

living with energy

IN IOWA

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MAY 2019

Win a Cuisinart Cool Creations™ Ice Cream Maker ▶ See Page 3

Capturing Iowa's beauty & co-op stories

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Inspiration
for a kitchen
makeover!

8 recipes to
celebrate
beef month

Powering the
future of rural Iowa

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ON THE COVER

We're looking for cover images and interesting stories about the people and places in Iowa's electric cooperative communities. See Page 3 for more details. ⚡

Photo courtesy of Ann Thelen.

Capturing Iowa's beauty and co-op stories

BY ANN THELEN

Spring is my favorite season – that is, until the next season starts. Each new season brings with it a special ambiance, things that make it part of Iowa's charm. That's one of the main reasons I love being an Iowan.

Beauty is all around us, and there are incredible stories to be told. I snapped this month's cover photo while my husband and I were sitting on our deck one Sunday afternoon. Mother Nature had worked her magic on the beautiful blossoms, and the sky was a perfect blue from her palette. A bee finding pollen on a flower was a subtle reminder that things are happening all around us.

Across the thousands of miles served by Iowa's electric cooperatives, things are happening in those communities. From the Missouri River to the Mississippi River, electric cooperatives are united in powering lives across Iowa's diverse landscape of 99 counties.

Stories waiting to be told

Electric cooperative members, employees and directors are doing things to enhance the quality of life in Iowa's communities. Many of these same people have interesting hobbies, traditions or stories that are waiting to be told. Perhaps a group of cooperative members rides together annually on RAGBRAI® or cooperative employees lead fundraising efforts for a worthy cause. Maybe a high schooler is achieving something special. Is there a business in your community that's unique? Has a hometown son or daughter moved away and is now involved in an intriguing career? I have a feeling the stories are



endless. Iowans are modest and don't like to toot their own horns. But that's where you come in. I'd love to hear your story ideas that have a cooperative connection.

The fabric of communities are the people who live and work there; the people who go about their way, doing what they do best. And you know those people.

The process is easy.

Simply send an email to me at editor@livingwithenergyiniowa.com with "Story Idea" in the subject line. In a brief paragraph (or two), tell me about your idea. You're pitching this idea to us, so be sure to provide the best details you can. I'm looking for the Who, What, Why and Where. Include your contact information and for the subject you're suggesting. If we publish your idea, we'll recognize you in the magazine and send a token of our appreciation to you. It may take us a few months until we cover your story ideas in the magazine, so thank you for your patience.

Capturing cooperative beauty

Remember, we're also looking for stunning cover images, and we'll award you with \$100 if your image is used. Thank you to those who have submitted beautiful photos. Because many of the shots we received were winter-related, those will be considered when Iowa's seasons again transform the landscape. We're looking for high-quality, clear photos from every season, which depict Iowa or a cooperative scene. Email photos to me with "Cover Submission" in the subject line.

I'm already looking forward to checking my email and hearing from you! ⚡

Ann Thelen is the editor of *Living with Energy in Iowa*.

Win an electric ice cream maker!



Just in time for National Ice Cream Month in July, you could win this Cuisinart Cool Creations™ Ice Cream Maker. At the touch of one button, you can create two quarts of delicious frozen treats in just 20 minutes. Making homemade ice cream, gelato, frozen yogurt and sorbet of any type in any flavor couldn't be easier with one-button operation, convenient digital LCD time programming and auto shutoff. The unique paddle makes fast work of processing. The sleek brushed metal housing makes it look as good as the treats it creates for your family and friends.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com no later than May 31, 2019. 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 the weed trimmer from the March issue was Martha O'Rourke, T.I.P. REC. ⚡

“Living in affordable and appealing communities is increasingly important to our members. Electric co-ops understand this need and are playing key roles in ensuring that our communities embrace those characteristics and provide lifestyle opportunities that meet their members’ expectations.”

- Lynn Moore, executive director of Touchstone Energy. Touchstone Energy Cooperatives® is a network that now serves more than 730 electric co-ops in 46 states

T.I.P. REC and CIPCO support Deep River Fire Station enhancements



T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative and Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) recently donated \$7,500 to the remodel and expansion project for the Deep River Fire Station in Poweshiek County. Iowa’s electric cooperatives are actively involved in sustaining and growing their communities, including supporting essential emergency and public safety services. Donations such as these support needed facilities that allow for revitalization in rural communities across the state.

“We appreciate the donation to our independent fire station here in Deep River,” says Captain Mike

Geiger. “Our steel frame building was built in 1972 and is long overdue for improvements that will better serve our volunteer firefighters and our local communities. This donation will go a long way to setting the project in motion.”

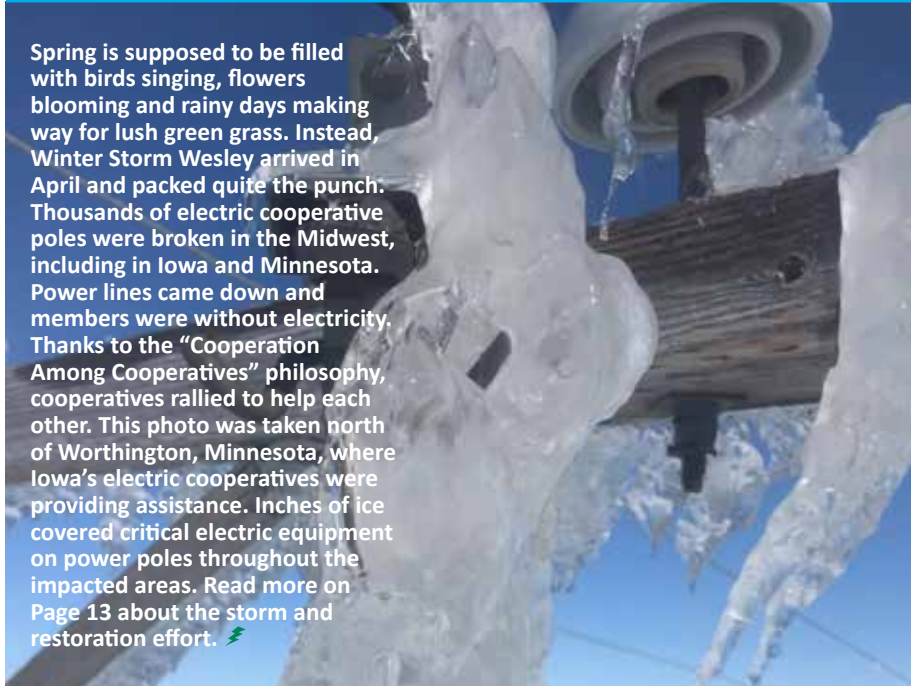
The fire department plans to raise over \$200,000 in its campaign to upgrade a nearly 50-year-old building, including a new roof, building sidewalls and insulation. Additionally, the revitalized facility will have a 30x41 foot addition allowing for new facilities and meeting rooms, while also providing a new truck bay. Fundraisers throughout the year will help raise the money necessary to get the project off the ground this year.

“Concern for Community is one of our cooperative principles. Electric cooperatives are local, and we’re committed to helping important causes in our communities,” says Dean Huls, T.I.P. REC assistant general manager. “Supporting local public safety and emergency services helps all of our members. We have a close connection with all fire departments and emergency services providers. We often work together when storms or electrical safety issues require their services as well as ours.”

“We’re proud to support community development in the areas served by our member electric cooperatives,” states CIPCO CEO Bill Cherrier. “By partnering with T.I.P. REC on this important project, we’re able to have a positive impact on priorities in the local area.”

POWERFUL IMAGE

Spring is supposed to be filled with birds singing, flowers blooming and rainy days making way for lush green grass. Instead, Winter Storm Wesley arrived in April and packed quite the punch. Thousands of electric cooperative poles were broken in the Midwest, including in Iowa and Minnesota. Power lines came down and members were without electricity. Thanks to the “Cooperation Among Cooperatives” philosophy, cooperatives rallied to help each other. This photo was taken north of Worthington, Minnesota, where Iowa’s electric cooperatives were providing assistance. Inches of ice covered critical electric equipment on power poles throughout the impacted areas. Read more on Page 13 about the storm and restoration effort. ⚡



EV charging station comes to northwest Iowa

Sioux Center is home to northwest Iowa's first electric vehicle (EV) charging station. A three-way partnership between the Holiday Inn Express, Russell's Electric and North West Rural Electric Cooperative made the two-port EV charging station possible.

For North West REC, based in Orange City, being a partner on the project fit with the company's strategic planning.

"Our co-op is always looking long term at where the electric industry is going," says Lyle Korver, North West REC general manager. "There's a lot of talk about electric vehicles. Automakers are announcing new models coming out in the next three to five years. We wanted to learn more about it and be able to share that with our members and legislators who might have questions."

The cooperative began searching for where it could place an EV charging station last spring.



"As we looked at the type of business where it would make sense, a hotel was the first thing that came to mind," Korver says. "People are parked here for a number of hours."

North West REC serves three hotels, and the Holiday Inn's EV charging station went online in mid-February. The cooperative is also partnering with Boulders Inn & Suites in Holstein to open a second EV charging station this spring.

Boulders, like the Holiday Inn, will have a Level 2 charging station. Open 24/7 to the public, there's a \$2 charge for every two hours of charging. EV owners can access the station using the ChargePoint smartphone app. ⚡

Photo and information courtesy of nwestiowa.com

Two students awarded trips on 2019 Youth Tour

Congratulations to **Sabrina Leistikow**, who has been named the winner of the *Living with Energy in Iowa 2019 Youth Tour Contest*. Her prize for submitting the winning essay is an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., on June 14-20, where she'll attend the national Youth Tour with 37 other Iowa students and about 1,900 students from across the country.

Sabrina is a junior at Cedar Falls High School, where she's involved in student senate, women's leadership, theatre and track. She's the daughter of Kurt and Jenifer Leistikow, and her family is a member of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative. Upon completion of high school, Sabrina plans to attend college.



Congratulations to **Chloe Inskeep**, who was randomly selected as the winner of the 2019 Youth Tour "At-Large" drawing. She was nominated by Pella Cooperative Electric Association and is the granddaughter of Director Steve Inskeep. Chloe is a junior at Prairie City Monroe High School and is involved with volleyball and speech. ⚡







Only use light bulbs that meet (or are below) the maximum wattage listed on the lamp or fixture. Exceeding the maximum wattage can cause overheating and potential fire hazards.

Safety starts with you.

MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

You can go along!

Well, almost. But you'll be able to see what Iowa's Youth Tour participants are posting during their **June 14-20** trip on these social media accounts:

-  Facebook: IowaYouthTour
-  Twitter: @IowaYouthTour
-  Snapchat: IowaYouthTour
-  Instagram: iowayouthtour

Powering the future of rural Iowa

BY KAY SNYDER

The Empower Rural Iowa task forces present recommendations at a meeting in Sheffield.



An exciting and multifaceted movement to support the vitality of rural Iowa communities is gaining momentum, and electric cooperatives are helping to lead the way.

Throughout the state, many programs and initiatives are creating and raising awareness of positive things happening in rural communities. Among these are the Iowa Rural Development Council and Gov. Kim Reynolds' Empower Rural Iowa initiative, both focused on contributing to the growth and health of rural Iowa.

Iowa Rural Development Council

The Iowa Rural Development Council (IRDC) was created as a part of an executive order and the ensuing Farm Bill in 1992. While the Council received federal and state funding for many years, the funding eventually dissolved, and the group operated without paid staff for more than a decade.

In 2015, a group of engaged IRDC supporters began a movement to revitalize the organization. The Iowa

Area Development Group (IADG) has been an active leader from the beginning.

"Through our Iowa network of electric cooperatives and other utilities, the Iowa Area Development Group sees firsthand the challenges and opportunities of our rural communities," states IADG President Rand Fisher. "With locally owned and operated electric cooperatives serving Iowans in all of the state's 99 counties, they are among the best suited to help be the drivers of change."

One of the priorities of the reenergized IRDC was to host the first-ever Iowa Rural Summit. The 2016 event, held in Jefferson, brought together more than 300 people representing more than 60 rural communities. The event sparked a resurgence of interest among rural advocates and convinced IRDC partners to revitalize the Council's efforts to support rural development. Today, IRDC members include federal and state agencies, colleges and

universities, utilities, non-profits, and business and industry.

Considerable work has been done to advance the priorities of the initial Summit. Several communities – Keosauqua, Kossuth County, Lamoni, Stanton and Greene County – adopted strategies to unify stakeholders and implement community-led change. A rural housing program stemmed from the Summit – Rural Housing 360 – a unique resource to bring new housing options to communities, especially those who cannot meet the housing needs of local businesses.

2019 Iowa Rural Summit

The third Iowa Rural Summit took place in April, with more than 350 people attending the event, including 225 people from 75 communities, associations, educational institutions, financial institutions, and regional, state and federal partners.

The Summit agenda centered around group learning, discussion and collaboration with a focus on action





Iowa Rural Development Summit attendees discuss growing rural Iowa.



Access Energy Cooperative hosted the inaugural meeting of the Empower Rural Iowa's "Growing Rural Iowa" task force.

and implementation. Key Summit topics included leadership, high-speed broadband, housing, retail, child care, quality of life and telling the positive story of rural Iowa.

During the Summit, Gov. Reynolds and Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg presented \$2.9 million in catalyst funding to 29 Iowa communities. The catalyst awards, also known as grants, provide \$100,000 per community to assist with the rehabilitation of buildings to stimulate economic growth and reinvestment.

"Each catalyst project is unique, inspiring different types of growth and development depending on the communities where they're located," says Lt. Gov. Gregg.

Empower Rural Iowa

On July 18, 2018, Governor Kim Reynolds signed an executive order creating the Empower Rural Iowa Initiative, co-chaired by Lt. Gov. Gregg and IRDC Chair Sandy Ehrig, to identify needed legislative, regulatory and policy changes to support rural Iowa.

Three task forces – Investing, Growing and Connecting Rural Iowa – worked to generate recommendations. Iowa's electric cooperatives along with municipal utilities and independent telecommunication company communities have been front-and-center, both by serving on and hosting the task force meetings. Gatherings were held in Winterset, Holstein, Mount Pleasant, Earlham, Maquoketa, Pella, Stanton and Sheffield.

"There is synergy happening between the Iowa Rural Development Council and the Empower Rural Iowa initiative," says Gov. Reynolds. "It's incredible, and it's one of the reasons I think Iowa is experiencing a tipping point in rural development. Together, we're building on the character of our

rural communities and turning our small towns into magnets for retail, commerce, housing and tourism. I can't say enough about the local leaders who aren't afraid to dream big, work hard and find ways to tap into the full potential of their communities."

Iowa's locally owned co-ops are powering the way

Historically, rural communities could count on their locally owned anchor businesses to support initiatives necessary for the growth and vitality of their citizens. Over the years, there has been a shift in ownership. Many of these local companies are now part of larger corporations with headquarters located in another city, state or country. With the absence of these types of decision-makers rural communities, direct engagement and support are often reduced. While some of those local connections have been diminished, electric cooperatives

have remained steadfast anchors of rural Iowa.

"Iowa's electric cooperatives remain locally owned entities that are actively engaged in renewing the communities and regions they serve," says Hollee McCormick of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and a member of the Empower Rural Iowa Executive Council. "Co-op directors, employees and members dedicate countless hours of volunteer work to support community activities and organizations that will enable future vitality for our small, rural areas."

Electric co-ops also support local businesses and initiatives by bringing new money to the community through state and federal programs in addition to their own revolving loan funds. Iowa's electric cooperatives play a vital role in powering the future of rural Iowa. ⚡

Kay Snyder is the director of marketing and communications for the Iowa Area Development Group.

Recommendations from Empower Rural Iowa Task Forces

Investing in Rural Iowa

- Assist rural Iowa communities in obtaining housing needs assessments
- Reform the workforce housing tax credit to make it more accessible



GOVERNOR'S
EMPOWER RURAL IOWA
INITIATIVE

Growing Rural Iowa

- Create an Empowered Rural Communities recognition program
- Create leadership pathways for empowered rural communities

Connecting Rural Iowa

- Optimize the existing broadband grant program
- Identify a consistent source of funding for the broadband grant program

These recommendations were delivered to Gov. Reynolds and are working their way through the Iowa General Assembly. ⚡

BEST BEEF

★ RECIPES ★

MAY
BEEF MONTH
IOWA 

Steak Sublime

- 1 Porterhouse steak, 2 inches thick salt and pepper, to taste
- ¼ pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 tablespoon onions, minced
- 1 tablespoon parsley, minced
- ½ cup red wine
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat broiler for 10 minutes. Season steak with salt and pepper, broil to desired temperature. In large skillet, sauté mushrooms in butter until brown. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Simmer 5 minutes longer. Pour over broiled steak and serve.

Jane Person • Batavia
Access Energy Cooperative

Slow Cooker Maid-Rites

- 3 pounds of ground beef
- 2 eggs
- 16 ounces tomato sauce
- 2 beef bouillon cubes, dissolved in ½ cup hot water
- 2 slices of bread cubed

Brown and drain beef. Put in slow cooker and add remaining ingredients. Stir well and cook for 4 hours on low. Stir once per hour. Add more water if too dry.

Barbara Ainger • Eagle Grove
Prairie Energy Cooperative

Slow Cooker Pepsi Pot Roast

- 3-4 pound pot roast
- dash of ground black pepper
- 1 ounce package of dry onion soup mix
- 1 10¾-ounce can cream of mushroom soup, condensed
- 12 ounces Pepsi or any other cola

Place roast in slow cooker that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Sprinkle meat lightly with pepper. In small bowl, whisk together onion soup mix, mushroom soup and cola until well combined. Pour over roast. Cover and cook 8-10 hours on low or 3-4 hours on high.

Minerva Small • Maurice • North West REC

Barbeque Beef Roast

- 1 large beef roast
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- 1 cup ketchup
- ½ cup chili sauce
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

Roast the beef until done. Let it rest, and then slice thinly across grain and layer in a slow cooker. Boil the remaining sauce ingredients, and then pour over meat. Cook on low in slow cooker. Serve on large buns.

Mary Blauwet • Larchwood • Lyon REC

PROTEIN- PACKED

You would have to eat 6 tablespoons of peanut butter (564 calories) to get the same amount of protein provided by one 3-ounce serving of lean beef (150 calories).

Slow Cooker Beef-n-Noodles

- 2½ cups water
- 1-2 pounds beef roast, cubed
- 2 teaspoons beef bouillon
- 3 teaspoons dried parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced onion
- 1 teaspoon Lawry's® Seasoned Salt
- ½ teaspoon celery salt
- 1 10-ounce can cream of mushroom soup
- 12 ounces noodles

Mix everything together except the soup and noodles. Put in a slow cooker and cook on low for 8-10 hours or on high for 4 hours. Stir in soup and noodles for the last 30 minutes of cooking.

JoAnn Nester • Rock Rapids • Lyon REC

Beefy Roll-Ups

- 1 pound thinly sliced beef roast, cooked
- 10 flour tortillas (8-inch)
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup Miracle Whip
- ¼ cup salsa
- 10 lettuce leaves
- 8 ounces shredded cheese tortilla chips

Combine sour cream, Miracle Whip, salsa and cheese. Spread over tortillas. Top with roast beef and lettuce. Roll tightly, secure with toothpicks, slice. Serve with more salsa and tortilla chips.

Mary Gropper • Chelsea • T.I.P. REC

Beef Burgundy

- 2 – 2½ pounds lean stew meat
- 1 package dry onion soup mix
- 1 can cream of celery soup (undiluted)
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup (undiluted)
- 1 cup Burgundy or red wine

Put everything in a roaster; do not need to stir. Cover and bake at 275-300 degrees F for 4 hours. Serve over rice, Chinese noodles, egg noodles or baked potatoes. No need for any salt or pepper.

Anita Mittag • Prescott • Southwest Iowa REC

Shanghai Beef

- 1 pound sirloin steak, cut in bite-sized pieces
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 14 ounces beef broth
- 1 can water chestnuts, drained
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup water
- 1 4-ounce can mushrooms
- 2 cups non-prepared Minute Rice

In skillet on medium heat, add oil and sauté beef until brown (about 5 minutes). Add cornstarch and blend well. Add broth, chestnuts, green pepper, onion, soy sauce, pepper and water. Simmer covered for 15 minutes. Add rice and mushrooms, stir. Cover and remove from heat. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Tammy Solsma • Sanborn • North West REC

LEAN & HEART HEALTHY

There are more than 30 lean cuts of beef available. Lean beef has less than 10 grams of total fat per 3-ounce serving. About half the fat in beef is mono-unsaturated fat, the same heart-healthy kind found in olive oil.

BEEF BITES

NUTRIENT RICH

One serving of beef is 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards) and provides 25 grams of protein, roughly 50% of your daily value. Plus, beef provides 10 essential nutrients, including zinc, iron and B vitamins.

BEEF BITES

HIGH STANDARDS

All beef choices must meet the same safety standards. Vigilance on farms, rigorous safety inspections and strict government guidelines ensure the highest level of safety for whichever type of beef you choose.

BEEF BITES

Wanted:

After-School Snacks

The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

After a full day of learning, kiddos are sure to come home ready for a snack. Share your favorite recipes for after-school snacks! If we run your recipe in the magazine, we'll send a \$25 credit for your electric co-op to apply to your power bill. Recipes submitted also may be archived on our website at www.livingwithenergyiowa.com.

The deadline is May 31, 2019. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

EMAIL:

recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your e-mail message.)

MAIL:

Recipes

Living with Energy in Iowa
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48
Des Moines, IA 50322-2992

Renovating the heart of the home

3 steps for turning your dream into a reality

BY LAURA ARAUJO



It's known as the heart of the home. The contemporary kitchen is the epicenter of activity, a place for cooking, eating and entertaining. Over the decades, the function of the kitchen has transitioned from a utilitarian space into a place for family and friends to gather — compare the dimly lit rooms with smoky wood stoves of pre-electricity days to the open-concept floor plans of modern homes outfitted with high-tech conveniences and oversized islands that are more frequent today.

“Today's kitchen is an all-inclusive space, not just a place for cooking,” says

Elle H-Millard, industry relations manager for the National Kitchen and Bath Association. “It has become an entertainment zone as well as a place for homework and office work.”

As a result, people are investing in their kitchens. And with good reason — a kitchen remodel offers homeowners the opportunity to customize the space to their lifestyle needs and tastes. Plus, updates to the kitchen can provide a great return on investment. According to the National Association of Realtors® (NAR), a renovated kitchen is of top priority for potential homebuyers.

Whether a few cosmetic changes are in order, or a homeowner is considering a complete kitchen overhaul, these practical steps can bring a revival to the heart of the home.

Step 1 – Envision the project

One of the first decisions a homeowner should make is whether to hire a designer. A certified designer will guide you through the entire remodel process.

“If you're looking at a do-it-yourself (DIY) replace and refresh, a designer might not be required. But if you're looking to move walls, plumbing, HVAC or change

the footprint of the space, a designer is advisable,” H-Millard says. “Designers know functionality and safety in the kitchen, and their expertise will prevent you from having to redo a project.”

If you choose not to work with a designer, you will take on the role of the designer throughout the remodel. Before embarking on the project, you should think about the functionality of the kitchen and how an upgrade or remodel will meet the needs of those living in the home.

Things to consider: Do you cook often? If so, what type of cooking do you do

– quick meals utilizing the microwave or more gourmet meals that call for upgraded kitchen appliances? What about baking? Do you entertain often? How much storage space is needed for kitchen equipment? What are the unique needs of the people who will utilize the kitchen? Are there young children for whom safety features are a priority?

“Surprisingly, lifestyle needs are often overlooked by homeowners,” H-Millard says.

She recommends doing online research to gain inspiration about what design elements you would enjoy having in the kitchen. A Pinterest board is a useful tool to organize ideas and to help a designer get to know your personality.

Step 2 –

Create a budget and timeline

Once you’ve decided a remodel is in order, determine the scope of the project. Are you undertaking a complete remodel that may involve gutting the existing kitchen and starting from scratch? Or will the project focus on cosmetic updates to outdated features or minor improvements to prepare a home for sale?

Depending on your skillset, DIY projects may involve removing and reinstalling cabinets, painting, tiling and installing new flooring. Elizabeth McKenna, director of marketing and communications for the

National Association of the Remodeling Industry, says if a renovation will require a building permit, moving a wall or adaptation to plumbing or electrical, it’s best left to professionals. In that case, McKenna recommends visiting www.nari.org to find a qualified remodeler.

“It is often cheapest in the long run to hire a professional,” McKenna says. “DIY projects can go horribly wrong and cost more money as well as emotional stress and inconvenience to the homeowner.”

The project’s scope will also depend on the budget available. H-Millard says that as a rule, a complete kitchen remodel will cost twice as much as the car in your driveway. A cosmetic upgrade will be less expensive.

She recommends that a 20% contingency fund be included in the overall budget.

“I often see homeowners cut corners in order to focus on aesthetic elements,” she says. “Problems hidden behind walls need to be solved before covering them up.”

Once the scope of the project and budget are determined, it’s time to contract trade professionals and vendors. If a designer is used, they will coordinate this process; in a DIY project, you will hire any needed tradespeople. Obtaining quotes from various professionals is essential for budget planning.

Finally, create a timeline

for the remodel. If professionals are used, the timeline will be dependent on their availability.

In scheduling the project, be prepared that a kitchen renovation will disrupt your family’s routine and yield a lot of dust.

Step 3 –

Execute the remodel

Once contracts are in place with the needed professionals, work begins.

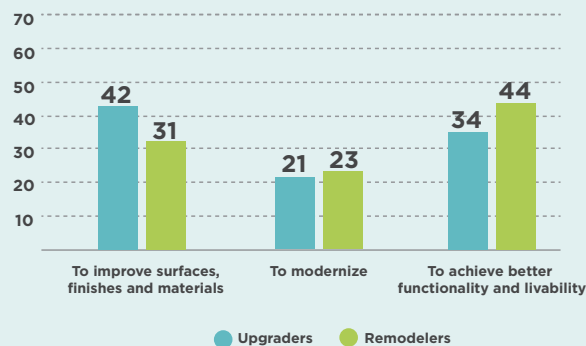
If the remodel is a DIY project, you can purchase materials and begin work.

If tradespeople are used during the project, you may need to be available to meet them during daytime hours.

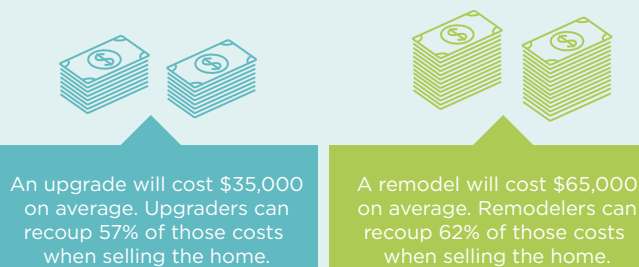
If a designer is used, he or she will ensure materials are ordered and that work stays on schedule. The designer will also oversee the progress to make sure work is being completed as specified.

At this point, your vision has become a reality. There’s only one thing left to do – invite friends and family over and enjoy a good meal in the heart of the home! 🌟

WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?



ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS



Source: National Association of Realtors®
2017 Remodeling Impact Report

Kitchen makeover – are smart appliances the way to go?

BY LAURA ARAUJO

One of the newest developments in home electronics is the smart appliance, an appliance with built-in technology that enables it to connect to the internet. Imagine a refrigerator that notices when the milk is almost gone and orders more from an online grocery store. It might sound space-age, but this technology now exists.

“Smart appliances are becoming more and more prevalent and there are a number of benefits to using them,” says Elizabeth McKenna, director of marketing and communications for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

Homeowners may consider including one or more smart appliances in a kitchen remodel. But what are the pros and cons of smart appliances?

Smart appliances offer energy savings

Smart appliances are designed with energy savings in mind. For example, a homeowner can schedule their dishwasher to run during off-peak times when the cost of electricity is less expensive. Likewise, a smart refrigerator can delay its defrost cycle until the evening hours. To preserve energy, a smart refrigerator will also allow the homeowners to look inside without opening the door. They will also receive an alert on their smartphone if the refrigerator door is left open.

Smart appliances offer convenience

Smart appliances have many conveniences. They can be controlled remotely from the homeowner’s smartphone. While out running errands, the homeowner can look inside the refrigerator to see if they need to pick up more eggs. A baker with messy hands can preheat their oven simply by speaking to it. And rather than hiring an appliance



repair person come to recalibrate the oven, the manufacturer can do it remotely.

Smart appliances offer safety

The technology in a smart appliance can monitor a person’s behavior and send an alert if they deviate from their normal routine. While this may be a privacy concern, it may also enable people to maintain their independence longer.

“Would you rather have your oven keep an eye on you as you walk into your kitchen each morning – invasive as that might seem – or would you prefer to have a nurse come and check on you each day?” asks Mary Jo Peterson, president of Mary Jo Peterson Design, Inc.

Cons of smart appliances

Though there are several benefits of smart appliances, there are also some

drawbacks a consumer must weigh before making a purchase.

With any form of technology, especially new technology, there may be glitches that need to be worked out. In addition, for those who are not tech-savvy, there will be a learning curve involved in utilizing the capabilities of the smart appliances. Another major concern is security. With appliances that are connected, there is a risk of hackers accessing a home’s wireless network. Perhaps the biggest drawback of the smart appliance is the cost; they are more expensive than a traditional appliance of the same quality.

“Smart appliances might really be worth the investment, but with the higher price point, you may pick a couple key appliances during a remodel,” recommends Elle H-Millard, industry relations manager for the National Kitchen and Bath Association. ⚡

Winter storm, broken poles and mutual aid

In April, which is officially springtime in the Midwest, Winter Storm Wesley brought a blizzard to the Plains, more than 2 feet of snow to the Dakotas and an ice storm to parts of several Midwestern states, including Iowa and Minnesota.

The storm delivered substantial ice accumulations and high winds along Iowa's northern border and throughout Minnesota, causing broken poles and ice-packed conductor wire to fall to the ground. Overburdened branches and broken trees also caused outages. High winds made progress difficult as linemen battled the elements to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

"More than 90 linemen from Iowa's electric cooperatives headed north to help neighboring electric co-ops as they worked to restore power following Winter Storm Wesley," says John Dvorak, director of safety and loss control for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Crews from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative; Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association; Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Clark Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Consumers Energy, East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative; Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Greenfield); Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative; Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative; Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association; Harrison County Rural Electric



Photo: Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative

Cooperative; Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative; Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative; Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative; Midland Power Cooperative; Nishnabotna Valley Rural Electric Cooperative; Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative; Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Western Iowa Power Cooperative and Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative assisted neighboring electric co-ops with outage restoration in northern Iowa and throughout Minnesota.

"I'm proud of the crews for working safely and efficiently – in tough conditions – to restore power to thousands of members who were

left without electricity. Cooperation among cooperatives and assisting others in need is what our business model is all about," Dvorak adds. ⚡



Photo: Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative

Broken poles by the numbers

Iowa

Corn Belt Power Cooperative: 5
 Heartland Power Cooperative: 100+
 Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative: 90
 Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative: 21
 MiEnergy Cooperative: 110
 Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative: 63
 North West Rural Electric Cooperative: 50
 Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.: 20

Minnesota cooperatives assisted by Iowa cooperatives

Federated Rural Electric Association: 400
 Nobles Cooperative Electric: 400
 Freeborn-Mower Co-op Services: 750



Photo: Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative

Spring into safety with National Electrical Safety Month

The top priority for Iowa's electric cooperatives is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to their members.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. Not only does the month bring spring storms and potentially severe weather, but it also heralds the beginning of the celebration season for many high school students, especially seniors. Proms, graduation parties and other social gatherings are often associated with this time of year.

Does your teen or loved one know what to do in the event of a collision with a utility pole resulting in a downed power line? Do your loved ones know what to do if they come upon an accident with a downed power line? The following tips are good reminders for people of all ages and may be especially helpful for youngsters unfamiliar with electrical hazards.

Life-saving tips

If a car collides with a utility pole, the vehicle may be charged with electricity. Anyone exiting the car could encounter thousands of volts of electricity from the downed line. When you step out of the car, you become part of the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted. Stay in the vehicle and tell others to do the same until emergency crews have told you it's safe to exit the car.



Photo: Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative

If the vehicle is on fire or you must exit for other safety reasons, jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothing touch the vehicle and ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle away (in small steps with your feet still together) to avoid electric shock. Keep moving away until you are at least 40 feet from the vehicle.

If you come upon a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines, keep your distance. A downed power line can energize the ground up to 35 feet away. While you may be concerned about injuries to those involved, the best action you can take is to alert emergency officials, who will in turn coordinate with the power provider. Never drive over a downed power line or through water

that is touching a downed power line.

If you have a downed power line on your property as a result of a falling tree, storm or other circumstance, do not go near the power line. Assume that the downed line is energized and dangerous. Never try to move the power line even if you think it's not energized or if you are using a non-conductive material. You may be anxious to clear your property of tree limbs or other debris near the downed line but wait until after an electric co-op crew, or emergency officials have confirmed that it is safe to do so.

Most accidents are preventable

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable.

We know firsthand how dangerous electricity is because Iowa's electric cooperatives work with it all day, every day.

Contact your local electric co-op for additional electrical safety tips or if you would like to request a safety demonstration at your school or community event. It is no accident that safety is our top priority. ⚡



“Sewing” a family tradition

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

The bottom line was, my mother wanted me to sew. Desperately.

To back up a little, my mother was an excellent seamstress. Taught by a neighborhood woman who avowed the theory that you should be able to wear your clothing inside out without anyone knowing, my mother made everything my sister, brother and I wore, well into high school.

Not to say there weren't a few foibles along the way. I remember a day in my senior year of high school when I was called to the phone in the school office. The Christmas Banquet was that night, and my mom was finishing up the white wool skirt that I would be wearing.

“I burned it!” she screeched through the phone. “It's got an iron mark right above the knee.”

Since my mother's idea of repairing anything was to stick some rick-rack around too-short pants or some lace in a too-low neckline, I waited to hear what she'd come up with.

“I could put a pocket there,” she tried, lamely.

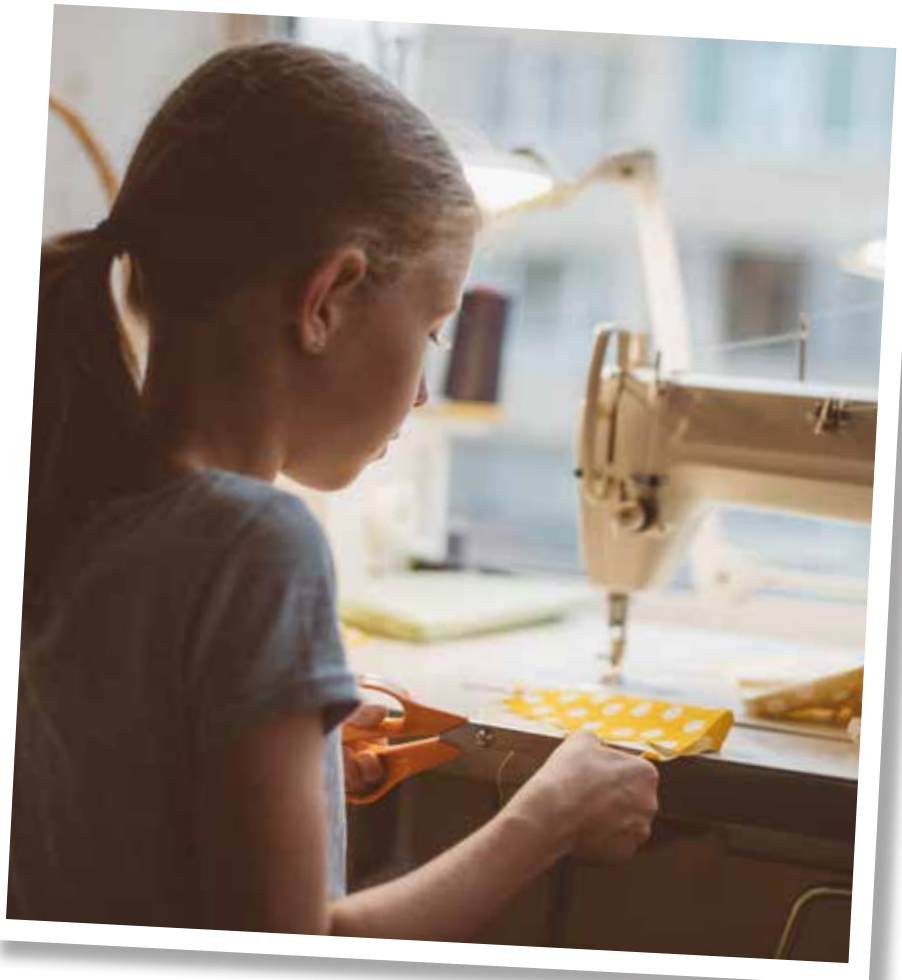
“Above the knee? Right,” I snapped at her.

In the end, I went uptown to an expensive clothing store and found another white wool skirt.

Despite the few setbacks she had in sewing (the “chicken coat” is a whole other story), she wanted her daughters to sew. She loved the feeling of turning a useless, outgrown garment into something we girls could wear. She felt downright virtuous saving hundreds of dollars in clothing costs for two daughters while keeping us in the latest styles.

When I started 4-H, she saw the path toward sewing mastery. And, in fact, I completed some lovely garments and even did some sewing for my sister and my little brother.

The problem was, I could follow things by rote, but I never got the



hang of starting something on my own and finishing it. If Mom was looking over my shoulder, telling me step-by-step what to do, I was fine. But when did I “stitch in the ditch?” When did I put these two sides together? How did I figure out “warp” and “weft” and why did it matter? And why aren't those notches lining up?

4-H did little to enlighten me. Not to blame the club, but I was simply too thick to catch on. My leaders were ready to throttle me with a tape measure, even though I did, after five years of being a member, learn how to make a crisp bust dart. I haven't used that knowledge yet.

As I approached high school

graduation, I made my wishes known to my parents in every way possible that I wanted luggage as a graduation gift. I've always loved traveling, and I was ready to set out and see the world.

My gift? A sewing machine. I used it halfheartedly a handful of times and then gifted it back to my mom.

My sewing prowess now extends to putting in a hem, sewing on a button and doing some minor repairs. And oh yeah, I can make a killer bust dart should the need arise. ⚡

Valerie Van Kooten is a writer from Pella who loves living in the country and telling its stories. She and her husband Kent have three married sons and two incredibly adorable grandsons.

ROAD-TRIPPING?

Electric vehicle growth is expected to continue to rise across the U.S. There are also plans to install thousands of additional charging stations across the country. With the infrastructure in place, people will soon be able to drive electric from coast to coast with plenty of options to plug in along the way. Let's ride.

-Advanced Energy



Contact your local co-op for more information
or visit <https://bit.ly/2GvHjzH>



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