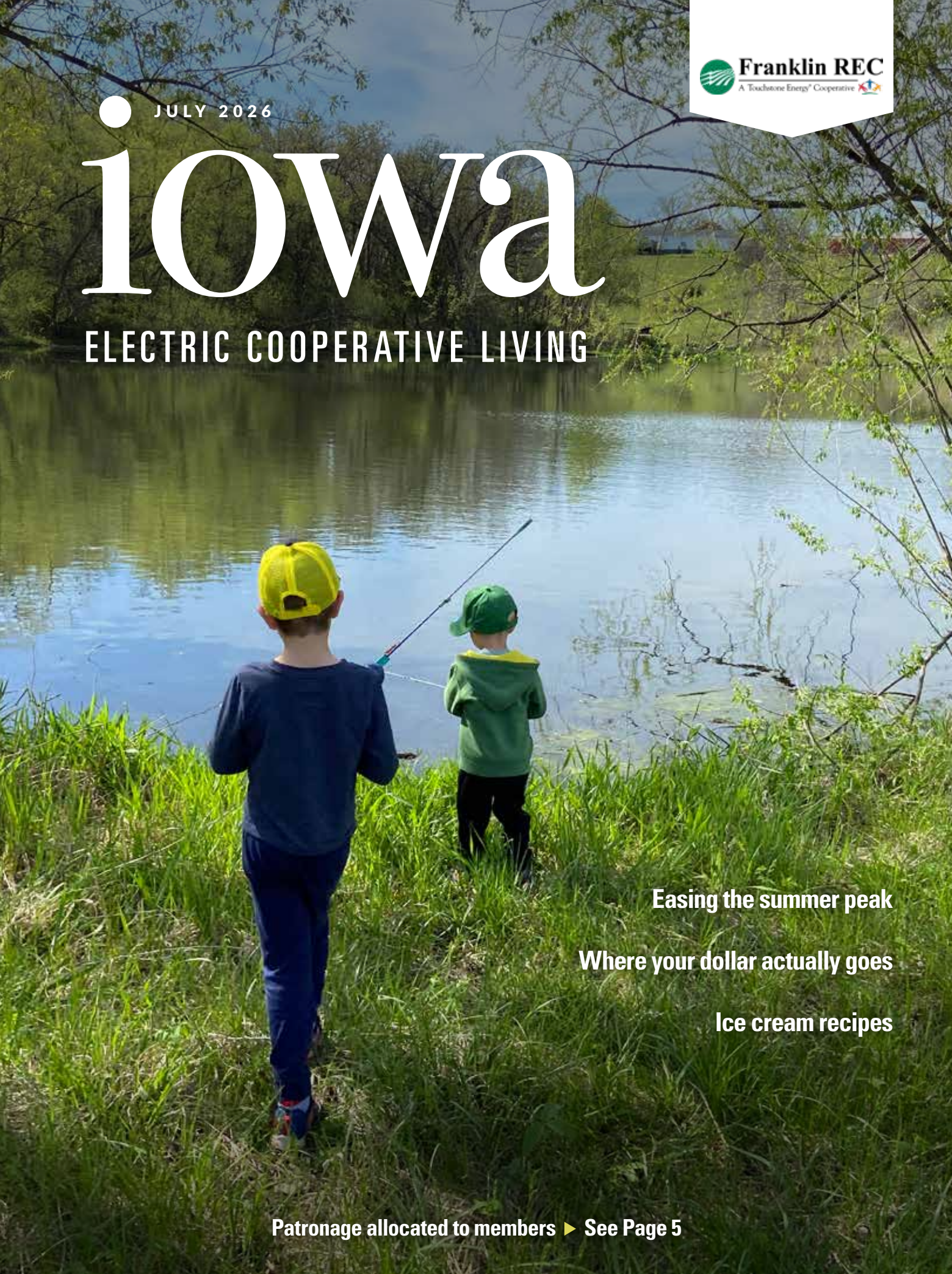
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING



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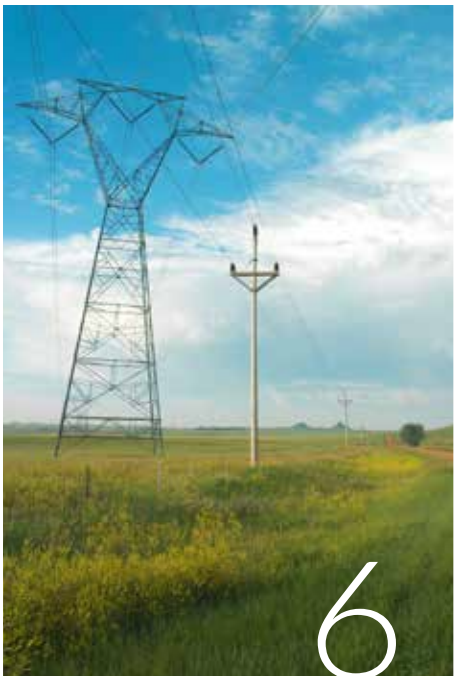

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Change of Address
Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine cannot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

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

ENTER ONLINE BY JULY 31!

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 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.

WHERE YOUR DOLLAR ACTUALLY GOES

BY GARRETT THOMPSON

One of the most common questions we hear is simple: "Where does my electric bill actually go?"

It's a fair question, and an important one. As a member-owned electric cooperative, our goal is to be transparent about how your dollars are used. Every dollar you pay stays focused on one thing: delivering safe, reliable and affordable electricity to you and your neighbors.

To illustrate this commitment, we've included a simple breakdown of how each dollar is used, based on our 2025 financial data.

Breaking down the dollar

For every dollar Franklin REC collects:

- **$0.60** goes to **power supply costs** (the cost of purchasing electricity from our wholesale power provider)
- **$0.12** goes to **operations and maintenance** (maintaining power lines, equipment and responding to outages)
- **$0.10** goes to **administrative and general expenses** (business operations, technology and support services)
- **$0.07** goes to **depreciation** (reinvesting in aging infrastructure to keep our system strong)
- **$0.04** goes to **long-term debt** (financing the construction and improvement of electric facilities)
- **$0.04** goes to **customer service** (billing, member support and account services)
- **-$0.04** comes from **non-operating margins** (interest income and other sources that help offset costs)
- **$0.07** is retained as operating margins (which stay in the cooperative and are ultimately returned to members over time)

What this means for you

The biggest takeaway is this: about 60% of your electric bill is the cost of power itself. That's the amount we pay to bring electricity onto our system. While we work hard to control the costs we can, a large share of your bill is influenced by broader market forces, infrastructure investments and regional reliability requirements.

The remaining portion covers everything it takes to deliver that power safely and reliably. From maintaining miles of line to restoring service during storms, to investing in the system so it's ready for the future.

Why balance matters

When you look at this breakdown, it becomes clear that there's no single lever to dramatically lower costs without affecting reliability or long-term performance.

That's why we take what we often call an "all-of-the-above" approach when it comes to managing your electric service.

- We focus on controlling local costs wherever possible.
- We invest in system reliability and resilience.
- We work with our wholesale power provider to ensure a diverse and dependable energy supply.
- And we stay engaged in policy discussions to help support a balanced and practical energy future.

Each piece matters. Focusing too heavily on one at the expense of others can lead to unintended consequences, whether that's higher long-term costs or reduced reliability.

Your cooperative at work

At the end of the day, every dollar is working on your behalf. Because we're a cooperative, we're not driven by outside shareholders. Any margins we generate are either reinvested in the system or returned to members over time as capital credits.

Our job is to manage your cooperative responsibly, keeping rates as affordable as possible while making the right investments to ensure your lights stay on, not just today, but for years to come.

That's a responsibility we take seriously, and one we're proud to carry forward.

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

Franklin REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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FROM YOUR BOARDROOM

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

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of $12,395.24
- Appointed voting delegate and alternate for Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' district election
- Approved 2025 patronage allocation
- Approved 2026 patronage retirement
- Approved estate patronage retirement

FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION

ITEM	THIS YEAR	
1. Operating Revenue and Patronage Capital	9,349,726.04	
2. Power Production Expense	0.00	
3. Cost of Purchased Power	5,647,668.64	60.00%
4. Transmission Expense	0.00	0.00%
5. Regional Market Expense	0.00	0.00%
6. Distribution Expense - Operation	556,732.09	6.00%
7. Distribution Expense - Maintenance	550,961.89	6.00%
8. Customer Accounts Expense	152,265.92	2.00%
9. Customer Service and Informational Expense	206,857.72	2.00%
10. Sales Expense	40,861.06	0.00%
11. Administrative and General Expense	975,795.26	10.00%
12. Total Operation & Maintenance Expense (2 thru 11)	8,131,142.58	87.00%
13. Depreciation & Amortization Expense	671,435.68	7.00%
14. Tax Expense - Property & Gross Receipts	0.00	0.00%
15. Tax Expense - Other	0.00	0.00%
16. Interest on Long-Term Debt	396,427.40	4.00%
17. Interest Charged to Construction - Credit	0.00	0.00%
18. Interest Expense - Other	159.07	0.00%
19. Other Deductions	0.00	0.00%
20. Total Cost of Electric Service (12 thru 19)	9,199,164.73	98.00%
21. Patronage Capital & Operating Margins (1 minus 20)	150,561.31	2.00%
22. Non Operating Margins - Interest	-77,380.44	-1.00%
23. Allowance for Funds Used During Construction	0.00	0.00%
24. Income (Loss) from Equity Investments	0.00	0.00%
25. Non Operating Margins - Other	48,152.74	1.00%
26. Generation and Transmission Capital Credits	543,457.00	6.00%
27. Other Capital Credits and Patronage Dividends	31,720.79	0.00%
28. Extraordinary Items	0.00	0.00%
29. Patronage Capital or Margins (21 thru 28)	696,511.40	7.00%
Operating - Margin	725,739.10	
Non Operating - Margin	-29,227.70	
Times Interest Earned Ratio - Operating	1.38	
Times Interest Earned Ratio - Net	2.76	
Times Interest Earned Ratio - Modified	1.31	

PATRONAGE ALLOCATED TO MEMBERS

Your Franklin REC board of directors approved this year's patronage allocation and retirement, which is reflected on your July bill statement. As an electric cooperative, Franklin REC operates under a unique business model that puts members first, and that includes how we handle profits. These "profits" are put into action through patronage allocation and patronage retirement.

What is patronage allocation?

Because Franklin REC is a cooperative, any remaining margins after covering operating expenses and financial obligations are not considered profits in the traditional sense. Instead, those margins are allocated back to members as patronage capital based on how much electricity their service location used throughout the year.

These allocations are recorded on your account but are not immediately available. Instead, Franklin REC retires a certain percentage of the prior year, plus remaining patronage from approximately 20 years ago to our members through a bill credit. Think of patronage allocations as a bank CD. You invest your money for a certain period of time, then once the cycle date expires the funds are given back to you.

The Franklin REC patronage allocation for 2025 is $258,707.78.

What is patronage retirement?

Eventually, allocated funds are retired, meaning they're paid back to members. Annually, the board of directors reviews the cooperative's financial health and determines if a percentage of the allocated margins can be returned to you.

The retirement of patronage for 2026 includes electricity purchased by members from 2006, 2007 and a percentage of 2025. The remaining allocated balance is held to ensure the financial stability of Franklin REC and our financial commitments are met to continue to provide reliable electricity to you.

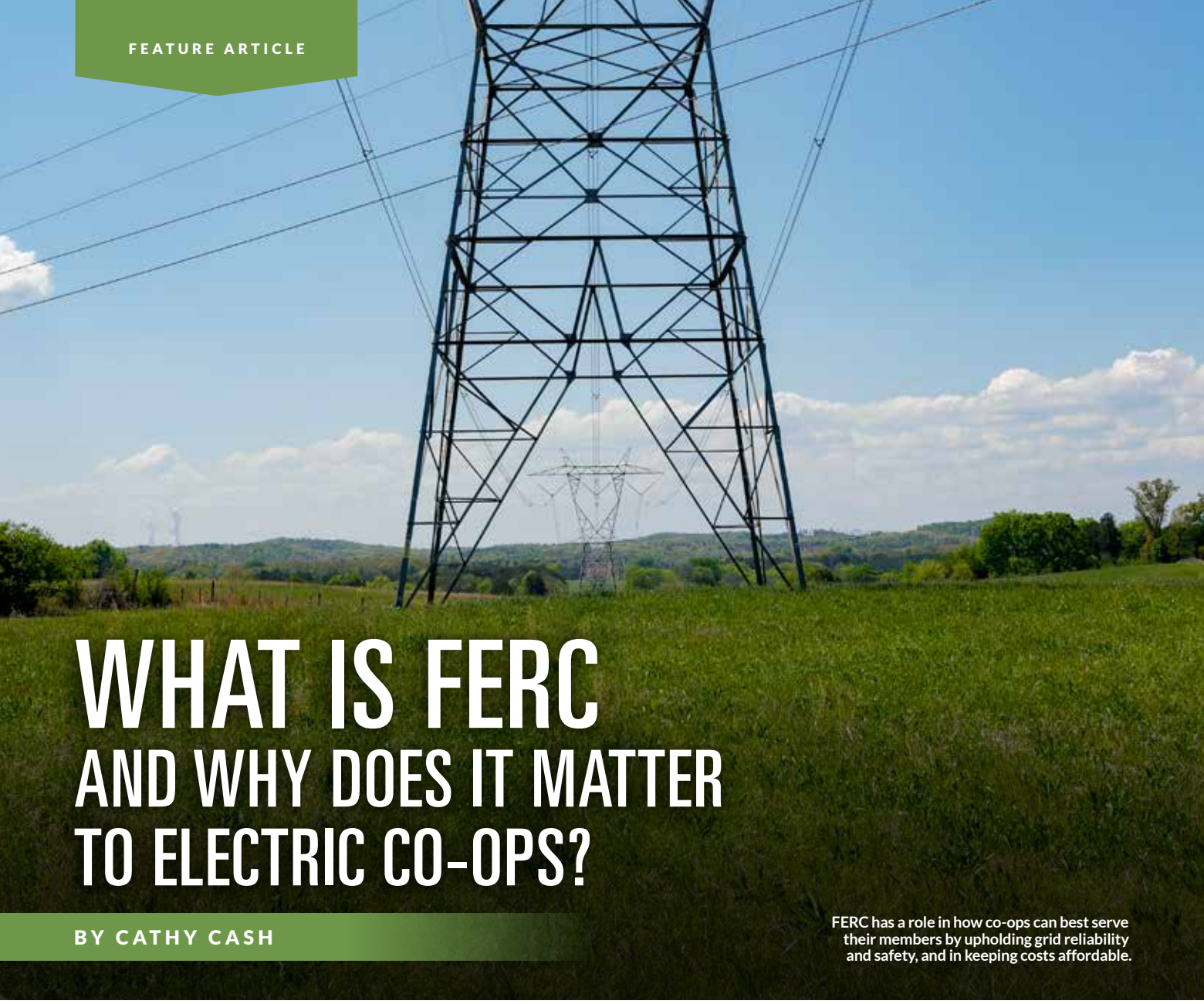
The Franklin REC 2026 patronage retirement is $244,638.82.

This includes part of the 2025 patronage allocation, balance of 2006 patronage allocation and 67.2% of 2007 patronage allocation.

Why does my bill show a different amount credited than allocated?

The allocation is the total amount of money your membership is keeping in your "patronage bank." The retired amount is the percentage of margins the board of directors sees fit to give back to our membership. This year it includes electricity purchased in 2006, 2007 and a portion of 2025.

If you move off Franklin REC lines, it is important to keep your mailing address updated, as patronage capital may continue to be retired and returned to you for approximately 20 years after your final bill.



WHAT IS FERC
AND WHY DOES IT MATTER TO ELECTRIC CO-OPS?

BY CATHY CASH

FERC has a role in how co-ops can best serve their members by upholding grid reliability and safety, and in keeping costs affordable.

Electric cooperatives were formed to serve members with affordable, reliable and safe power. But what role, if any, does the federal government play in ensuring that happens?

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent agency in Washington, D.C., with authority over the transmission and wholesale of electricity in interstate commerce.

The commission also regulates the interstate commerce of natural gas and oil and the siting of natural gas and hydropower facilities. Basically, FERC oversees how energy moves across the country by high-voltage power lines or large pipelines.

Definitely big-picture stuff.

The federal role in the power grid

FERC doesn't regulate your local distribution co-op. But it does exert authority over five generation and transmission co-ops and all the wholesale electricity markets where co-ops buy their power supply. By setting the markets' transmission rates that electric power companies and utilities, including co-ops, must pay, the federal agency can ultimately influence retail prices.

Mary Ann Ralls, senior director, regulatory counsel for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), notes that while state utility commissions have more immediate control over co-op operations and building power lines, the federal agency's influence fills in the gaps.

"State regulation over co-ops is like Swiss cheese – there are many holes where states don't regulate," she said. "FERC's authority is akin to a buffet – a handful of co-ops are subject to the entire scope of regulation, while the vast majority of co-ops must focus on a few items."

The commission's regulations aim at maintaining fair prices within the wholesale electricity markets run by six regional transmission organizations (RTOs) and independent system operators (ISOs). These FERC-regulated RTOs and ISOs manage parts of the national electric grid.

FERC also monitors these markets for energy supply manipulation that can hike prices. When things go wrong,

the commission can investigate and levy penalties.

Overall, FERC sides with conserving energy and encourages utilities to find ways to reduce demand, which eventually can place downward pressure on monthly bills.

The commission largely lacks authority over electric transmission in terms of siting and construction. That falls under state and local authorities.

FERC's authority over building generation is also limited to approving, licensing and inspecting hydropower plants.

Regarding natural gas, FERC has the final say in the construction and operation of liquefied natural gas terminals, pipelines and storage facilities. It reviews gas projects in terms of their impact on the environment, land use, geology and the economy.

And, being a public agency, all FERC's final decisions can be challenged in court.

Keeping the lights on across America

When it comes to grid reliability, the buck stops with FERC. The commission directs the national grid watchdog – North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) – and enforces its mandatory reliability rules and requirements on grid operators and owners of the U.S. bulk power system, including utilities and energy producers.

The commission tasked NERC as the electric reliability organization for the continental U.S. after Congress called for a single point of contact following the historic blackout of Aug. 14, 2003, which left more than 50 million people in the Northeast and parts of the Midwest without electricity for periods ranging from several hours to several days.

FERC can require NERC to set new reliability standards or update current rules as needed to protect the grid's ability to serve today's increased demand.

Who makes the decisions at FERC?

The body is made up of five commissioners appointed by the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate for five-year terms. The chair presides over open, public meetings on the third Thursday of the month, where the commission votes on orders to act on or approve projects or set precedents. You can even watch these meetings at home from the live link on the FERC website.

While its regulatory influence may not have a hand directly in co-op operations to serve consumers, FERC does have a role in how co-ops can best serve their members by upholding grid reliability and safety and keeping costs affordable.

"Irrespective of the level of regulation FERC has over a co-op, it is incumbent upon NRECA, working with its members, to impress on the commission that ultimately the co-op's obligation is that the consumer-member at the end of the line has affordable, reliable and safe electric service," said Ralls. "And it is FERC's responsibility through its regulations to support the co-op's achievement of this goal."

Cathy Cash writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

FERC exerts authority over five generation and transmission co-ops and all the wholesale electricity markets where electric co-ops purchase their power supply. ***Photo Source: Basin Electric Power Cooperative***

FERC's authority over building generation is also limited to only approving, licensing and inspecting hydropower plants. ***Photo Source: NRECA***

Ice Cream RECIPES

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 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**
- **¾ 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

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

HOW YOU CAN HELP DURING PEAK DEMAND

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

Your electric utility works hard to ensure safe, reliable power is delivered to homes and businesses 24/7. To make sure everyone has the power they need, generation must match consumption and have the capacity to adapt to changing energy demands.

Why peak demand matters

Peak demand is the period during a day, month or year when electricity use is highest. It's caused by many people using energy-consuming equipment at the same time. It differs based on geography, weather and time of year. For example, demand is typically highest on hot summer afternoons and cold winter mornings. Most utilities also experience daily peaks when people are getting ready in the mornings and returning home in the evenings.

When everyone uses more energy at the same time, it puts more stress on the electric grid and requires more expensive electricity to meet the need. Electricity pricing is based on supply and demand. Electricity prices are higher when demand is higher, which costs the utility more.

Shift your use, reduce the strain

To reduce energy use and strain on the grid during peak times, we can adopt habits in our homes.

Let's look at two examples.

Joe and John arrive home from work at 5:30 p.m. They both turn on the oven to make dinner.

While John waits for the oven to preheat, he throws in a load of laundry. He finishes dinner, cleans up and starts the dishwasher. Then, he moves the clothes to the dryer.

Joe finishes dinner, loads the dishwasher and sets it to start at 10 p.m. He puts a load of laundry in the washing machine and later that evening switches it over to the dryer.

Although they use the same appliances and amount of energy, John uses it all at once, running multiple appliances during peak

hours, creating higher demand and more strain on the electric grid while using more expensive energy.

To lower your demand, spread electricity use throughout the day and avoid peak times whenever possible. This will reduce the utility's cost of supplying electricity to your home. Another benefit of shifting your use to midday is the integration of renewable energy, such as solar, which produces power when the sun is shining.

Large appliances, including washers, dryers, ovens, water heaters and air conditioners, have the biggest impact. Using them during off-peak hours or one at a time can help.

Let technology do the work

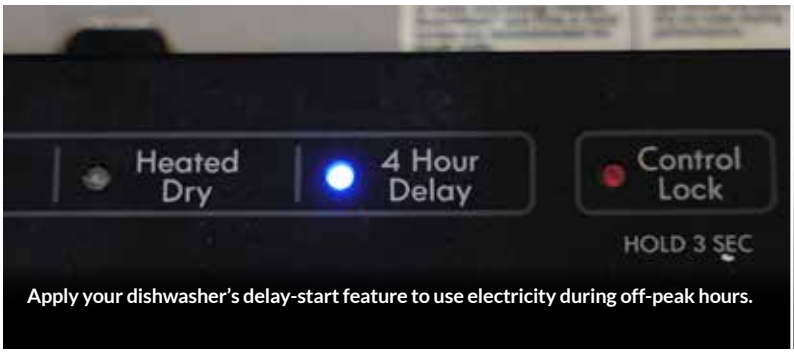
Automate as much as possible. Most electric vehicle chargers can be set to charge during scheduled hours with built-in timers or apps. Most modern dishwashers have delay-start features. If you have a pool, set the pool pump to run in the middle of the day, especially if you live in a region with high solar output.

You can also automate air conditioning. Some utilities offer programs that pre-cool homes during off-peak hours to reduce demand during peak times. Simple, free adjustments, such as closing your curtains on hot afternoons and evenings, can help, too.

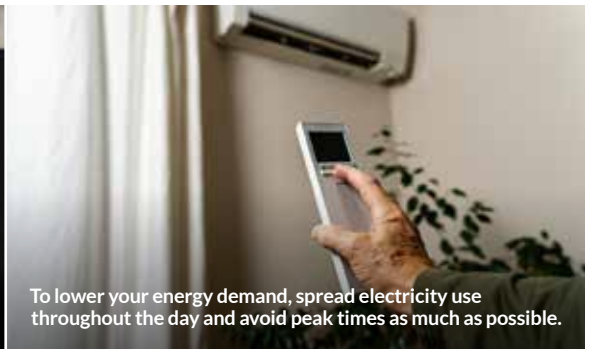
Keep in mind that extreme weather, whether freezing temperatures or a heat wave, puts extra stress on the grid. Conserving energy during extreme weather events can help prevent outages.

Spreading out your energy use helps your utility keep costs down and benefits your local energy grid.

Miranda Boutelle writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Apply your dishwasher's delay-start feature to use electricity during off-peak hours.


To lower your energy demand, spread electricity use throughout the day and avoid peak times as much as possible.

7 WAYS IOWANS CAN SAVE ENERGY THIS SUMMER

Summer is in full swing across Iowa, and so is the season of higher energy use. Air conditioners work harder during hot, humid weather, but a few simple steps can help keep your home comfortable while managing energy costs. Try these energy-saving tips for the remainder of the summer season.

1. Block the sun's heat.

Keep blinds, shades or curtains closed during the hottest parts of the day, especially on south- and west-facing windows. This can help reduce heat gain and lessen the workload on your air conditioner.

2. Adjust your thermostat.

Set your thermostat at the highest comfortable temperature when you're home and raise it a few degrees when you're away. A programmable or smart thermostat can make these adjustments automatically.

3. Use ceiling fans wisely.

Ceiling fans can help you feel cooler, allowing you to rely less on air conditioning. Use ceiling fans in a counter-clockwise rotation in the summer. Be sure to turn fans off when you leave a room since they cool people, not the room itself.

4. Maintain your cooling system.

A clean, well-maintained air conditioner operates more efficiently. Check or replace air filters regularly and make sure vents and registers are not blocked by furniture, rugs or curtains.

5. Seal leaks and keep cool air inside.

Small gaps around windows and doors can allow cooled air to escape and hot air to enter. Adding weatherstripping or caulk can improve comfort and reduce energy waste.

6. Limit heat-producing activities.

Appliances and lighting generate heat that can make your air conditioner work harder. Use LED light bulbs and consider grilling outdoors or using smaller appliances instead of turning on the oven during the hottest parts of the day.

7. Save on water-heating costs.

Water heating is one of the largest energy expenses in many homes. Setting your water heater to 120 degrees F can reduce energy use while still providing plenty of hot water for most households.

Even small changes can make a difference. By adopting a few energy-saving habits this summer, you can stay comfortable and help keep energy costs under control.

NEW LINE ADDED TO YOUR BILL

Beginning with your July statement, you will notice a new line item added to your Franklin REC bill. This change can be found in the "Detail of Charges" section under each respective meter.

Over the next several months, Franklin REC will be sharing additional information through bill inserts, emails, our website and other communications to help explain what the addition of the "Demand Charge" to our bill structure means for members. At this time, the new line item is intended to provide you with more information and greater insight into your individual usage patterns.

As always, if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Franklin REC office at 641-456-2557.

Details of Charges

Meter Number: 342505976

Facility Charge		57.50
Energy Charge	837 kWh @ 0.13635	114.12
Energy Cost Adjustment	837 kWh @ 0.0068	5.69
Demand Charge	10.915 kWh @ 0.00	0.00
04/28/2026 10:40:00		

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is demand? Demand is the amount of energy used at a specific time at a service location. The unit of measure is kilowatt (kW).

Q: What is the difference between the energy charge and the demand charge? The energy charge is based on the total amount of electricity used at your service over the billing period and is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). The demand charge is based on the highest level of electricity used during the billing period, typically measured over a 15- or 60-minute interval.

Q: When will demand charges begin? A final implementation date has not yet been determined.

Franklin REC is continuing to evaluate rate design, billing processes and member education efforts to help ensure any future transition to demand billing is as smooth and understandable as possible.

Q: Why is demand on my bill if I'm not being charged yet?
To help you, our members, better understand individual usage patterns, Franklin REC began displaying demand information on bills starting in July 2026. This allows time to become familiar with understanding demand before any potential future demand charges are implemented.

Q: Why is Franklin REC introducing demand billing?
Franklin REC is billed by our wholesale power supplier, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, based on the energy consumed by cooperative members as well as the peak demand our system had on the electric grid. By transitioning to demand billing, the cooperative better aligns each member's cost of service to reflect how Franklin REC is billed.

Since the cooperative is not-for-profit, we work to be financially responsible with our members' investment into the cooperative. Demand billed from Corn Belt Power Cooperative costs are driven by how much electricity is being used at the same time across Franklin REC's entire electric distribution system. Demand billing helps more accurately align electric costs with each member's impact on the system.

Q: Where can I see and monitor my demand? Monitor demand usage through Franklin REC's SmartHub app or by logging into SmartHub through the Franklin REC website. A link to SmartHub can be found at the top of the homepage at www.franklinrec.coop.

Q: What are ways I can reduce my demand? One of the best ways to reduce demand is to spread the use of high-energy appliances throughout the day rather than running them all at the same time. Appliances such as ovens, dryers, dishwashers, microwaves, electric heat and shop equipment can quickly increase demand when used simultaneously.

Ensuring your location is energy efficient, while an initial investment, can provide returns that will continue to pay out for many years. Plus, Franklin REC offers a wide variety of energy-efficiency rebates for our members.

REMINDER: LIMITED OFFICE HOURS DURING COUNTY FAIR

As a reminder, Franklin REC's office will have limited hours on July 16 and 17 as our team participates in the Franklin County Fair.

We invite you to stop by the Ice Cream Parlor in Pleasant Hill on Thursday and Friday morning, where Franklin REC employees will be serving ice cream. Be sure to redeem your co-op ice cream voucher and take a moment to visit with our team.

While the office will be operating on a limited schedule, our commitment to reliable service remains unchanged.

For outage or service needs, please call 641-456-2557.

Crews will remain on standby, and phones will be answered 24/7 to assist our members.

YEAR-ROUND MAINTENANCE HELPS ENSURE RELIABILITY

BY SCOTT HAGENSON

Winter is over and summer is upon us. Franklin REC line crews had a good winter with minimal outages. Crews were able to patrol every mile of Franklin REC distribution lines across all nine substations on our system. Several issues were discovered during our maintenance; the crews use a reporting system that allows them to record where maintenance work is needed once the temperatures and weather allowed. By early spring, all noted issues were resolved.

We are now in the summer construction season, building new lines and replacing aging structures according to our work plan. In July, the cooperative's annual three-week line breaker maintenance program will begin. This entails 80 line breakers being removed, tested and maintained, then reinstalled. These breakers are important to the safety and the reliability of our system.

Tree maintenance and removal remains at the forefront of member-related service issues. The cooperative continues to work with our members to trim or remove potentially problematic vegetation. To help tackle persistent problem areas, Franklin REC contracts with a third-party organization to clear undergrowth near the power lines and poles.

Currently, crews are rebuilding six miles of single-phase power lines north of Thornton and Swaledale. This large project will carry on for the rest of the summer. The rebuild consists of replacing original poles and equipment with new aluminum conductors and utility poles spaced closer together. Upgrades like this increase reliability of service to members and ensure we stay diligent on providing the best value of service to our members.

Requests for overhead-to-underground conversions continue to increase through the years, and our crew now handles approximately 10 to 15 annually. Common reasons for transitioning to underground service can be due to increased service loads, new construction or safety concerns. If you are planning any changes to your grain handling facilities or new construction, please give us a call to determine whether any service work is necessary.

As always, with summer storms, please report any service disruptions or issues to our office. Reporting problems, such as trees or blinking lights, allows our crews to repair your service prior to a disruption. It also allows our crew to safely make repairs in excellent weather conditions prior to a weather-related outage.

Contact our office with any questions or concerns regarding the service we provide.

Thank you to all the members who are willing to help our crew in times of need. We have the best members at Franklin REC.

Scott Hagenson is the line superintendent for Franklin REC.

CELEBRATING YEARS OF SERVICE

Congratulations to cooperative employees Cole Marzen and Tessa Haller on their work anniversaries this month.

First Class Lineman Cole Marzen has been part of the cooperative line crew since 2020. His leadership is recognized by the entire crew, as he works alongside team members to support safe and efficient operations. Cole plays a key role in maintaining the system and responding to outages, helping to ensure reliable service for the members we serve.

Consumer Accountant Tessa Haller is celebrating two years with the cooperative, where she is responsible for billing members and processing payments. Her role supports the cooperative's daily financial operations and helps ensure accounts are maintained accurately and efficiently.

COLE MARZEN

TESSA HALLER

We thank both Cole and Tessa for their continued dedication to the cooperative and the members we serve.

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:

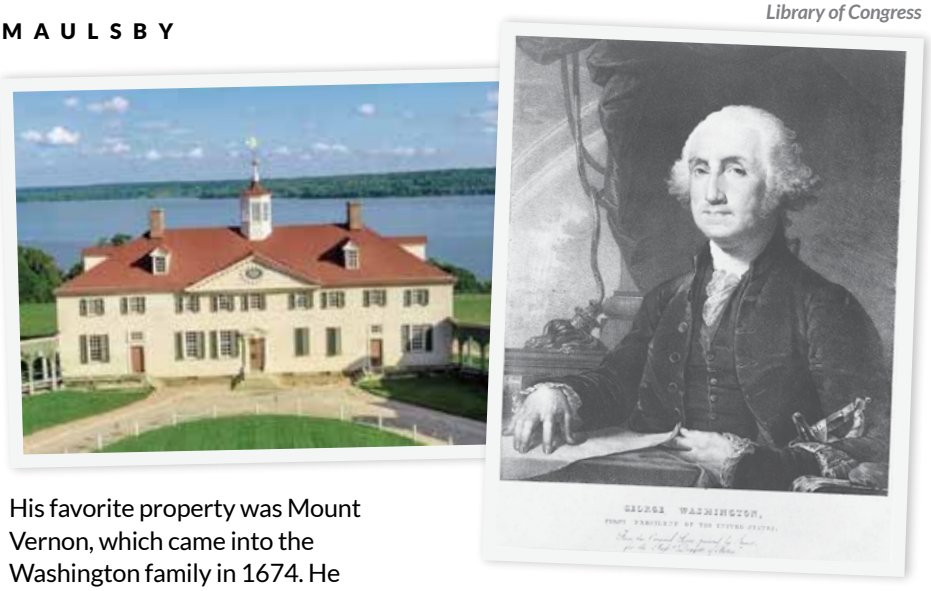
1. Snap a photo capturing rural Iowa (image must be high quality, at least 1MB large; if taken on a phone, send us the largest version – bigger is better!).
2. Send us the original, high-resolution image file in an email to **editor@ieclmagazine.com** with **"Cover Submission"** in the subject line.
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

Photo Source: Library of Congress



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 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.

Franklin REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

The magazine for members of Iowa's electric cooperatives

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Visit our website at www.franklinrec.coop