

# ACEC<sup>NEWS</sup>

APRIL 2024 | VOLUME 27 | ISSUE 04

ACEC Representatives attend annual Day on the Hill event.

See story  
on page

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ACEC YOUTH  
TOUR WINNERS

WHATEVER IT TAKES  
LINEMAN STORY

GRAIN BIN SAFETY





## A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

**Hollie McCormick**  
EVP/General Manager

# SHAPING OUR ENERGY FUTURE THROUGH INNOVATION

The energy industry is undergoing significant change driven by technology and the transition to more sustainable forms of energy. Innovation is essential in addressing these challenges and ensuring a continuous, reliable and affordable power supply.

Electric co-ops are no strangers to adapting to the needs of the local communities we serve. Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative has always tuned into change as we explore new ways to meet your energy needs.

### Advanced Technologies

There is a constant flow of new ideas, tools and technology to improve an electric utility's reliability. Just a few examples include using advanced equipment like drones that inspect local grids, sensors that provide real-time data on the condition of power lines and satellite imagery used to monitor vegetation growth- these types of advancements can pinpoint potential problems before they even occur and ultimately improve service for all.

Investing in smarter technologies also can enhance the monitoring and control of electricity flow so we can respond swiftly to changing needs. Smart electric meters remotely collect data on how electricity is being used. This helps in promptly prioritizing and dispatching

## INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

The energy industry is changing, but electric co-ops are known for adapting to their local members' needs. As we plan for changes and challenges ahead, innovative solutions are essential.

Here are a few ways we're innovating for the future.



**Use of Advanced Technologies**  
Drones aid in power line inspection and maintenance. Smart meters provide real-time data and help pinpoint service issues.

**Preparing for Increased Energy Use**  
The demand for electricity is increasing as more technologies are electrified. Co-ops are exploring innovative solutions like battery storage to meet demand.

**Energy Solutions for Members**  
Co-ops provide innovative efficiency services like appliance rebates and flexible billing options to help members manage their energy use.

**Strength in Numbers**  
By working with and learning from other co-ops, we are uniquely positioned to improve service for our local communities.

crews during an outage, reducing restoration time during weather-related disruptions. Even before adverse weather is here, advanced analytics from our systems, combined with data on weather patterns and other information, allows us to be proactive in taking preventative measures to shore up our system.

### Preparing for Increased Energy Use

Today, we depend on electricity more than ever before. From farming equipment to home heating options to vehicles and tools, more products and appliances that we depend on run on electricity.

Some members' interest in electric vehicles (EVs) is growing. ACEC is available to help our members make informed decisions about EVs, including electric charging options and capacity requirements for the home. **#114**

Additionally, we are exploring innovative technologies like large-scale batteries and large co-op owned solar projects to help address the increasing demand for electricity.

### Innovative Efficiency Solutions

ACEC is driven by a commitment to community and member satisfaction. As consumers become more proactive in managing their energy use, we are providing new ways to help our members lower their use and save money.

### Cooperation Among Cooperatives

You may not realize it, but Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative is part of a larger network of 900 electric co-ops nationwide. While we are locally-owned by you, the members of the co-op, we also have the advantage of working with co-ops across the country to share ideas and leverage the innovations our colleagues might have tried out first. As cooperatives, we're collaborators instead of competitors--it's a unique aspect of our business model, and we're stronger because of it.

Our energy future will look different than it has in the past, but ACEC is prepared to make necessary adaptations that are best for the members we serve. Our mission and commitment to you remain steady--to provide reliable power at a cost local families and businesses can afford. ■

# CONGRATULATIONS YOUTH TOUR WINNERS

ACEC wishes a big congratulations to our 2024 Youth Tour winners! Selected this year were **Ethan Squier**, a junior from Clayton Ridge High School, and **Hannah Hagen**, a sophomore homeschool student/Waukon High School.

Our winners will join nearly 40 other students in Iowa and about 1,800 students nationwide on the annual trip to Washington, D.C. Students will visit D.C. June 15-21, doing activities such as running their own snack cooperative, visiting the Franklin D. Roosevelt Monument, going to the Capitol and meeting local legislators, among other activities.

We thank Connie Euans, Calmar, and Shelly Elliott, Waukon, for serving as judges this year! ■



Judges **Connie Euans**, Calmar, and **Shelly Elliott**, Waukon



The ACEC Board of Directors approved an application through the USDA's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program to Shea Properties, LLC. for a building remodel & green space project in Elkader. Shown in the picture are ACEC's Brenda Hackman with owners Danielle and Caleb Shea.

## BOARD BRIEFS | March 25 Meeting

- Approved Reliability Plan/Inspection Plan Review
- Recap of work order training and future changes in procedures
- Approved CFC long-term loan advance
- Approved two DPC Cost-Share applications: Lansing podcasts and Lansing website upgrade
- Approved REDLG application resolution: Nexus
- Approved RLF resolution: Sumner daycare
- Tiffany Johansen provided an HR update
- Selected candidates for the Nominating Committee
- CEO of STAR Energy provided an update to the Board

## On the cover:

ACEC was well-represented at the Annual REC Day on the Hill event in Des Moines in March. Pictured are, from left, Olivia McCormick, Hollee McCormick, Brenda Hackman, Ryan Wagner, Jerry Keleher. See the complete story on Pg. 5.



# WHATEVER IT TAKES: POWERING LIVES, FROM A LINEWORKER'S PERSPECTIVE



ACEC Lineworkers work on making upgrades to one of the 16 substations.

*Lineworkers are ranked as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the country. The lineworkers at Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative work rain or shine, in often challenging conditions to ensure you have reliable electricity. We celebrated Linemen Appreciation Day on April 8. The following column represents a perspective from one of the many dedicated lineworkers we all depend on.*

Allamakee-Clayton REC has 13 lineworkers who work every day in all weather conditions to make sure our community has the power to live their lives. I love my job. It's hard work, but it's very rewarding. I hope this will give you a better look into what we face and more importantly, why we do it.

## The Danger

A lot of people know linework is dangerous because we work near high-voltage electricity. Move just the wrong way or lose focus for a split second, and it could be deadly. You have to be aware of your surroundings and the safety of the person next to you. We often work on energized power lines, and you can never tell they are energized by just looking at them. You're working with an element of danger that requires concentration, and there is little margin for error. The environment compounds the pressure because when you need power most is usually when the weather is the worst. I'm often working in storms with rain, wind, extreme heat and cold, in the dark, or on the side of the road next to fast-moving traffic. Yes, it's dangerous, but that's what we're trained to do.

Many may not realize it, but we undergo years of training before we can officially be called a lineworker. We typically start as a groundperson, helping crews with tools and keeping job sites safe, then we transition to apprentice status, which typically spans four years. After an apprenticeship, with more than 7,000 hours of training under our belts, we transition to journeyman status – that's when we're considered officially trained in our field.

But the education is ongoing. Lineworkers continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up to date on the latest equipment and procedures.

## The Physical Demand

There are some sacrifices to being a lineworker. I'm often first on the scene of an emergency, seeing things that are devastating like car accidents, structure fires and damage from severe storms. You don't know what type of situation you're going to face or when you're going to face it. We get calls all hours and in the middle of the night. I've missed a lot of sporting events, holidays and family dinners, but my family is supportive. We make sure there is nothing standing in the way of helping our friends and neighbors get back to normal life.

## It's Worth It

One thing that makes this job worthwhile is the camaraderie. My co-op is my second family, and the line crews are a brotherhood (and sisterhood). In this work, you have to depend on the person beside you in life-or-death circumstances. It's a culture of trust, teamwork and service. It's all about keeping the teammate beside you safe and the lights on for everybody else.

I have a lot of pride in my work. Even when it's cold and wet, I know I'm working to keep people warm. There's a lot of satisfaction in hearing someone yell "Thank you" from the window after the lights come back on or seeing people flipping the light switches on their porches after an outage is restored. No matter how tired I am or how long I've been working, that feeling always makes it worth it.

Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and its employees are members of this community. We live in the same neighborhoods. We shop at the same stores. Our kids go to the same schools. If your lights are off, there is a good chance ours are off too. So, you can trust that we are doing our best to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible – so you can get back to normal life. ■



# Iowa's Rural Electric Cooperatives Advocate for Power Reliability During 2024 "REC Day on the Hill"

More than 200 employees and elected directors from Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives (RECs) convened at the Iowa Capitol on March 12 to advocate for important issues during the annual "REC Day on the Hill" event.

"Our annual advocacy day at the capitol is a powerful opportunity to meet face-to-face with our state legislators and share a local perspective on issues that impact rural Iowans and rural economic development," remarked Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC).

"Thank you to our local legislators for meeting with us during our REC Day on the Hill advocacy event at the Capitol. This is a valuable opportunity for rural electric co-ops (RECs) to talk directly with our legislators about issues that impact our members and our communities," said ACEC's Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations Brenda Hackman. During the event, ACEC met with several elected officials, including locals Senator Mike Klimesh and Representatives Chad Ingels, Michael Bergan and Anne Osmundson.

Advocates asked elected officials to ensure reliable electric service for Iowans by supporting an "all-of-the-above" electric generation strategy. Specifically, Iowa's electric cooperatives believe it's time to update the state's 2001 advanced ratemaking principles (ARPs) to stipulate an all-of-the-above approach

and include nuclear and energy storage technologies.

Also related to reliability, advocates talked with their legislators

about Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) and the potential pitfalls of requiring Iowa utilities to file IRPs as part of contested case proceedings before the Iowa Utilities Board. IRPs will increase administrative and legal fees which must ultimately be paid by ratepayers. In other states, IRPs have served as a pathway to the premature closure of carbon-based power generation facilities which negatively impacts electric reliability. **#C19-XX**

Additionally, co-op representatives discussed the issue of "right of first refusal" which allows incumbent, established utilities to have the first option to construct, maintain and operate electric transmission projects. Iowa's electric co-ops are best prepared to respond locally to weather-related outages because we have a proven track record of restoring power quickly and safely.

During the advocacy event, representatives educated legislators on the benefits of the not-for-profit cooperative business model, which includes local ownership, democratic governance and cost-based rates. Several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda which provided information on topics including economic development, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, safety innovations, energy efficiency efforts and vegetation management work.

Learn more about the legislative priorities of Iowa's electric cooperatives and Iowa Rural Power grassroots advocacy at [www.iaruralpower.org](http://www.iaruralpower.org). ■

*Legislators posed with Allamakee management pictured clockwise from top left - Michael Bergan, Chad Ingels, Anne Osmundson and Mike Klimesh.*



*Jason Herbert, Vice President of External Affairs for Dairyland Power Cooperative, chatted with ACEC's Ryan Wagner during Day on the Hill.*





# CYBERSECURITY

## Tip of the MONTH

Sharing is caring... or is it? These days, everyone needs to think about their data-sharing permissions. Your solitaire app doesn't need to know your contact list or location. You should also think carefully about what personal information you share on social media. ■

~courtesy of [staysafeonline.org](http://staysafeonline.org).

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# ENERGY EFFICIENCY

## TIP OF THE MONTH

A well-designed landscape can add beauty to your home and reduce home heating and cooling costs. Plant deciduous trees with high, spreading crowns to the south of your home to block sunlight in the summer and reduce the need for air conditioning. Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Plant evergreen trees and shrubs with low crowns to block winter winds. Dense evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest are the most common type of windbreak and can help lower energy used for home heating.

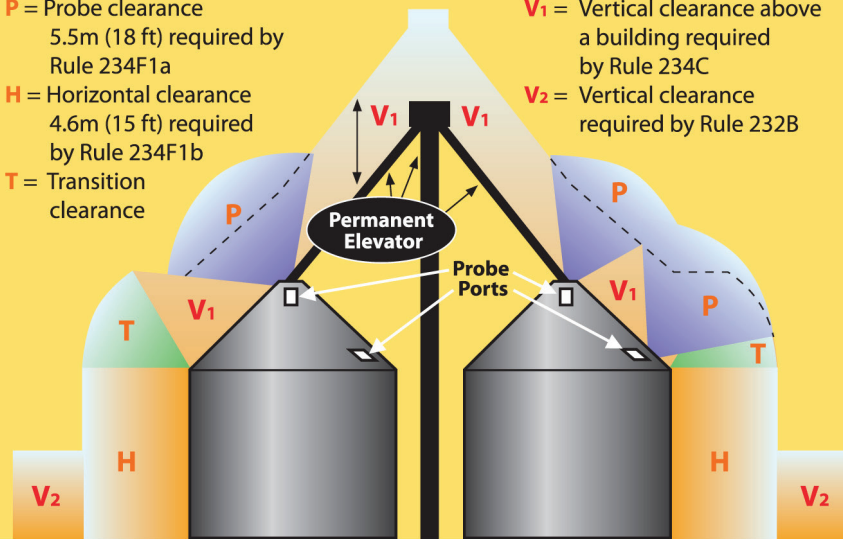
Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



## Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by permanently installed augers, conveyors or elevators

- P** = Probe clearance  
5.5m (18 ft) required by Rule 234F1a
- H** = Horizontal clearance  
4.6m (15 ft) required by Rule 234F1b
- T** = Transition clearance

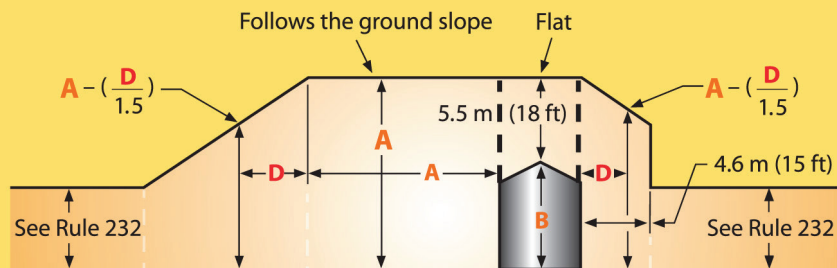
- V<sub>1</sub>** = Vertical clearance above a building required by Rule 234C
- V<sub>2</sub>** = Vertical clearance required by Rule 232B



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## Clearance envelope for grain bins filled by portable augers, conveyors or elevators

### ELEVATION

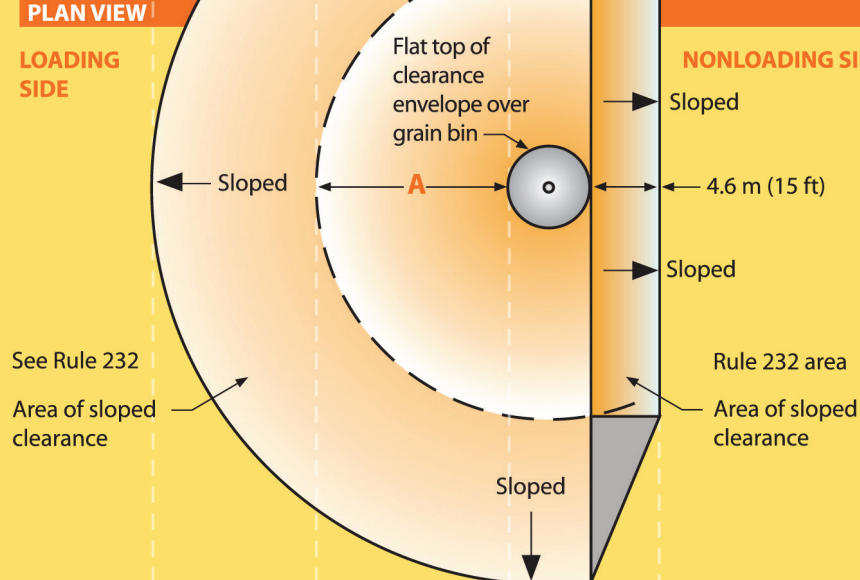


- B** = Height of highest filling or probing port on grain bin
- A** =  $B + 5.5\text{m (18 ft)}$
- D** = Variable horizontal dimension

In the area of sloped clearance, the vertical clearance is reduced by 300mm (1 ft) for each additional 450mm (1.5 ft) of horizontal distance from the grain bin.

### PLAN VIEW

#### LOADING SIDE



#### NONLOADING SIDE

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# MEMBER RECIPES

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jennifer Achenbach, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email [jachenbach@acrec.coop](mailto:jachenbach@acrec.coop).

You'll receive a \$5 bill credit if your recipe is printed. Please note – recipes must be received by the 25th day of the month before the intended publication.

May – **PICNIC DISHES**; June – **BLUEBERRIES/RASPBERRIES**; July – **ON THE GRILL**

## AIR FRYER CINNAMON ROLL BITES

- 1 (12.4 oz.) can refrigerated cinnamon rolls (such as Pillsbury™)
- ¼ c. white sugar
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- ¾ c. confectioner's sugar
- 1 Tbsp. freshly grated orange peel
- 1 Tbsp. orange juice
- Icing from the cinnamon roll package

### Directions

Preheat an air fryer to 325°F according to manufacturer's instructions. Add sugar and cinnamon to a large resealable plastic bag, and shake to combine. Remove the 8 cinnamon rolls from the can, and set icing aside. Cut each roll into 4 equal pieces for a total of 32 bites. Line the air fryer with parchment paper. Place the bite in a single layer in the bottom of the basket, cook for 3 minutes, turn over using tongs, and cook until golden brown, another 2 to 3 minutes. Depending on the brand and size of your air fryer, you may have to cook in batches, and your timing may vary, so watch closely. Meanwhile, prepare the dip. Add cream cheese, confectioner's sugar, orange zest, orange juice, and the packaged icing to a small bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until you reach a dipping consistency, about 1 minute. Drop the warm pieces into the sugar-cinnamon mixture, and shake. Transfer to a plate or basket, and serve with the drip.

## AIR FRYER GREEN BEANS

- 12 oz. fresh green beans, ends trimmed
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- ¼ tsp. seasoned salt
- ⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

### Directions

Preheat an air fryer to 400°F. Place green beans in a bowl. Add olive oil, garlic, seasoned salt and ground black pepper. Toss to coat. Place green beans in the basket of the air fryer. Cook until crisp-tender, about 10 minutes, shaking the basket halfway through cooking time.

## AIR FRYER LOADED MASHED POTATO CAKES

- 2 c. cold mashed potatoes
- 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 green onions, chopped
- ¼ c. real bacon bites
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 small egg, beaten

### Directions

Combine mashed potatoes, cheddar cheese, green onions, bacon bites, and flour in a bowl; stir until combined. Mix in beaten egg. Preheat air fryer to 400°F for 10 minutes. Form mixture into 6 patties and set on a baking sheet. Place baking sheet in the freezer for 10 minutes while you preheat the air fryer. Place patties in the air fryer basket in batches, making sure to not overcrowd. Cook undisturbed for 12 minutes. Repeat with remaining patties.

## AIR FRYER CHICKEN BITES WITH PARMESAN CHEESE

- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 lb. skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-in. cubes
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour

- Cooking spray
- ¼ c. shredded parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

### Directions

Whisk olive oil, Worcestershire, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, and pepper together in a bowl. Add chicken cubes and stir to coat. Preheat an air fryer to 370°F for 10 minutes. Add flour to the chicken mixture and stir to coat until all liquid is absorbed. Place chicken in the basket of the air fryer and cook for 8 minutes. Using tongs, flip the pieces over. Spray tops with non-stick cooking spray and cook 8 minutes more. Sprinkle parmesan cheese and parsley over the chicken. Cook until cheese has started to melt, about 2 minutes more. Serve immediately.

■ All recipes from [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

## PLUGGED IN: Electric Vehicle Update



### MARCH

# of miles driven: **504 miles**

kWh's charged: **146 kWh**

Total cost to charge  
.13 x 146kWh = **\$18.98**





## FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter. The numbers are from different regions of our service area – **one is worth \$12.50 and two are worth \$5.00.** The service location number must be yours to claim the credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



## CONTACT ACEC

### HEADQUARTERS

229 Highway 51 • PO Box 715  
Postville, IA 52162

### PHONE NUMBERS

**LOCAL** 563-864-7611

**TOLL-FREE** 888-788-1551

**PAYMENT LINE 24/7** 833-284-5051

**UNDERGROUND CABLE LOCATING**  
811

**SKYWAYS INTERNET SOLUTIONS**

800-864-1611

### WEBSITE

acrec.com

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### OUTAGES

888-788-1551 or 563-864-7611

### IOWA STATE ONE CALL

811

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**STAY CONNECTED**



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## CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY



One of our seven Co-op Principles is Concern for Community. Since 2018, lineworkers from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and MiEnergy Cooperative have come together to show support for a family in need on either MiEnergy or ACEC lines. This year, the Co-ops honored the Mackay Mathis family from Harpers Ferry. In late February, the Co-ops gathered at the Stephens Building on the Fayette County Fairgrounds for a day of bow shooting, as well as a meal and raffle drawings. In addition to the money raised during the bow shoot, generous businesses sponsored the event, with individuals buying raffle tickets for dozens of prizes. Following the event, ACEC's Josh Abbott presented Brooke Mathis with a check for \$11,582 raised during the event. Brooke is pictured with children Wava and Weller. Thank you to Josh Abbott and MiEnergy's Dave Wilkes for coordinating the event, as well as all the individuals and businesses who sponsored the event and purchased raffle tickets. ■ **#6544**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

