



Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

# Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

September 2022

## Help Southwest Iowa REC battle copper crimes

Metal theft – a crime that endangers lives and can result in thousands of dollars in damages ultimately paid by you – continues to plague electric utilities across America.

Copper wire is appealing to thieves who look to sell it for scrap. Burglars often climb power poles, scale fences at substations and break into buildings to steal the precious metal – almost always endangering themselves and others in the process. Between 2001 and 2008, the price of copper skyrocketed 500 percent. After a brief decline in 2009, it has hovered around \$3 per pound for the past several years.

Thieves may not understand that they are risking their lives by taking copper from utility poles or substations, where high transmission voltage is stepped down to a lower current for distribution lines.

“To a would-be thief, stealing copper may seem like a quick way to make a buck,” says Justin Murphy, Director of Operations, Southwest Iowa REC. “But it’s illegal, it’s costly and it’s not worth a life. Working with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, even for trained electric co-op employees using proper equipment.”

**CRIME STOPPERS** TOGETHER, WE CAN CUT DOWN ON COPPER THEFT AND OTHER CRIMES AGAINST IOWA’S ELECTRIC UTILITIES!

**800-452-1111**

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual at a Southwest Iowa REC facility, call 888-220-4869 immediately. If you see anyone other than Southwest Iowa REC personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.

If you would rather make an anonymous report about suspicious activities at one of the cooperative’s substations – or around other equipment, such as a transformer, power pole or even a meter at a residence, farm or business – call Crime Stoppers at 800-452-1111. Once your tip is received, Crime Stoppers will contact the local sheriff or other designated law enforcement agency about the possible crime. Then, after you have seen or heard on the local news that a crime has been solved, you can call Crime Stoppers to receive instructions for claiming a cash reward up to \$1,000 – although most rewards range from \$20-200. Your identity and other information will remain anonymous throughout the process.

## County and State Fairs



Eric at State Fair

Eric Hensley, Member Service Technician, participated in the STEM festival at the Ringgold County fair and gave safety presentations at the Taylor County Fair. Tim Pfeiffer, Director of Member Service, gave safety presentations at both Montgomery and Page County Fairs. Both Tim and Eric volunteered at the Touchstone Energy Cooperative of Iowa Booth at the Iowa State Fair.



County Fair Hazard Hamlet

## CEO's COMMENTS:

# The Power of Preparation

With severe weather events occurring more frequently, now more than ever, it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water and supplies to last at least a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind members of our community about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prepper" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress, anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.

- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.).
- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.
- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from home (for example, a bank safe deposit box).
- Keep neighbors and coworkers apprised of your emergency plans.
- Fill your car with gas.
- Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

### Caring for vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample formula, diapers, medication and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.



Phil Kinser

### Keeping four-legged family members safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged

outage or an emergency

will help reduce worry and stress especially if you need to make a decision during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.
- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.
- Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.
- Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications and other supplies).

At Southwest Iowa REC, we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future.

## Employee Updates:



Congratulations to Shayne Larson for 10 years of service. Shayne is a lineman at the Stanton location.



Congratulations to Lucas Dalton for 5 years of service. Lucas is a lineman at the Corning location.



Congratulations to Marilyn Rubel for 35 years of service. Marilyn is the accountant at the Stanton location.

**Congratulations to our dedicated employees!**

## We're looking for students interested in public service and leadership

### High schoolers who attend our Zoom sessions in October will have a chance to win AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship!

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Southwest Iowa REC has a long history of supporting students in the communities we serve through scholarships and leadership opportunities. We've also been sending deserving high school students to our nation's capital every summer for years as part of the national Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are pleased to once again offer a virtual opportunity for rural students to learn more about advocacy, electric cooperative career opportunities and the cooperative business model with a three-part webinar series in October. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any high school student in our service area and they are invited to register at [www.IowaYouthTour.com](http://www.IowaYouthTour.com) by October 1.

"This new program is perfect for rural Iowa students who have a passion for public service, leadership or government," remarked Phil Kinser, Southwest Iowa REC General Manager/ CEO. "We want to raise students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about exciting cooperative career paths that are available in smaller communities."

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from their own computer or mobile device or come to the local co-op office. Each Zoom session will last around 45-60 minutes and focus on a specific topic:

- Thursday, Oct. 6, 7:00 p.m. – Cooperative Business Model
- Tuesday, Oct. 18, 7:00 p.m. – Rural Iowa Advocacy
- Thursday, Oct. 27, 7:00 p.m. – Civic Involvement and Leadership



At the end of each live session, one lucky attendee will be selected at random to win a pair of Apple AirPods. Students who attend all three sessions will be entered into a random drawing for two \$1,000 college scholarships. All students who register online by October 1 will receive a special box of co-op goodies in the mail.

During the Zoom sessions, students will be inspired by our lineup of speakers and presenters. Participants will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and build leadership skills from a motivational speaker. Attendees will also hear from former Iowa Youth Tour students who pursued their passion for government service and leadership after attending the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. The 2023 Youth Tour is slated for June 17-23 next summer.

Learn more at [www.IowaYouthTour.com](http://www.IowaYouthTour.com) or contact Tim Pfeiffer at 888-220-4869 for more information.



**WANTED:  
Rural Iowa  
high school  
students  
who have a  
passion for  
leadership**

Attend our webinar series in October for a chance to win Apple AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship! Learn more at [IowaYouthTour.com](http://IowaYouthTour.com)



## Board Approves \$348,000 Patronage Refund

The Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative Board of Directors has approved payment of patronage dividends in 2022. We will return 70% of the dividends allocated to the members for the year 2005 and 10% of the current allocation for 2021. The total payment will be approximately \$348,000.

Dividends will be distributed to you in October and will appear as a CREDIT ON YOUR ELECTRIC BILL for those who are still active members of the cooperative. Former members will receive a check. There are substantial savings to the cooperative in applying these dividends to your account versus mailing out checks.

If you have questions regarding the taxability of these dividends, please consult your tax preparer. Patronage dividends reduce the net cost of electricity to members. It is one of the principles that provide the basis for the cooperative business model.

Our current policy on patronage dividends allows the board flexibility in the amount of patronage that will be returned to the members. There are several factors to be considered when determining this amount, such as the co-ops current cash position, equity level and major improvements needed to keep the system in good condition and provide all members with reliable electric service. Deferred patronage dividends are used by the cooperative to help finance major construction and maintenance projects. This allows us to reduce the total amount of long-term financing that is required, thus reducing the total interest expense.



# Bravo!

Dear Southwest Iowa REC,  
Thank you very much for choosing me for your scholarship. I will attend SWCC for Electrical Technology.

-Vincente Butcher

Dear SWIAREC,

Thank you so much picking me for your scholarship. It will help with the cost of tuition at ISU!

-Sarah Shipley

## Baked Parmesan Zucchini Fries

- 1 1/2 lbs. (680 g) zucchini, cut lengthwise into wedges (about 3 medium zucchini)
- 1/2 cup (50 g) freshly grated Parmesan
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) dried herbs – thyme, oregano, basil, rosemary, etc...
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 ml) smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 ml) garlic powder
- Kosher salt, to taste
- black pepper, to taste (freshly ground if possible)
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) olive oil
- 3 tablespoons (45 ml) chopped fresh parsley leaves

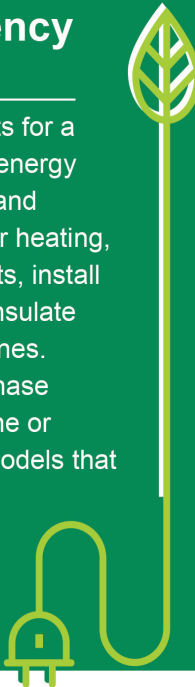
- Preheat oven to 400° F. Line baking sheet with parchment or aluminum foil. Spray with non-stick cooking spray.
  - In bowl, combine Parmesan, dried herbs, smoked paprika and garlic powder salt and pepper, to taste.
  - Toss the zucchini with olive oil and roll in parmesan/herb mixture to coat all sides. Place zucchini onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with extra parmesan/herb mixture if needed.
  - Bake until crisp, about 15 minutes. Then broil for 2-3 minutes, or until golden brown. Garnish with parsley. Serve warm.
- If you want them crispy and not keto, add bread crumbs to the coating, then spray the outside before baking



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Water heating accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. To save energy (and money!) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate accessible hot water lines. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are ENERGY STAR®-certified.

Source: Dept. of Energy



## SBS Inspections, Inc. Testing and Treating Poles This Fall

Southwest Iowa REC has contracted SBS Inspections, Inc. from Olathe, Colorado, to perform pole testing and treatment this fall on one-tenth of our system; approximately 5,000 poles or 250 miles of line. SBS Inspections Inc. will be testing and treating poles in the following areas:

### Adams County

Nodaway and Jasper townships

### Ringgold County

Tingley, Jefferson and Union townships

### Union County

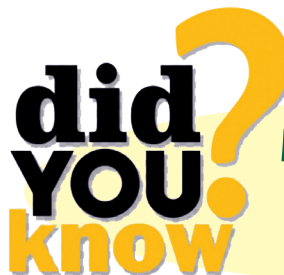
Douglas, Platte and Grant townships

### Montgomery County

Jackson, E. Jackson and Washington townships

SBS Inspections, Inc. inspectors will dig a hole at least 18 inches deep and wide enough to ensure a proper inspection and treatment of the pole. After exposing the wood, the poles are inspected and treated with a wood preservative, and then the hole is backfilled and the dirt tamped into place. The ground line treatment with wood preservative should extend the pole's life at least another 10 to 20 years. Poles that fail inspection are scheduled for replacement by our crews which provides you with even more reliable electric service in the future.

2022 Energy Efficiency & Beneficial Electrification Program Delivery Costs = \$.0028/kwh



The average U.S. home uses about 11,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per year.



Find us on Facebook

**Corning**  
1801 Grove Ave., Corning, IA 50841

**Mount Ayr**  
1502 W. South St., Mount Ayr, IA 50854

**Stanton**  
415 Broad Ave., Stanton, IA 51573

Phone Number: (888) 220-4869

### Board of Directors

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