

Southwest Lines

Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

May 2024

2024 Annual Meeting Plans

Plans are being made for this year's Annual Meeting. Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held at the Lenox Community Center on Thursday, September 5, 2024. The general business session will be called to order at 6:30 p.m. In addition to reports being presented that cover our 2023 operations, a major item of business will be the election of four directors to serve one three-year term each. Directors whose terms expire at the Annual Meeting in September are:

- Region 1, District #1 – Jason Smith
- Region 1, District #3 – Dale Walkup
- Region 2, District #5 – Deena Moore
- Region 2, District #7 – Dana Morgan



A nominating committee will be named at the May board meeting and given the task of nominating qualified candidates to run for each of these positions. Once the slate of candidates is chosen, members will be given the opportunity to vote by mail or at the Annual Meeting on September 5th. A detailed explanation of the nominating and election process will be provided in the next newsletter. If you are interested in being considered to serve on the nominating committee this year, please contact Phil Kinser at (888) 220-4869 before May 30th.



Southwest Iowa REC's Eric Hensley, Member Service Tech, and Mount Ayr Lineman David Head traveled to Graceland University for a STEM Festival on April 3rd. They set up the "Hazard Hamlet" display and utilized VR goggles. The "Hazard Hamlet" display is an interactive board showing safety around electrical equipment in and outside of the home. The VR goggles mock climbing a pole and hanging a transformer with a 360-degree view. While attending the STEM Festival, they educated over 350 3rd-8th graders from surrounding schools. Eric has also done these displays at local area schools to promote STEM.

Employee Updates



Connor Giles achieved Journeyman

Congratulations to Connor Giles, lineman in Mount Ayr, For earning First-Class Journey Lineman.



Congratulations to Sarah Newton for 10 years of service.

Sarah is the Director of Finance and Administrative Services at the Mount Ayr location. Thank you, Sarah, for your years of dedicated service.

Think Summer Storms are Harmless? Think Again

You might joke that you have a better chance of getting hit by lightning than winning the lottery, and you would be right.

According to National Weather Service (NWS), there are an estimated 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes in the United States each year, killing 28 people and injuring 252 annually.

Your odds of being struck by lightning are 1 in 1,171,000 in any given year. Before you deny that might ever happen to you, consider a person's average lifespan (estimated at 80 years) and the odds drop to around 1 in 14,600.

(Oh, and just so you know, the odds of winning the Mega Millions jackpot is 1 in 302.6 million and the Powerball, 1 in 292.2 million. And that's according to Lottery USA.)

While there is little you can do to increase your chances of becoming a multi-millionaire by winning a huge lottery windfall, there are proactive steps you can take before and during a storm to stay safe. Safe Electricity offers the following weather-related reminders from FEMA, the Red Cross and other safety organizations:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower or utility pole since lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas, such as hills, mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!). (Approximately 5 percent of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the U.S. happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.)
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Learn about your community's emergency warning for severe thunderstorms.
- Pick a safe place in your home for family members to gather during a thunderstorm. The location should be away from windows, skylights and glass doors that could be broken by strong winds or hail.
- Protect your animals by ensuring that any outside buildings that house them are structurally sound.
- Your mom was right: never talk on a landline telephone during a thunderstorm. Lightning could strike whatever building you are in, and the electricity will look for the quickest route to the ground via wiring. Although many homes don't have landlines anymore, many businesses still do.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning. A severe thunderstorm watch means that they are possible in and near the area. A severe thunderstorm warning means that severe

weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is serious and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

The best way to protect yourself against lightning or other storm-related injury or death is to monitor the weather and cancel or delay outdoor activities when thunderstorms are forecast. Lightning can strike from 10 miles away, so if you can hear thunder, you are at risk for being struck by lightning.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Phil Kinser CEO



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Looking for an easy way to manage home energy use? Smart plugs are inexpensive and offer convenient solutions for scheduling and controlling your favorite electronic devices.

With smart plugs, you can easily manage your coffee maker, lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. Smart plugs can help you manage devices through a smart phone app, your home assistant or voice control. By conveniently powering off or scheduling devices, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov

Board Approves Patronage Allocation

In March, the Board of Directors allocated margins for 2023. Margins are the “bottom line” on our financial operating statement when all the expenses of providing electric services to our member-owners are deducted from the revenues taken in. After the annual independent audit of the books, these margins are allocated to the various reserve accounts and also as patronage capital to the member-owners who received service from the Cooperative during the year the margin was created.

For 2023, margins of \$324,499.93 will be allocated to the member-owners based upon the amount each paid for electricity in proportion to what the other member-owners paid. The payment of patronage capital is deferred until a future point in time when the financials of the Cooperative allow a refund. Member-owners who purchased electricity from us in 2023 should receive a patronage allocation notice in the mail in late May or early June.

HEAT PLUS METER READINGS



The Heat Plus rate season will end May 31, 2024. It is important that members do not turn off the power to those meters because we still need to be able to read them each month. The Heat Plus rate will begin again on October 1, 2024.

Reduce Energy Use During Peak Hours

Peak hours are the busiest times for your local electric cooperative, since many people are using electricity at the same time. In addition, it costs your co-op more to generate electricity when demand soars during peak periods – and the cost of your electricity also may rise. Obviously, using less electricity during peak periods can save your co-op – and you – money.

Here’s how you can help during peak hours, which generally are on the hottest summer days between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.:

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. Wait to run your dishwasher until you go to bed, for instance.
- If you have air conditioning, turn the thermostat up when you are gone and at night. Cool only the rooms that you are using.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave oven, for example, uses considerably less energy than your stove or cooktop.
- If you’re buying a new appliance, make sure you get a highly efficient one. Look for ENERGY STAR® labels when you’re evaluating different models.
- Be aware of your energy consumption, and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round.

Use the energy you need, but use it wisely! You’ll help your co-op avoid building expensive new power plants – and that, in turn, will help keep your electric rates stable.

RECare – Customer Contribution Fund

Southwest Iowa REC’s RECare program makes it easy to help Cooperative neighbors in need this winter. With rising heating fuel prices this season, more and more Iowans are seeking assistance with energy, heating and weatherization costs. While some federal and state dollars exist to help those in need, there are still shortfalls.

Consider a monthly contribution to Southwest Iowa REC’s RECare program. Your contribution – whether it is \$1 or \$10 a month – when combined with those of other generous members, can go a long way in helping those who can’t afford winter’s heating bills. To help, fill out the form:

Consumer Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of “members helping members” and contribute to RECare.

I will make a 1-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

I will contribute \$_____ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

Name _____ Account # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Mail to: **RECare – SW Iowa REC**

1801 Grove Avenue; Box 367; Corning, IA 50841

OR **RECare – SW Iowa REC**

1502 W South Street; Box 391; Mt Ayr IA 50854

OR **RECare – SW Iowa REC**

415 Broad Avenue; Box 460; Stanton, IA 51573

**SAFETY
FIRST,
SAFETY
ALWAYS**

MAY IS ELECTRICAL
SAFETY MONTH

DANGER



MEMORIAL DAY

NEVER FORGET THOSE WHO GAVE US OUR FREEDOM

**Our offices will be closed Monday,
May 27th in observance
of Memorial Day.**



Please make room for roadside crews

By Abby Berry

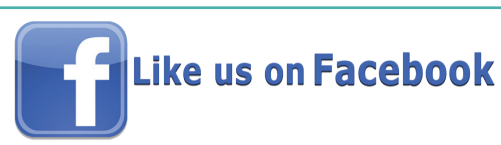
When the power goes out, so do Southwest Iowa REC's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see one of our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Iowa's Move Over Law, which was established in 2002, requires motorists to change lanes to give space for vehicles stopped along the side of the road. Anyone who violates the law could face a fine of up to \$10,000. Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians, often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.



Strawberry Lemon Blondies

Strawberry Lemon Blondies are pretty in pink strawberry bars with a sweetly tart flavor and a soft melt-in-your-mouth texture!



- 1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 2 1/4 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup diced fresh strawberries

Glaze

- 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted measure out your sugar before sifting.
- 1 Tbsp strawberry puree you'll need about 2 large strawberries, instructions below.
- lemon juice about 1 Tbsp, or just enough to thin the glaze to a spreadable consistency



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350F.
2. Line a 9 inch square baking pan with parchment paper with long edges. This is optional but will help you lift out the blondies for easy glazing and slicing later.
3. Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in the egg.
4. When the egg is fully incorporated, beat in the lemon juice. The lemon juice will probably not completely incorporate at this point, that's ok.
5. Whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt, and add to the wet ingredients, mixing until no more dry flour is present.
6. Gently fold in the diced strawberries. Spread the mixture into your pan and spread out as evenly as possible. The dough is thick, so take your time. I like to use a large offset spatula for this job.
7. Bake for 30-35 minutes, just until starting to turn golden around the edges and the center is set. A toothpick inserted in the center will be moist but not wet. Don't over-bake these, or they will dry out. Let cool on a rack.
8. Trim the strawberries for the glaze and puree in a small food processor. Strain the puree through a small strainer to get 1 Tbsp of puree. Whisk together the sugar, puree, and lemon juice until no lumps remain. If your glaze is too thin, add a touch more sugar. If it's too thick, add more lemon juice.
9. Spread the glaze over the cooled blondies. Let the glaze set before slicing.



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

Southwest Iowa REC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Board of Directors

Marilyn Werner, President
Mark Herzberg, Vice President
Kay Fast-Deyoe, Secretary
Jason Smith, Treasurer
Alan Spencer Deena Moore
Dana Morgan Terry Barnes
Bonnie Larson Dale Walkup

Phil Kinser, CEO