



Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

January 2020

Cooperative Leaders Meet With Legislators



(Pictured left to right: Senator Amy Sinclair, Phil Kinser; CEO/General Mgr. Southwest Iowa REC, Cozy Nelsen; CEO Guthrie County REC, Dave Opie; General Mgr. Clarke Electric Cooperative, Senator Mark Costello, Representative Ray Sorensen, Senator Tom Shipley, Charlie Dunn; CEO Farmers Electric Cooperative)

Representatives from Southwest Iowa REC (Corning/Mt Ayr/Stanton), Clarke Electric (Osceola), Farmers Electric (Greenfield) and Guthrie County REC (Guthrie Center) hosted a Legislative Meeting in Creston on November 25, 2019. Representative Ray (Bubba) Sorensen and Senators Tom Shipley, Amy Sinclair and Mark Costello met with about 25 attendees from these area Cooperatives.

The Legislative Meeting gives cooperative leaders a chance to discuss key issues in detail with their area representatives and for the legislators to discuss what they expect to work on in the next legislative session. The biggest influence on lawmakers is their

own voters and their expressed concerns. Whether you are a co-op member, director, manager or employee, you can play an important role in this process. If we don't tell them about our issues and concerns, they won't know we care.

Your Cooperative's future can be directly related to your active participation in the political process. There is a great deal of power behind grassroots activities and how they can effectively influence the outcome of legislative, political and community decisions. We are there to get the best deal for Iowa's RECs and YOU, our members.

You can help in this effort. We encourage all of you to participate in Iowa's politics.

Editor's Choice Contest



In last month's Living with Energy in Iowa magazine, one of our members was randomly chosen winner for the Editor's Choice Contest. Congratulations to Darlene Stamps for winning the Keurig K-Café single serve coffee, latte and cappuccino maker!



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CEO's COMMENTS:

Proactively Providing Safe and Reliable Service

When electric cooperative member-owners are asked what they value most about their electric service, two things consistently rank near the top – reliability and affordability. With a 5-year annual average reliability rate of 99.9791%, we know reliability doesn't happen by chance. It takes constant effort to maintain systems, improve where necessary, and anticipate our member-owners' increasing needs for electric service.

During the winter months, reliability is under greater scrutiny from our member-owners. Old Man Winter's fury of snow and ice storms, combined with strong winds, can put our systems to the test in a significant way. When outages occur, the most frequent cause is trees or other vegetation coming into contact with power lines. These types of outages are not only inconvenient for our member-owners but also costly to your cooperative's bottom line, which impacts affordability over the long-term.

We know that vegetation – especially trees – are valued parts of our landscape. Beyond enhancing the beauty of an area, they provide important functions like cool shade, noise barriers, supplying vital oxygen to the atmosphere, and providing a habitat for many animals. But trees also grow, which

can cause problems with power lines if they are not properly planted or if volunteer trees rise in unintended areas.

When branches and limbs break off, they often land in roadways or bring the power lines down with them – posing a safety risk to cooperative employees and the public. Because our distribution system connects thousands of people across our service territory, one tree coming in contact with a power line may impact your neighbors near and far. The Iowa Electrical Safety Code requires electric utilities, including cooperatives, to have a schedule and procedures for regular tree trimming and vegetation management, which is critical in minimizing these instances.

Both federal and state policies require that vegetation must be cleared from power lines as a safety measure for member-owners and our employees. These groups also have strict guidelines, including prohibiting trees from being planted certain distances away from power lines.

Under our vegetation management program – which means that trees and other vegetation are inspected and trimmed on a 5-year cycle – maintaining line clearance is our primary objective. We do this while ensuring we trim vegetation

in an environmentally responsible manner. The tree trimming process has two purposes – to remove elements that may already be coming into contact with utility equipment, such as wires and conductors and to create a clearance that will provide hazard-free operation of electric service.



Phil Kinser

Using the established standards as the guide, we also know that a methodical, proactive approach is important to ensure the safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible delivery of service. Like many things in life, preventative maintenance is a key to health – oil changes are vital to the longevity of a vehicle, regular dental visits are important in cavity prevention, and annual inspections and maintenance will likely extend the life of your furnace. Left to chance – rather than being proactive – your vehicle, teeth or furnace would likely suffer. The same is true with your cooperative's electric system. By proactively clearing vegetation before it reaches power lines, Southwest Iowa REC will be less impacted during severe weather and we'll avoid longer, more costly outages.



**2020 Washington D.C.
Youth Tour
June 18-25, 2020**
**Contact your local
Southwest Iowa REC
office for an application
or visit
www.swiarec.coop**

2020 Residential Energy Efficiency Incentives – Effective 1/1/2020

Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative provides our members with ways to save on your energy budget. We offer rebates on the following products that will offer substantial savings for your home.

Appliances:

When replacing appliances, always look for **Energy Star** qualified appliances. Appliances can account for 13% of your energy bill.

Energy Star qualified appliances incorporate advanced technologies that use 10-50% less energy and water than standard models.

Energy Star Clothes Washer/Dryer
With electric Water Heater \$40/unit

Energy Star Clothes Dryer \$20/unit

Pull the Plug Appliance Recycling:

Call 855-838-7817 to request collection and recycling of your old, working refrigerator, freezer or window air conditioner and receive an incentive for up to three operable units per address. Curbside pick up and recycling is done by the cooperative's contractor.

Refrigerator \$35/unit

Freezer \$25/unit

Window Air Conditioner \$25/unit

Indoor Air Quality:

Equipment must serve the entire conditioned space of the home. Limit of two air quality system per home.

Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV) \$250/unit

Heating and Cooling:

As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. So making smart decisions about your home's heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system can have a big effect on your utility bills - and your comfort.

Geothermal Heat Pump (closed loop system) \$400/ton (AHRI listing)

(open loop system) \$300/ton (AHRI listing-- no "pump & dump systems")

G.S.H.P. Replacement \$150/ton

Air Source Heat Pump \$200/ton (ASHP units over ¾ ton; including mini-split systems)

(Hybrid system) \$300/ton

Energy Star Bonus \$250/unit (Min. SEER 15.0, EER 12.5, HSPF 8.5)

Energy Star Central AC \$100/unit (Min. SEER 15.0 & EER12.5)

Lighting:

Lighting is one of the easiest places to start saving energy. Up to 12% of your energy usage in a home. Replacing your five most frequently used light fixtures or the bulbs in them with **ENERGY STAR** or **DLC** qualified lights can save \$70 a year in energy costs.



Interior Lighting

Residential Energy Star Hardwired 50% of price paid for qualified products (up to \$5/fixture)

and Screw-in Fixtures Qualified products include: **Energy Star** LED fixtures, **Energy Star** ceiling fans with light kits

Maximum incentive of \$5 per fixture and \$600 per home. Household limit applies to a 5-year period. (Installs prior to 1/1/13 are exempt). Minimum 4watts per unit.

Outdoor Security Lighting

Energy Star LED or DLC Qualified Fixtures \$10/fixture (20-34 watt) \$20/fixture (35-49 watt) \$40/fixture (50-74 watt) \$50/fixture (75-124 watt) \$60/fixture (125 watts or more)

*New lighting fixtures must be more energy efficient (lower wattage) than original installed fixtures.

Water Heaters:

From warm showers to clean dishes, we count on hot water. In fact, the average household spends \$400-\$600 per year on **water heating - making it the second largest energy expenditure** behind heating and cooling. Depending on the technology you choose, you can cut your water heating costs in half!

Energy Star Heat Pump Water Heater \$650/unit
Electric Resistance Storage Tank Water Heater \$75/unit (40-85 gal. tank-min. EF 0.90)
Electric Resistance Unit / First Time Heat Plus \$125/unit (40-85 gal. tank-min. EF 0.90)

*Inquire for prices on water heaters purchased from SWIAREC

Weatherization:

Weatherizing your home will put money back in your pocket every month. It's that simple. On average, weatherization helps homeowners reduce their energy consumption by 25% to 30% - a savings of \$600 per year, every year. Older homes save even more – around 35% or more!

Requirements are you must have electric heat and/or central air conditioning (homes with natural gas heat do not qualify).

Home must be built prior to 2000.

Must be upgrade to existing home (new additions do not qualify)

Project cost must be \$150 or more (labor costs for self-installed projects cannot be included).

Maximum incentive per home \$2,200 (with electric heat with or without air conditioning) \$300 (with central AC only and non-electric heating)

*Inquire with the Cooperative for details

New Home Construction:

Building an All-Star home is the maximum goal you can obtain toward energy efficiency and will result in putting the most money back in your pocket.

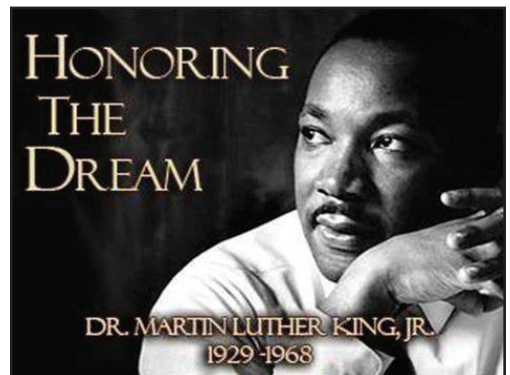
All-Star Home \$500/home

Premier Electric Home \$200/home (new construction, heat pump, electric water heating and appliances)

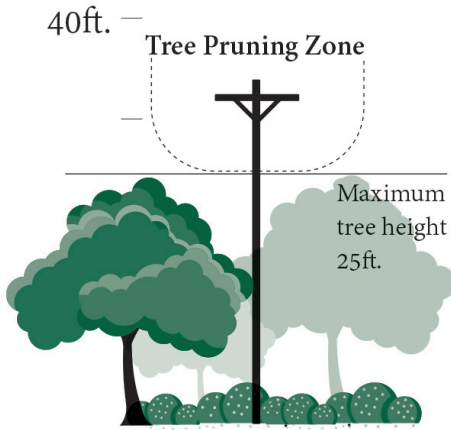
*Please ask about the Building Checklist

Other Programs:

Electric Vehicle Level 2 Charger \$500 (Must be installed at a residence served by Southwest Iowa REC)



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 20, 2020



2020 Vegetation Management Plans

The majority of our vegetation management program is completed during the months of January – March. In 2020 the following areas are scheduled for vegetation management (ground cut, trim and chemical treatment):

Midwest Spray Teams (contractor)

Montgomery County – All townships

Decatur County- Fayette, New Buda, Bloomington townships

REC Crews

Page County – Pierce and Douglas townships

Fremont County – Monroe and Walnut townships

Adams County – Quincy and west half of Washington townships

Cass County – Pleasant and Noble townships

Union County – Platte township townships

Taylor County- Grove and Platte townships

Ringgold County- Lincoln and Jefferson townships

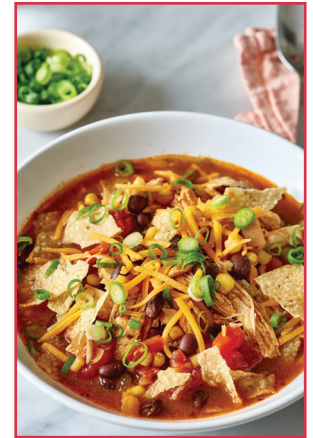
You can always feel free to contact us at any of our service locations in Corning, Mount Ayr or Stanton with any questions you might have on this process. Or perhaps, you would like to let us know about a tree or other vegetation that you think could be too close to power lines or important electrical equipment. You'll also find helpful information on our website at www.swiarec.coop.

Taco Soup

With only six ingredients, you can easily put this one pot soup together in just a few minutes! You'll love how easy this six-ingredient taco soup is to make.

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 1 can diced tomatoes with chilies
- 1 can black beans
- 1 can corn
- 2 cups beef broth
- 4 cups water

1. Brown the ground beef in a large stock pot or Dutch oven.
2. Add the taco seasoning and one cup beef broth. Stir to combine. Cook for 10 minutes.
3. Add diced tomatoes with chilies, corn, black beans, remaining beef broth, and water. Stir to combine.
4. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer for one hour, stirring occasionally.
5. Serve with sour cream shredded cheese, and sliced jalapenos for topping (optional).



Enjoy!

Scholarships Reminder

Southwest Iowa REC will once again be offering scholarships for the 2019-2020 school year to graduating high school seniors. We will be awarding twelve (12) \$500 scholarships. In addition, two (2) \$1,000 scholarships will be available for students planning to attend an Accredited Lineman School or electrical trade program.

Completed applications and a photo must be received at the REC Office by March 2, 2020 to be eligible.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Let the sunshine in! For additional warmth, open drapes over windows that receive sunlight during the day. Close them at night, which can reduce heat loss from a warm room up to 10%.

Source: energy.gov

2019 Energy Efficiency & Beneficial Electrification Program Delivery Costs = \$.0029/kwh



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