

OCTOBER 2024

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Powering a brighter
future in Guatemala**

**Compassion Flights:
Where hope grows wings**

Family dinner recipes

Save the date for Light Up the Night ► See Page 12

NATURAL GAS POWER PLANTS

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



You made it! The final generation asset in our “all-the-above” series is natural gas. Natural gas plants are interesting assets with unique

attributes that we will cover in this month’s article.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), natural gas-fired power plants

produced 43% of electricity in the U.S. in 2023. Also, during 2023, natural gas plants were the second fastest-growing generation asset, only trailing solar. The reasons for the rapid build-out of these plants can be credited to a variety of factors, including dispatchability, efficiency, broad regional coverage, advancements in technology, and increased domestic supply of natural gas, which equates to competitive pricing.

How natural gas plants work

There are two main designs for natural gas plants: simple cycle and combined cycle.

Simple cycle

During 2023, simple-cycle natural gas plants made up 1,756 megawatts (MW) of new electricity built within the U.S., according to the EIA. To develop that electricity, the power plant uses a gas turbine to mix air and natural gas to cause combustion, thus creating gases that turn blades connected to a generator. This technology operates similarly to a jet engine on a Boeing 737 airplane. One of the main advantages of a simple-cycle gas plant is that it is easier to build, which makes it economical. However, compared to a combined-cycle power plant they are much less efficient in their electricity production.

Combined cycle

Combined-cycle plants are set up similarly to a simple cycle. However, the combined cycle adds a heat recovery steam generator (HRSG). The HRSG captures exhaust heat from the turbine that would otherwise escape through the exhaust stack. Thanks to the captured heat, the combined-cycle plant uses it to create steam to generate even more electricity. In 2023, combined-cycle plants added 7,376 MW of capacity. The efficiencies gained from this technology make it an attractive asset for electricity generation. One of the

downsides is the cost, complexity and build times compared to a simple-cycle plant.

Baseload versus peaking

A major competitive advantage of natural gas plants compared to all other generation assets is the flexibility to be a baseload asset or a peaking asset. Simply put, a baseload generation plant runs almost all day every day to generate the minimum electricity that is used by consumers each day. A peaking plant asset can ramp up production very quickly to meet spikes or surges in electricity demands, such as the evening rush, when most people get home from work and turn on ovens, dishwashers, air conditioners and washing machines/dryers.

You can think of peaking plants similarly to how you think of your car. You don’t leave your car running all night because you need it to be available to go to work the next morning. They are designed to start right up whenever you need to use them to get to your destination.

In the coming months, we will begin to wrap up our “all-the-above” series, focusing on all the generation plants and diving deeper into baseload versus intermediary versus peaking plants and why those differences matter.

Thank you

Thank you to those who have interacted with us throughout this series. Interacting with you, our member-owners, on your comments and questions is one of the more rewarding parts of the job. If there was a generation asset we didn’t cover that you would like to know more about, please let us know, and we will be happy to share more information with you.

Garrett Thompson is general manager/CEO of Franklin REC.

FROM YOUR BOARD ROOM

During the August meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$69,688.75
- Approved employee benefit plans for 2025
- Approved legal counsel retainer fee



Office

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

Office Hours

M-F 7 a.m.-3:30 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.

COMPASSION FLIGHTS: WHERE HOPE GROWS WINGS

Congratulations to Franklin REC's Shine the Light 2024 winner – Doug Pralle with Compassion Flights in Hampton. Compassion Flights received a combined total donation of \$4,000 from Franklin REC, the Iowa Association Electric Cooperative's Shine the Light contest and CoBank's Sharing Success program.

Founded by Pralle and his wife Robyn in 2017, Compassion Flights is a nonprofit organization providing free air transportation for lowans traveling extreme distances for necessary medical treatment. Health care costs can be daunting, and hours on the road can be a burden. Pairing his aviation skills and passion to help others, Pralle created a beacon of hope for northern Iowa families. Many major medical facilities are an average of a 4-hour

drive, but Compassion Flights turns a half day of travel into two short flights. The short flight is a saving grace for those unable to stay seated for long periods.

Getting Compassion Flights off the ground and into the air, Pralle opened his heart and aircraft to assist with medical journeys for Iowa families, operating at no cost to the patient and family. His dedication to flights and generosity have infectiously spread into our community and throughout Iowa.

Today, Compassion Flights operates with a volunteer team filled with pilots, friends and others who come together to serve lowans with free air travel for medical treatment. Pilots volunteer their skills and



Garrett Thompson, Franklin REC general manager/CEO (left) presents a check to Doug Pralle.

aircraft, while individuals volunteer their time to assist with logistics. It is an all-hands-on-deck team that collaborates to provide flawless, steadfast travel for passengers. Pralle stands by his principle of never charging a fee for services, and any donation toward Compassion Flights directly finances an individual's flight.

As Compassion Flights continues to grow, it stands as a shining example of how one person's idea, combined with community support and volunteerism, can create a powerful force for good.

EXPANSION OF LATIMER INDUSTRIAL PARK

In late August, Franklin REC, Franklin County Development Association (FCDA) and Corn Belt Power Cooperative (Corn Belt Power) closed loans with the Latimer Development Corporation (LDC) for the expansion of the Latimer Industrial Park. To assist LDC with purchasing land adjacent to the existing industrial park, Franklin REC and Corn Belt Power each closed initial Revolving Loan Funds for \$176,850, while FCDA closed on an initial loan for \$26,850.

The Latimer Industrial Park sits approximately 1 mile east of Interstate 35 on Highway 3. The City of Latimer, LDC, Franklin REC, FCDA and Corn Belt Power are partnering with a vision of economic and community growth within the community, county and region.

Pictured from left to right: Mark Johansen, mayor of Latimer; Doug Peters, Latimer Development Corporation president; Wayne Pralle, Latimer Development Corporation treasurer; Garrett Thompson, Franklin REC general manager/CEO; Brittany Dickey, Corn Belt Power Cooperative; Mary Amsbaugh, Franklin County Development Association executive director; and Stacy Cirks, Corn Belt Power Cooperative.



CELEBRATING CO-OP WORKIVERSARIES

This month, we celebrate the work anniversaries of two cooperative staff members.



General Manager/CEO **Garrett Thompson** marks four years with Franklin REC. His analytical

and member-oriented leadership has been pivotal in guiding our cooperative toward success and innovation.



Communications/Key Account Representative **Madison Alert** reaches five years of service with the cooperative.

DEMONSTRATING ELECTRICAL SAFETY

In August, Franklin REC hosted multiple high-voltage demonstrations across our service territory. The traveling high-voltage trailer is a benefit provided by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The trailer is shared between all Iowa rural electric cooperatives intended to educate the public on the dangers of electricity.



Partnering with Franklin County Emergency Management Services and the Franklin County Sheriff's Department, Franklin REC participated in National Night Out on Aug. 6 at Hampton-Dumont High School.

Franklin REC linemen Tom Demro and Austin Neff showcased the dangers of electricity, while Line Superintendent Scott Hagenson provided insights to attendees. Member Service Representative Chad Foster explained the protective gear and equipment linemen use on the job. Franklin REC office staff added to the event with a photo booth, education packets and information about the cooperative.

Following National Night Out, Franklin REC partnered with Corn Belt Power

Cooperative to host a high-voltage electrical safety demonstration for local first responders. The event sparked valuable discussions on safety and the proper procedures to follow when responding to electrical incidents. Linemen Cole Marzen, Trey Swaney and Nick Nelson conducted the demonstration, with Hagenson offering detailed explanations and scenarios. Nearly 40 participants from various agencies engaged in an open discussion about electrical hazards and safety protocols.

These training and educational opportunities allow Franklin REC to connect with the community and raise awareness about electrical safety.

SAVE THE DATE FOR LIGHT UP THE NIGHT 2024

Light Up the Night is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 30, in downtown Hampton. Enjoy a day full of family-friendly activities, a meet and greet with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a dazzling parade and lighting the park for the holiday season!

Thanks to the Fareway Store in Hampton for assisting in this year's BBQ fundraiser, and the Franklin County Cattlemen for grilling! The community came together to support a wonderful cause that lights up our town during the holiday season. More than \$1,200 was raised for this year's event.



Pictured from left to right: Walt Mason, Fareway meat manager; Garrett Thompson, Franklin REC CEO/general manager; and Rick Schall, Fareway grocery manager.

MAINTAIN CLEAR ACCESS TO FRANKLIN REC EQUIPMENT

Franklin REC reminds you to please keep a clear path to all Franklin REC equipment at your service location. Per Franklin REC's tariff, it is the duty of the member-owner to allow and maintain proper access to all Franklin REC equipment year-round. Obstructing the pathways to any pole or electrical equipment prevents our linemen from performing routine maintenance work necessary to ensure reliable service.

If your service location is impacted by a power outage and Franklin REC linemen are dispatched, Franklin REC may not be able to make the necessary repairs, until a pathway is clear and safe. Section 6.2.2 of the Franklin REC tariff provides that ***“Electric service may be disconnected for failure of the member-consumer to permit the Cooperative reasonable access to the Cooperative's equipment.”*** We would prefer not to have to exercise this right.

To ensure the safety of our linemen and provide you, our member, with the best service possible, Franklin REC respectfully requests that you remove any and all items attached to or located near any Franklin REC equipment installed on your property. If you have any questions about this request, please contact our office at 641-456-2557.



Franklin County houses the first power plant to generate electricity west of the Mississippi River. The REA Power Plant became operational in 1938 and provided electricity to rural areas.

POWERING LIVES, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: THE IMPACT OF IOWA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

One hundred years ago, before electric cooperatives existed, there was an electric divide in America. Nine out of 10 city and town dwellers had access to electricity in the 1920s, while nine out of 10 rural citizens were left in the dark.

Life on the farm was difficult without electricity; there was no indoor plumbing or reliable refrigeration. Cooking, lighting and heating homes without electricity was dangerous and inefficient. Household chores and farm work were laborious and time-consuming.

The investor-owned utilities at that time didn't see the return on investment to build out miles of power lines and infrastructure to only reach a few farms. But a bright light was coming.

Out of the darkness

President Franklin D. Roosevelt believed that if private enterprise could not supply electricity to the people,

then it was the duty of the government to do so. He created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935 as part of the New Deal and the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, which provided official status to the REA as a lending agency to serve rural areas.

With federal financing ready, REA representatives traveled across the country to help rural citizens band together to form not-for-profit electric cooperatives to bring affordable, reliable electricity to their homesteads. By 1950, 80% of farms in America had access to electricity, and the percentage increased to 99% by 1960. Truth be told, nothing has improved the lives of rural Americans like electrification.

Iowa's electric cooperatives have a proud legacy that goes back generations. We have been owned by our members since the beginning, making us truly democratic organizations that are locally owned and governed.



SHOW YOU CARE WITH RECare

As an electric cooperative, Franklin REC is invested in helping our communities thrive, and that means supporting our low-income member-owners, too. RECare is a nationwide program exclusive to rural electric cooperatives encouraging fellow members to make a one-time or monthly donation to help alleviate the stress for other member-owners straining to pay their electric bills.

Funds may also be used to weatherize the recipient's home to make electricity use more efficient. And don't worry; your donation is directed to a local community action agency for distribution to low-income families on Franklin REC lines. You can feel good that the dollars you donate are helping your friends and neighbors.



YES I care and want to contribute

- I will make a one-time contribution to Franklin REC's RECare. My check is enclosed.
- I will contribute \$_____ per month to Franklin REC's RECare program. I understand that this amount is automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

Name: _____

Account #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

LED LIGHTING PROGRAM

The days are getting shorter, but you don't have to be in the dark on long winter nights. Illuminate your property for only \$9.50 per month! By joining the program, Franklin REC will install a brand-new LED light and provide year-round maintenance. The location must be an overhead service.

If you are interested in the program, contact our office at 641-456-2557.

The \$9.50 monthly fee includes the light's kilowatt usage.



IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

The magazine
for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives.

October 2024

Visit our website at www.franklinrec.coop

I AM THE CO-OP

The information we get from our Touchstone Energy cooperative about efficiency, safety and technology gives us the power to make informed decisions.

Visit TouchstoneEnergy.com to discover the power of your co-op.

YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.



Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives