

ACEC NEWS

FEBRUARY 2022 | VOLUME 25 | ISSUE 02



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SLOW DOWN**

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HOW WILL WE
CHARGE ALL
THE EVS?



A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

FIVE REASONS WE SERVE YOU, OUR MEMBERS

It's February, the month of Valentine's Day. So, in that vein, we've created our list of top five reasons why we love serving you, the members of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative.

- 1. We wouldn't exist without you.** Our purpose is to provide you with reliable, responsible, and safe electricity. Simply put, the electric cooperative exists to serve you. That's why in 1939, the co-op was formed—to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities wouldn't.
- 2. You enable us to complete our mission by supporting our efforts to give back.** A significant part of our mission is to serve our community and look after the greater good. With your assistance, we're able to help the most vulnerable members of our community through food and essential living donations, school supply drives, and programs like RECare donations that help local families pay their energy bills when times are tough, and our newest Operation RoundUp program that will put your dollars back into our communities.
- 3. Members of our co-op also serve on the board of directors.** They provide guidance for setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board members live in the area, they can



serve as the pulse of the larger community and identify immediate and long-term needs. The broader co-op membership provides helpful input through voting director elections and reviewing co-op and community issues.

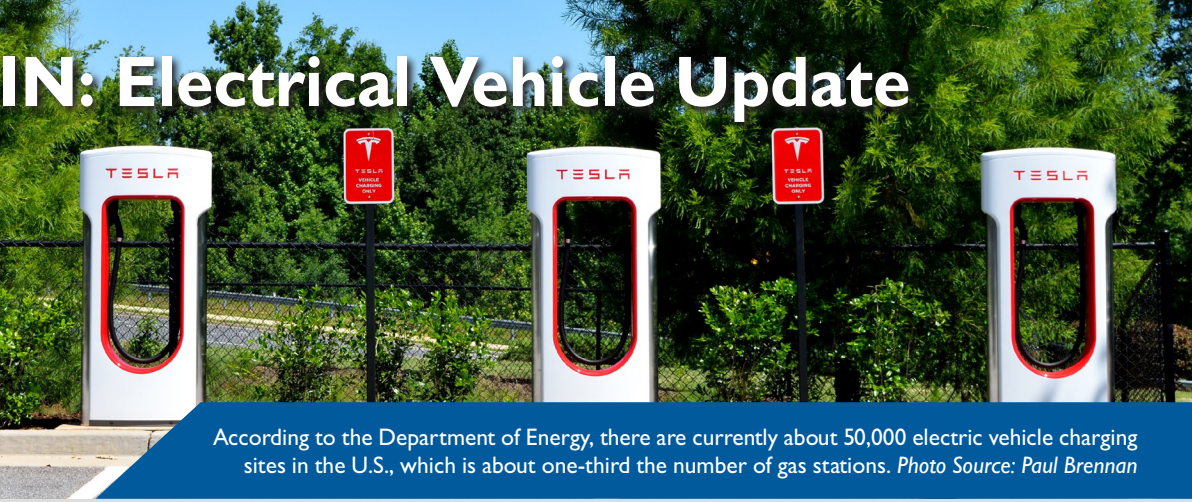
- 4. You help us get it right.** Allamakee-Clayton members are great about keeping us in the know. We do our best to avoid power outages, but Mother Nature can occasionally throw us a curveball; our members quickly report any power disruptions and are patient as our crews work to restore power safely. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so much to our employees. We also appreciate your feedback on all co-op programs and services. Your opinions are critical for the co-op's success, and we thank you for that.
- 5. You and other ACEC members make up the community we serve — and for us, it's all about community.** Our employees live and work here too and care about our community the same way you do. We're invested and work to help it thrive. That's why ACEC donates to local charities, schools, benefits, and scholarship funds. It's also why we invest in economic development and why you'll see our employees volunteering at local schools and other charitable and community endeavors.

Our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our community and look after its long-term interests. We love serving our members and our local community, and just like you, we want to see it continue to thrive. **1502-5** ■

BOARD BRIEFS | January 31, 2022, Meeting

- Approved 2022 Delegates and Alternates for affiliated organizations
- Reviewed and Approved Board Policy 407 "Conflict of Interest"
- Reviewed and Approved Board Policy 410 "Standards of Conduct"
- Reviewed and Approved 2022 Capital Expenditure Budget
- Received updates on fiber projects and timelines
- Received updates on Operation Round-Up
- Approved a \$750 donation request to Fayette County Economic Development

PLUGGED IN: Electrical Vehicle Update



According to the Department of Energy, there are currently about 50,000 electric vehicle charging sites in the U.S., which is about one-third the number of gas stations. *Photo Source: Paul Brennan*

How Will We Charge All the New Electric Vehicles?

Where you charge your EV may not be as important as how it looks and what it costs.

What electric cars need to become a top choice for American drivers is a nationwide network of charging stations to overcome fears of running out of juice on long trips. Or maybe that's not true at all.

There are already nearly one-third as many charging sites in the U.S. as there are gas stations. And that doesn't even count the "refueling stations" found in the electric outlets of every home in America.

Plus, the range of electric cars already exceeds how far most people drive in a day. Ninety percent of Americans drive less than 45 miles a day, and the average range for electric vehicles is 250 miles.

The ballyhoo over charging stations has created a pearl of powerful conventional wisdom that they're a necessary step toward overcoming the "range anxiety" about getting stranded in the middle of nowhere. Accordingly, president Biden's American Jobs Plan proposes a national network of 500,000 charging stations by 2030, up from the Department of Energy's current count of 50,000.

But the conventional wisdom masks a different road ahead.

Range anxiety may be the least of the reasons there aren't more electric vehicles on the road, says Brian Sloboda, director of consumer solutions for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"There are people who argue we need the charging network for the electric vehicle market to be successful. They might be right, but I'm not one of those people," says Sloboda. "Let's say you only drive your electric vehicle for commuting, and you're just driving it from your home to the grocery store to work. Likely, you would never even use public charging stations because you can charge your EV at home for a very reasonable price."

Sloboda is quick to list the advantages of electric vehicles, from how they affect the environment to their lower maintenance costs to the fact that you can wake up every morning with a full tank of "gas." But he sees more significant issues than a lack of charging stations standing in the way of greater acceptance.



Electric co-ops across the country are responding to consumers' rising interest in electric vehicles by installing charging stations or offering special rates for EV owners who charge vehicles during designated hours.

He says, "You have limited model availability, limited body styles, limited manufacturers, high prices, and most people are unfamiliar with the technology."

But Sloboda sees those problems as solvable. Right now, you'll pay about \$10,000 extra for an electric model. But those costs are coming down as batteries get cheaper and more powerful.

And competition is heating up. Every major car manufacturer has high-profile plans for electric models—Ford has announced an electric model of its popular F-150 pickup. Although electric vehicles make up less than 4% of the auto market, that's doubled from just one year ago.

Even if charging stations are not the most important determiner of the future of electric vehicles, they are a growing part of the landscape. Various apps will guide you to the nearest charging station. In addition, many electric co-ops are also responding to the rising interest. Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative has two level 2 chargers available located at our headquarters and available for public use. In addition, the Cooperative offers a rebate for a Level 2 electric vehicle charger for members who purchase an EV.

"Co-ops are looking at what they can do to support public charging," says Sloboda. "They do it to meet the needs of their members, but they also do it as economic development to bring tourists into the community to support local businesses like hotels and parks."

While trends point to solid growth for electric vehicles, forecasting the future of charging stations is trickier. It's not as easy as comparing the number of charging stations to gas stations. For one thing, people don't have a gasoline pump in their garage, which is essentially the case with an electric vehicle. And while an internal combustion engine might take 4 minutes to fill, it could take more than an hour to recharge an electric vehicle.

"It's something everyone is wrestling with," says Sloboda. "But if you're truly interested in making the switch to electric, don't let the current charging infrastructure deter you. Instead, focus on your daily driving needs, your budget and read reviews from trusted sites like Consumer Reports, Motor Trend, and Car and Driver."

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

DO YOUR PART TO KEEP IOWA'S ROADS SAFE

Have you ever had to stop your vehicle on the side of a busy highway to check on a flat tire or a trailer cover? Or maybe you've been pulled over by a police officer and worried about his or her safety on the shoulder of the road while hoping you can get away with just a warning!

If so, you are well aware that most drivers won't bother to move over or even slow down as they pass you by. But as of July 1, Iowa's newly expanded move over or slow down law – Iowa Code section 321.323A – now requires motorists to move over or slow down when approaching ANY stationary vehicle with flashing lights activated, including passenger vehicles with hazard lights. Those who disobey the law could receive a hefty fine or potentially lose their driver's license.

This law is particularly important to Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative because it helps keep our lineworkers

and maintenance workers safe as they often need to perform difficult and dangerous work with electric equipment on the shoulder of the road. And even though our employees set out caution signs and orange cones, wear high visibility gear and turn on their vehicles' emergency lights, other motorists often fail to give them the room they need to do their job safely.

This law will help keep Iowa's roads safe for everyone – drivers, emergency responders, utility workers and others. But the law doesn't do much good if motorists don't know about it. Please make sure to share this safety message with other drivers in your family, especially younger drivers who don't have as much experience behind the wheel. We can each do our part to keep Iowa's roads safe by simply moving over or slowing down (preferably both) when we see stopped vehicles on the side of the road. **3012**

When you're behind the wheel, keep your eyes on the road and make room for utility workers and others who are stopped on the shoulder. Their jobs are dangerous enough already. ■



RULES OF THE ROAD

According to Iowa Code section 321.323A, Iowa law requires motorists to:

Change lanes or slow down, absent any other direction from a peace officer, when approaching the following vehicles:

- A stationary emergency vehicle that has its flashing lights activated.
- A stationary tow, recovery, maintenance, construction, solid waste or recycling collection vehicle that has its flashing lights activated.
- Any stationary motor vehicle, including a passenger vehicle, that is continually displaying its emergency signal lamps (i.e., standard hazard lights).

Yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights or giving an audible signal by moving over to the right, stopping and waiting until the vehicle has passed before proceeding.



MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN

**WHAT THE SIGN REALLY SAYS IS –
MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN.**

In accordance with Iowa state law, you should move over or slow down when approaching ANY vehicle stopped on the side of the road with its flashing lights activated.

www.MoveOverIowa.com

5 TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AND MONEY THIS YEAR

BY: Miranda Boutelle

You don't need a lot of money to save on your energy bills. I have some low-cost suggestions for simple adjustments you can make in your home, whether you rent or own.

We all want to afford to be comfortable in our homes. But, if you're having trouble paying your energy bills, you are not alone. The U.S. Energy Information Administration reports one in three households face challenges meeting their energy needs.

Decreasing monthly bills and being more efficient at home is something we all should practice. So here are some budget-friendly energy efficiency tips targeting one of the most significant energy users in the house: the heating system. Heating and cooling account for nearly half of a U.S. home's energy consumption.

1. ADD COZINESS TO YOUR HOME

One way you can feel warmer in your home without turning up the thermostat is by making your home cozy.

The way our bodies perceive the temperature of a room is based more on the surfaces in the room than the air temperature. In general, harder surfaces feel colder. For example, your tile floor will feel cooler than your fabric sofa.

Cold floors in a room make us feel colder. However, adding an area rug to a hard-surface floor can make us feel warmer, even with the same setting on the thermostat.

The same goes for windows. Windows are typically the least-insulated surface in a room and can feel cold in winter. Adding or closing curtains can help the room feel warmer.

2. CHECK YOUR WINDOWS

Make sure your windows are closed and locked. Locking windows pulls the sashes tighter together, reducing gaps that allow air to flow through and cause drafts. If your sash locks don't form a tight fit, adjust them or add weatherstripping.

There's a variety of window weatherstripping products available for less than \$20. Most are simple to install and only

require tools you most likely already have around the house, such as scissors and a tape measure.

Some are more permanent solutions, and some are intended to be used for one heating season and then removed. In addition, you can use temporary solutions such as caulk strips, putty, pull-and-peel caulking, or window insulation films can be used if you rent your home and can't make permanent changes.

3. SEAL YOUR DOORS

Weatherstripping doors is an easy do-it-yourself project. First, make sure your doors seal tightly and don't allow drafts to pass through around the edges or under the door.

Make sure any doors leading to an unheated space—outside or into a garage—are sealed tightly. You know you are losing energy if you can see light around the edges or underneath the door or feel air movement when the door is closed.

Because doors need to open and close easily, expect to do a bit of adjusting after installing weatherstripping. If you do not install weatherstripping correctly, the door can be hard to close. Making it too loose defeats the purpose. You need to get it just right.

4. CLOSE THE DAMPER

If you have a fireplace, make sure the damper is completely closed when not using it. Leaving the damper open is like leaving a window open—it's just harder to see. The air you just paid to heat your home will go right out of the chimney.

The only exception is some gas fireplaces need to remain open for gas fumes to exit the home. If you have a gas fireplace, check the owner's manual for more information on the damper position.

5. LAYER UP

Dressing for the season prevents going overboard on your energy use. It can be tempting to adjust the thermostat to increase your comfort. However, putting on a sweater or comfy sweatshirt can have the same comfort impact without increasing energy use. Slippers can be a big help, too, especially when your feet touch a cold floor.

The next time you consider turning up the thermostat a few degrees, try some of these tips first to stay warm and leave high energy bills out in the cold. ■

Miranda Boutelle writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

IOWA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES DISCUSS IMPORTANT ISSUES AT LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

More than 160 directors, managers, and employees from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with nearly 90 state legislators on January 11 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in downtown Des Moines. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives hosted the annual reception in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Communications Alliance, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives, and FUEL Iowa.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to meet with state legislators at the beginning of the 2022 Legislative Session to discuss issues that impact rural electric cooperatives and the communities we serve. For example, as the Legislature and Governor prioritize tax cuts this session, we're asking for a correction to a 2018 legislative oversight that left electric cooperatives out of a tax exemption on digital goods and services. This unfair tax burden has resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased taxes for rural electric cooperatives.

At Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, we think it's critical to develop and cultivate relationships with local legislators because they craft, introduce and vote on legislation that impacts the local business climate, the environment and quality of life for our community, said Brenda Hackman. "That's why we work closely with our local elected officials. After all,



Area representatives traveled to the Capital to visit with legislators during this year's Welcome Back Reception. L-R: Jeff Bradley, ACEC's board president; Janell Bradley, Fayette County Supervisor; Rep. Michael Bergan; Rep. Anne Osmundson, Sen. Mike Klimesh; Rep. Chad Ingels, and Brenda Hackman, ACEC's manager of economic development & community relations.

our purpose is to provide safe, reliable, affordable energy, but our mission is to help our community thrive." The Co-op expresses our appreciation and gratitude for the interest our area legislators demonstrate in energy policies that will maintain affordable, reliable, and safe electricity. **6076-XX**

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will address many issues, including energy-related matters that are central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric co-op directors, managers, and staff will again be influential advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues. Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives collectively provide affordable, reliable, safe, and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans throughout 99 counties every day. ■



ACEC's Brenda Hackman (left) and Rep. Anne Osmundson are seen discussing important issues for RECs and northeast Iowa.



Rep. Michael Bergan (left) and Secretary of State Paul Pate break from conversation for a photo during January's Welcome Back Reception in Des Moines.



JOB SHADOWING

"This experience really opened my eyes on what it takes to be a lineman," said Brady Stille, a junior at Decorah High School. Brady spent a day last month job shadowing Brent Schutte (left), and Jeff Cox. "I want to thank both Brent and Jeff for their advice that day, and after talking with them, becoming a lineman is probably the path I am going to take for my career." The crew spent the day setting poles in a right-of-way in Mallory Township in Clayton County.

Please support and encourage job shadowing if you have the opportunity, so our youth know of job opportunities right here in northeast Iowa. ■

MEMBER RECIPES



Chocolate is made from the fruit of cacao trees, which are native to Central and South America. Chocolate is derived from the cacao plant, which grows pods. When those pods are cracked open, inside there's a seed that looks a bit like a coffee bean. Jackpot. That's the cacao bean. Each cocoa tree produces approximately 62 pods and each pod contains around 40 cocoa beans - It takes 400 cocoa beans to make one pound of chocolate.

EASY CHOCOLATE PIE

- 1 Baked Pie Shell
- 1 Sm. package instant chocolate pudding
- 1 c. milk
- 1 pt. vanilla ice cream
- 9 oz. cool whip
- Shaved chocolate (optional)

Mix pudding with milk for 1 minute on low; add slightly softened ice cream. Mix and pour into pie shell and top with cool whip. Refrigerate for about 4 hours before serving. Add shaved chocolate on top.

Becky Engelhardt, Postville, IA

MOM'S HOT FUDGE SAUCE

I am the oldest of five girls raised on our rural Wadena farm. Dad milked cows so we always had plenty of milk and cream. In the winter, we had homemade ice cream, but we had only a 2-quart hand crank freezer, so we always had to make two batches because dad could eat one batch himself! Then mom always made hot fudge sauce to pour over our dish of ice cream.

- 1 c. sugar
- 3 T. cocoa
- 1/3 c. milk
- Pinch of salt

Combine in 1-qt. saucepan. Bring to boil, turn heat down and simmer for 7-8 minutes. Stir once in a while and watch closely so it doesn't boil over, until dark brown and glossy. I always add a spoonful of ice cream in a dish and pour 1/2 tsp. of sauce over it to see if it firms up but not hard enough to crack. Remove from heat and spoon over ice cream and ENJOY!

Patricia Baumler, Wadena

CHOCOLATE BANANA BREAD

- 1 box chocolate cake mix (I use Duncan Hines)
- 4-5 ripe bananas, mashed.
- 2 eggs
- Nuts or Chocolate chips (optional)

Mix all ingredients, including nuts and chocolate chips if desired. Bake at 350°.

Darlene Johnson, Waukon

The power of human connections

CHEWY FUDGE BROWNIES

- 1 1/3 c. flour
- 2 c. sugar
- 3/4 c. cocoa
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2/3 c. cooking oil
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 T. honey (Make brownies chewier. Optional)

Combine dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Stir in oil, eggs, vanilla, and honey, if desired. Do not over mix. Spread in greased 9" x 13" pan. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes.

Caleb & Miranda Knobloch, St. Olaf

PARISIAN CHOCOLATE CREPES

- 2 c. milk
- 1/2 c. cocoa powder
- 2 lg. eggs
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla
- 1 1/2 c. flour
- 6 T. powdered sugar
- 2 T. butter, melted
- 1/4 tsp. salt

Whisk all ingredients vigorously until batter is smooth. Refrigerate for at least 20 minutes. Melt a little butter in bottom of skillet. Add 3 T. of batter and swirl until bottom of pan is covered. Cook crepe for 1 minute until golden brown on bottom. Flip over. Serve with fruit, ice cream, or whipped cream.

Patricia Meyer, Guttenberg

CHOCOLATE PEANUT CLUSTERS

- 24 oz. vanilla almond bark
- 12 oz. bag of peanut butter flavored chips
- 12 oz. bag of semi-sweet chocolate chips (or dark chocolate if you like that)
- 12 oz. bag of milk chocolate chips
- 32 oz. of dry roasted or honey roasted peanuts (or a combination of the two)

Put all ingredients except the peanuts in a slow cooker on high; stir often as it melts. Turn to low; add peanuts and mix well. Drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper until firm and cool. Refrigerate in air-tight container. You can freeze these as well.

Vickie Lee Roeske, New Albin

Warning: Do not make more than you need. If you do and store the extras in your extra refrigerator, you'll grab a handful every time you open it!

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jenny McIntyre, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email jmcintyre@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 intended publication.

March–MUFFINS April–RHUBARB May–POTATOES

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to **Gordon & Karen Anderson**, Waterville, who found their service number in a past newsletter; the Cooperative awarded them a \$5 bill credit.

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within the text of this newsletter. The numbers are from three different regions of our service area – one is worth a **\$17.50** bill credit, and two are worth a **\$5** bill credit, if found. The Service Location number must be yours to claim the bill credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



CONTACT ACEC

HEADQUARTERS

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SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Graduating high school seniors entering a course of study in the electric field are encouraged to apply for a cooperative scholarship. Students' parents or guardians are not required to be ACEC members but must reside within the boundaries of our service area.

Applications are available at acrec.com. The application deadline is Feb. 28.

The scholarship fund was established in 1995 in memory of Robert Hauschild by his wife and family. This annual scholarship(s) recognizes Bill's dedication and service as a director of the Cooperative from his election September 10, 1988, until his death March 17, 1993.

Since the Cooperative established the fund in 1995, the Co-op has awarded 44 scholarships totaling \$18,800.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip all windows to seal air leaks.

When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

Source: Dept. of Energy

