

ACEC NEWS

MARCH 2023 | VOLUME 26 | ISSUE 03

NEW
ELECTRIC
RATES

CALL US
BEFORE
DIGGING

BREAD
RECIPES



**BUSINESS IS
BOOMING FOR
RIVALS INC.**

See pg. 4 for story





**A MESSAGE
FROM**
*Your
General
Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

NEW ELECTRIC RATES TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MAY

Douglas Adams said, “Nothing travels faster than the speed of light, with the possible exception of bad news, which obeys its own special laws.” In an era of dramatic price increases at every turn, adding on yet another is certainly not an enjoyable task to do or message to write. Although not exactly good news, let me explain why new electric rates are necessary.

Last fall, I informed member-owners of the Cost-of-Service study, which your Board of Directors authorized rate specialists at Star Energy Services to conduct. Star Energy Services has now completed the study and made their recommendations to the Board of Directors for implementation of revised retail rates to be effective May 1, 2023. The Board approved the new rates at their February 27 regular monthly meeting.

The official “NOTICE OF RATE INCREASE,” as required by Iowa Utility Board regulations, is printed on page three of this newsletter. The revised rates are projected to have an overall increase of 8% or \$1,335,000 in revenue. The amount of increase on individual bills will vary, depending on how much energy is purchased each month and the type of service you buy. Your first billing under the new rates will reflect electricity used from May 1, 2023 forward.

One of the most significant components of the electric rate is the Facility Charge component. The Facility Charge attempts to recover a portion of the actual cost of providing electric service from the substation to your home or business, your transformer,

service wires and meter, taxes, maintenance, customer accounting expenses, a small operating margin, etc. All this is necessary to have facilities available for you to access the electric power we purchase from Dairyland Power, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. We pride ourselves on reliable electricity at your fingertips, but that comes with a cost, of course. The Cost-of-Service Study indicates the actual cost of maintaining the facilities in readiness for your use is over \$2 per day, but the Board of Directors has chosen to keep the Energy Availability charge at \$1.63 per day. The remaining cost will be assessed as part of the kWh charge. As are most electric utilities, we are slowly moving towards energy availability charges which more closely reflect the true cost of having the necessary facilities in readiness, at all times, to serve customer needs, whether they be small energy users or larger consumers of electricity. **#1591**

The Cooperative’s last rate adjustment was on May 1, 2020. At that time, it was anticipated the adjustment would be effective for 2 years. With sound financial practices, we were able to stretch that rate to last three years. Since the last rate adjustment, the effects of inflation on Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative have been significant. Our cost to purchase power from Dairyland Power is increasing 5.6% in 2023. As with all electric distribution cooperatives, wholesale power costs continue to make up our biggest expense. Here are more examples of increases we’re seeing:

	2020 Cost	2023 Cost	Difference	% Increase
40 Foot Pole	\$221.80	\$531.55	\$309.75	139.7%
8' CrossArm	\$112.76	\$136.00	\$23.24	20.6%
Underground Wire per Foot	\$1.83	\$3.42	\$1.59	86.9%
10 kVA Overhead Transformer	\$690	\$1,133	\$443	64.2%
10 kVA Underground Transformer	\$1,102	\$1,996	\$894	81.1%
Digger Derrick Truck	\$257,000	\$359,000	\$102,000	39.7%
1/2 Ton Pickup Truck	\$34,000	\$46,000	\$12,000	35.3%

We are constantly taking measures to manage operating costs and become more efficient. We have implemented methods to share employee time and other specialized services and equipment with neighboring cooperatives. We have been able to contract some specialized work. We are evaluating each retirement and deciding how we can restructure positions.

While I recognize the rate increases are never welcome news, I do believe there is a silver lining here. By acting now to protect the financial health of the Cooperative, we can continue to focus on delivering great value to our members. As we’ve always done, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative will continue to balance the need to make smart investments in our distribution system while also working to control costs and reduce expenses. This approach will enable us to continue focusing on our core responsibilities of:

- Enhancing reliability across our more than 2,500 miles of distribution.
- Maintaining well-stocked warehouses which allows us to restore power quickly during unplanned outages.
- Ensuring our staff continue to have the tools and training necessary to do their jobs safely under even the harshest conditions.
- Providing our members with innovative programs, options and rebates to better help them manage their electric bill.

We are committed to delivering the safe, affordable, reliable and responsible power our members depend on. We will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of our members and the communities we proudly serve. ■

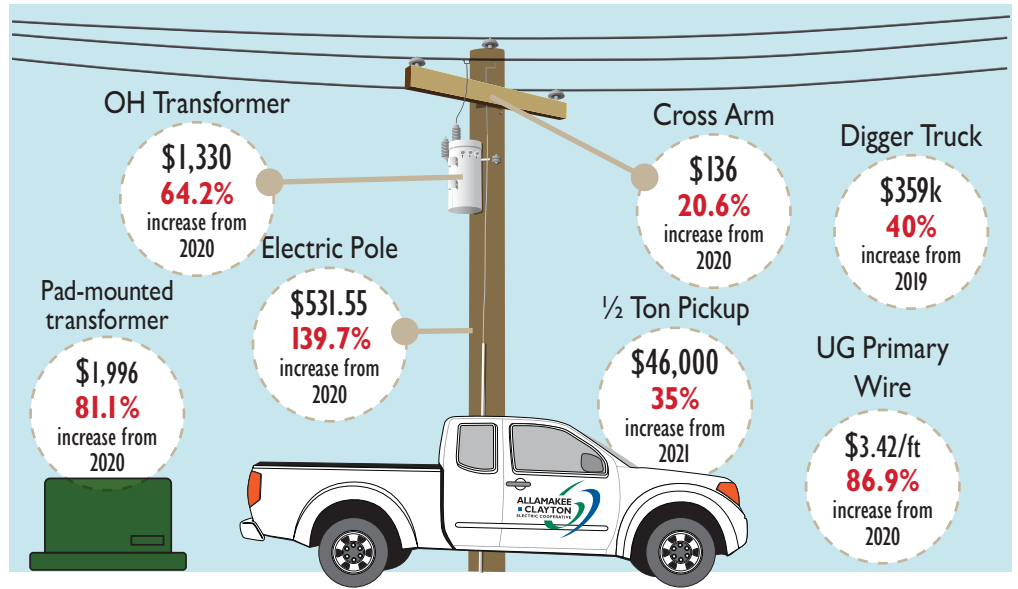
NOTICE OF RATE INCREASE

March 15, 2023

On February 27, 2023, the Board of Directors of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc. approved an increase in rates affecting the prices for electric service that you receive. The increase will apply to your usage beginning May 1, 2023.

The increase in annual revenues will be approximately \$1,335,000 or 8.0%.

Although the effect of the increase on your bill will vary depending upon the type and extent of usage, the average monthly increase per customer for the primary customer classes is:



Notice of Rate Increase Comparison Information:

Rate Code	Rate Type	Avg. Monthly kWh Usage	Current Monthly Rate	+ Increase	= New Monthly Rate	Percentage Increase
A	Single Phase - General Service	857	\$146.75	\$13.66	\$160.41	9.31%
	Single Phase - General Service with					
B	- One Interruptible Water Heater	1,228	\$189.64	\$16.00	\$205.64	8.44%
C	- Two Interruptible Water Heaters	3,381	\$455.97	\$27.56	\$483.53	6.04%
M	Multi - Phase - General Service	4,648	\$634.69	\$35.61	\$670.30	5.61%
	Multi - Phase - General Service with					
N	- One Interruptible Water Heater	5,915	\$750.40	\$77.81	\$828.21	10.37%
O	- Two Interruptible Water Heaters	16,529	\$1,913.46	\$260.72	\$2,174.18	13.63%
X	Peak Alert	53,812	\$4,780.61	\$173.19	\$4,953.80	3.62%
Y	Large Power	78,099	\$8,842.71	\$55.70	\$8,898.41	0.63%
F	Non-Interruptible Home Heating	674	\$72.75	\$6.67	\$79.42	9.17%
G	Interruptible Home Heating	824	\$64.02	\$7.78	\$71.80	12.15%
T	Electric Thermal Storage Heating (ETS)	910	\$68.96	\$9.29	\$78.25	13.47%
R	Single Phase - Low Temp Crop Drying	469	\$41.03	\$17.51	\$58.54	42.68%
L	Unmetered Security Light		8.00	\$1.25	9.25	15.63%

A written explanation of current rate schedules and charges is available without charge. If you have any questions, please contact our office.

BOARD BRIEFS | February 27 Meeting

- Approved 2022 Audit Report
- Reviewed and approved 2023 Operating Budget
- STAR Energy presented a Cost of Service Study overview
- Approved an 8% rate increase to be effective May 1, 2023
- Approved revisions to our Line Extension Policy (Board Policy 1-11)
- Approved a resolution to move forward on a USDA REDLG Application on behalf of the Guttenberg Hospital Family Resource Center
- Approved donations to Fayette County Economic Development & Cooperative Family Fund

WELCOME DARRIN!



Darrin Smith started February 20 as our Broadband Information Technology Technician. He and his wife, Laurie, live near Guttenberg. Darrin has a background in construction and water treatment. He previously worked at 3M and Alpine Communications. When he's not at work, he enjoys fishing, hiking and exploring local areas. He also enjoys high school sports (Go Eagles!) and spending time with his grandkids.



RIVALS INC. FINDS A HOME IN STRAWBERRY POINT

What started as a small business inside her home has blossomed into a booming brick and mortar as well as e-commerce dream for Elkader native Shanna Hamann.

Hamann started Rivals Inc. from her home in Ossian in 2009, doing custom design work. In 2014, Hamann opened her Rivals storefront in Strawberry Point, located next to the Big Strawberry on Commercial Street. From there, she's created a niche market of custom work for clients around the world.

After graduating from Central Community Schools, Hamann attended Iowa State University. While initially intending to major in graphic design, Hamann pivoted course and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in art and design. When her husband took a teaching position for the South Winn School District after graduation, Hamann moved back to Northeast Iowa.

Unsure what her next step would be, Hamann began her career at The Sports Shop in Decorah, running their screen printing and embroidery side of the business. Although that wasn't something she had experience with, Hamann said she had "a great base" from her background at ISU.

After five years, Hamann decided it was time to try something new. She went back to school to earn her K-12 teaching degree to teach art. At the same time,

she was raising their two-year old and fulfilling orders for custom shirt designs from previous customers. It became so popular, Hamann said Rivals was "born out of necessity." Hamann completed her teaching degree and again was posed with the question of now what, with Rivals taking off.



Shanna Hamann (middle) fulfilled her graphic design dreams by opening Rivals Inc. in 2009. She's called Strawberry Point home since 2014. She's pictured with employees Macy Streicher (left) and Erin Miller (right)

With \$150, she started a business checking account to get Rivals off and running. She began by doing custom designs and outsourcing the printing because she lacked the equipment and space to do everything in-house. As the demand grew, she outgrew her space in her home and she opened her first storefront in Ossian.

In 2014, her husband took a position

with the Edgewood-Colesburg School District so the Hamann family and Rivals Inc. moved to Strawberry Point. Hamann purchased the three-story downtown space at 109 Commercial Street, which is on ACEC lines. By then, technology was rapidly making it easier to do business through creating customized website

stores. Hamann said that was when her e-commerce business really took off. Having her storefront in Strawberry Point also proved to be a big sell for her.

"We're only 15-20 minutes between a host of schools and we're on a main highway. We're only an hour from Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Dubuque. And things like shipping are easily accessible. This proves it's great to be in a small town,

but you don't have to be in a big city to make a business work. With the advent of technology really advancing, what could look like a really small shop is actually a really big shop because of all the websites and the e-commerce that we have out there right now."

Hamann also credits her team of strong women employees making everything work – Macy Streicher, a lead graphic



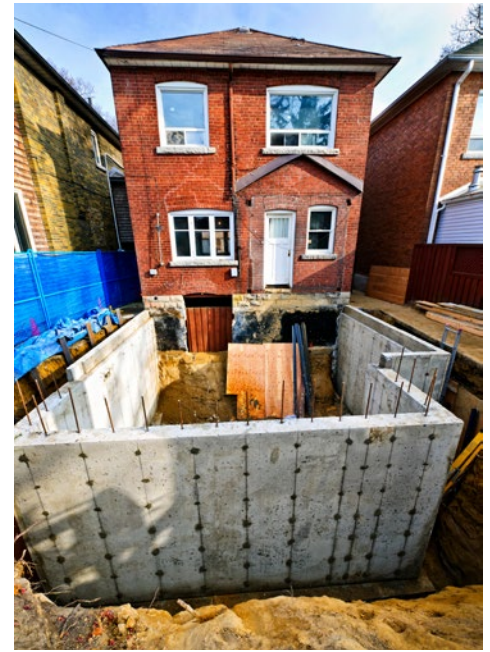
CONSTRUCTION PLANS?

Give us a call before work begins

If you have plans for a home addition, putting up a new farm building, constructing a new or adding on to grain drying facilities or anything else that requires an increase in amperage, please call ACEC early in the planning process so we can complete the work in time to accommodate your needs.

Each year, especially during the heat of the summer, we receive outage calls from members who add central air, geothermal or even build a new, larger home without notifying us. If the transformer is not large enough to handle the extra load, it can overload and create an unnecessary outage. Not only is the outage and equipment replacement costly for the Cooperative and its members, it's an unnecessary inconvenience for all members affected.

We urge all members to plan ahead for any new services or improvements to existing services so the work can be arranged and completed in a timely manner. Give us a call at (888) 788-1551 if you have any questions regarding a service upgrade or line extension. By working together, we keep costs down and the power on. ■



If you're planning a project this year that may require a service upgrade, give us a call early in the planning process. Aandi Deering, the Cooperative's Staking Engineer, can answer your questions regarding a line extension or service upgrade.

designer who's been with Rivals since she was in high school; Erin Miller on the embroidery side of the business; and newest employee Stephanie Geiger, who will be taking on screen printing.

The boom of social media exposure has also led to an increase in business. She's had social media celebrities, such as the Iowa Dairy Farmer, ask her to set up an online store for their products.

Hamann said her "bread and butter" is setting up merchandise stores for businesses like ACEC, allowing their employees to choose what products they want. #3918

"It gets their brand out there. We get them set up with 10-12 items on their own website, everything from mugs to decals to baseball caps, we can do all of that in house. None of it is outsourced," she said.

"We're not Custom Ink or the mom and pop store. We're the outfitter that has quality gear, timely gear. We want to be the person who fits in there."

Another thing Hamann credits with helping expand her business is ACEC Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations Brenda Hackman. Hamann credits Hackman with being pivotal for success, especially during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"What Brenda did was amazing. She was stopping in, asking us if we knew about energy rebates," she said. "Just being able to have someone like Brenda in our bag of tools to be able to survive as a business is a big deal."

To learn more about Rivals., Inc. and what they can offer, visit <https://www.rivalsinc.com/> or check them out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/RivalsIncGear>. ■

Don't Risk It!

Nearly two in five U.S. homeowners will put themselves and their communities at risk this year by digging without calling 811 beforehand.*

*CGA 2021 Omnibus Study

Always contact 811 before digging to avoid service disruptions caused by damaging buried utilities.

HOW ELECTRIC UTILITY REGULATIONS BENEFIT RURAL IOWANS



By Ethan Hohenadel, Director of Regulatory Affairs for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives

During the 2023 Iowa Legislative Session, proposals have been introduced with the intent to deregulate electric service territories in Iowa. Iowa's electric cooperatives are concerned about the negative economic impacts of deregulation for rural Iowans because we know firsthand how exclusive service territories provide stability. Exclusive service territories also provide consistency and reliability through a utility's obligation to serve its assigned service territory. I'd like to provide some background on how rural Iowans benefit from these regulations.

In 1976, the Iowa Legislature passed Senate File 1258 which created assigned electric service territories. The legislation's goal was "to encourage the development of coordinated statewide electric service at retail, to eliminate or avoid unnecessary duplication of electric utility facilities, and to promote economical, efficient, and adequate electric service to the public."

Let's break this down. First, the Iowa Legislature desired a coordinated statewide retail electric service system ready to serve Iowans. This was accomplished with SF 1258 by ensuring that every square foot of Iowa had an electric utility obligated to provide electric service upon request. This means

electricity is available to every Iowan no matter where they chose to live, work, vacation or adventure. #6783

Second, the Iowa Legislature wanted to eliminate or avoid unnecessary duplication of electric utility facilities. SF 1258 achieved this by assigning a single electric utility to serve within the assigned service territory. This means that only one set of substations, power lines, and transformers are installed to serve every home and business in a service territory. Imagine the cluttered landscape of several sets of equipment in your community if multiple utilities provided electric service.

Finally, the Iowa Legislature set out to promote economical, efficient and adequate electric service to the public. SF 1258 promoted economic electric service by reducing potential expenses related to duplication of electric facilities. Additionally, the legislation promoted efficiency by reducing the electric facilities installed and by establishing service territories based upon existing facilities already installed.

Although the Iowa Legislature didn't set out to increase reliability by creating assigned service territories, SF 1258 accomplished that as well. According to

a 2021 utility report published by the highly respected law firm Wilkinson Barker Knauer, LLP, "Deregulation may make power cheaper for some major electricity buyers like Big Tech, but it increases costs for the average consumer, all while sacrificing reliability. In fact, nine out of ten states in the continental United States with the highest utility costs have fully restructured markets with retail choice. Deregulation proponents also claim that the approach is clean and green. In reality, these restructured models offer little incentive for the kind of large-scale investment in clean energy technology that we'll need to meet the demands of a changing climate."

Additionally, a recent investigation on electric deregulation by The New York Times concluded that on average, residents living in a deregulated market pay \$40 more per month for electricity.

For over 45 years, Iowa's assigned service territory laws have reinforced reliable and affordable electric utility service. Efforts to weaken or eliminate these laws will only harm rural Iowans. ■

TAKING BIDS



The Co-op has a **Dodge RAM 1500 4x4 4.7L Crew Cab** up for bid.

- 214,702 miles
- Vinyl interior
- Workmaster topper
- Steel wheels
- 15,000 miles on new tires
- NO known issues

Sealed bids are due by April 15 and should be mailed to:

Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative
Attn: Jason Troendle
PO Box 715
Postville, IA 52162



PLUGGED IN: Electric Vehicle Update

FEBRUARY

Number of miles driven:

591 miles

kWh's Charged:

186

Cost to Charge:

.123 x 186 = \$22.88



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.

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.

April – **CASSEROLES**, May – **BEEF**, June – **BERRIES**



OLD FASHIONED HONEY BREAD

- 2 ¼ c. scalded milk
- 2 ½ tsp. salt
- ½ c. butter
- ¾ c. honey
- 2 packages dry yeast
- 1 egg (beaten)
- 7 c. flour
- 1 c. yellow cornmeal
- ¼ c. water

Directions

Combine scalded milk, salt, butter and honey. Cool to lukewarm. Dissolve yeast in warm water in large bowl. Add milk mixture and egg; mix well. Sift flour and cornmeal together. Stir half the dry ingredients into liquid ingredients, beat until smooth. Stir in remaining flour mixture. Knead until smooth and elastic. Place in a greased bowl, turning to grease surface, then cover. Let rise in a warm place for 1 ½ hours or until doubled in bulk. Punch down. Divide into thirds – place in greased bread pans. Let rise until doubled in bulk. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until tests done and the tops are golden brown. I like to brush the tops with a little melted butter right from the oven before removing from pans.

■ *Ruth Hilgersen, Saint Olaf*

CREAM CHEESE BANANA BREAD

Banana Bread Ingredients

- 2-3 very ripe bananas, peeled (about 1 ¼ to 1 ½ c. mashed)
- 1/3 c. melted butter, salted or unsalted
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- Pinch of salt
- ¾ c. sugar (1/2 c. if you'd like it less sweet, 1 c. if you want it sweeter)
- 1 large egg, beaten

- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 ½ c. flour

Cream Cheese Filling Ingredients

- 8 oz. cream cheese (room temperature)
- 1 large egg
- ¼ c. sugar
- 2 Tbsp. flour

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350° and grease a loaf pan. In a mixing bowl, mash the ripe bananas with a fork until completely smooth. Stir the melted butter into the mashed bananas. Mix in the baking soda and salt. Stir in the sugar, beaten egg and vanilla extract. Mix in the flour. In another bowl, beat together all the ingredients for the cream cheese filling. Pour half the banana bread batter in the loaf pan. Top the batter with half of the cream cheese filling, one dollop at a time. Top with remaining batter. Top with the remaining cream cheese filling one dollop at a time. Insert a butter knife about halfway into the batter and run through the batter vertically and horizontally to swirl the cream cheese into the banana bread batter. Bake for 50-60 minutes

■ *Nancy Einck, Waukon*

CRUSTY HOMEMADE BREAD

- 1 ½ tsp. active dry yeast
- 1 ¾ c. warm water (110° to 115°)
- 3 ½ c. plus 1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour, divided
- 2 tps. salt
- 1 Tbsp. cornmeal or additional flour

Directions

In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Using a rubber spatula, stir in 3 ½ c. flour and salt to form a soft, sticky dough. Do not knead. Cover and let rise at room temperature 1 hour. Stir down

dough (dough will be sticky). Turn onto a floured surface; with floured hands, pat into a 9-in. square. Fold square into thirds, forming a 9x3-in. rectangle. Fold rectangle into thirds, forming a 3-in. square. Place in a large, greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise at room temperature until almost doubled, about 1 hour. Punch down dough and repeat folding process. Return dough to bowl; refrigerate, covered, overnight. Grease bottom of a disposable foil roasting pan with sides at least 4 in. high; dust pan with cornmeal. Turn dough onto a floured surface. Knead gently 6-8 times; shape into a 6-in. round loaf. Place into prepared pan; dust top with remaining 1 Tbsp. flour. Cover pan and let rise at room temperature until dough expands to a 7 ½ in. loaf, about 1 ¼ hours. Preheat oven to 500°. Using a sharp knife, make a slash (1/4 in. deep) across top of loaf. Cover pan tightly with foil. Bake on lowest oven rack for 25 minutes. Reduce oven setting to 450°. Remove foil; bake bread until deep golden brown, 25-30 minutes. Remove loaf to a wire rack to cool.

■ *Clara Lensing, Castalia*

BUTTERY BEER BREAD

- 3 c. flour
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¼ c. brown sugar
- ¼ c. white sugar
- 1 12oz. can beer
- ½ c. butter (melted)

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Add brown sugar and white sugar. Add the beer and mix together until it forms a dough. In a 9x5-in. greased loaf pan, spread the dough evenly. Pour melted butter on top. Bake for 50-55 minutes or until golden brown and toothpick inserted in center comes clean.

■ *Melissa Johnston, Clermont*

Don't see your recipe? We were FLOODED with bread recipes this month! While we didn't have room to run them all in March, look for them online, as well as all our Member submitted recipes, at www.acrec.com/member-recipes. And don't worry, we'll make sure to get all the bread recipes in as we have space.

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to Wayne Metcalf, West Union, and Donald and Mary Kuennen, West Union, who found their service numbers in the past newsletter; the Cooperative awarded each a \$5 bill credit.

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter. The numbers are from different regions of our service area – **one is worth a \$10.00 bill credit, and two are worth a \$5 bill credit if found.** 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

JEFF BRADLEY, President, Wadena

MICHAEL D. GIBBS, Vice President, Waterville

CINDY HEFFERN, Sec./Treas., Harpers Ferry

ROGER ARTHUR, Sumner

NELSON CONVERSE, Postville

GREG FORMANEK, Farmersburg

JERRY KELEHER, Elkader

AL STEFFENS, Clermont

BRICE WOOD, Lansing

MANAGEMENT STAFF

HOLLEE McCORMICK, EVP/General Manager

DAVID DECKER, Director,
Finance & Administrative Services

BRENDA HACKMAN, Manager, Economic
Development & Community Relations

JENI KOLSRUD, Manager, Information Technology

JENNIFER ACHENBACH, Manager,
Marketing & Communications

JASON TROENDLE, Director,
Operations & Engineering

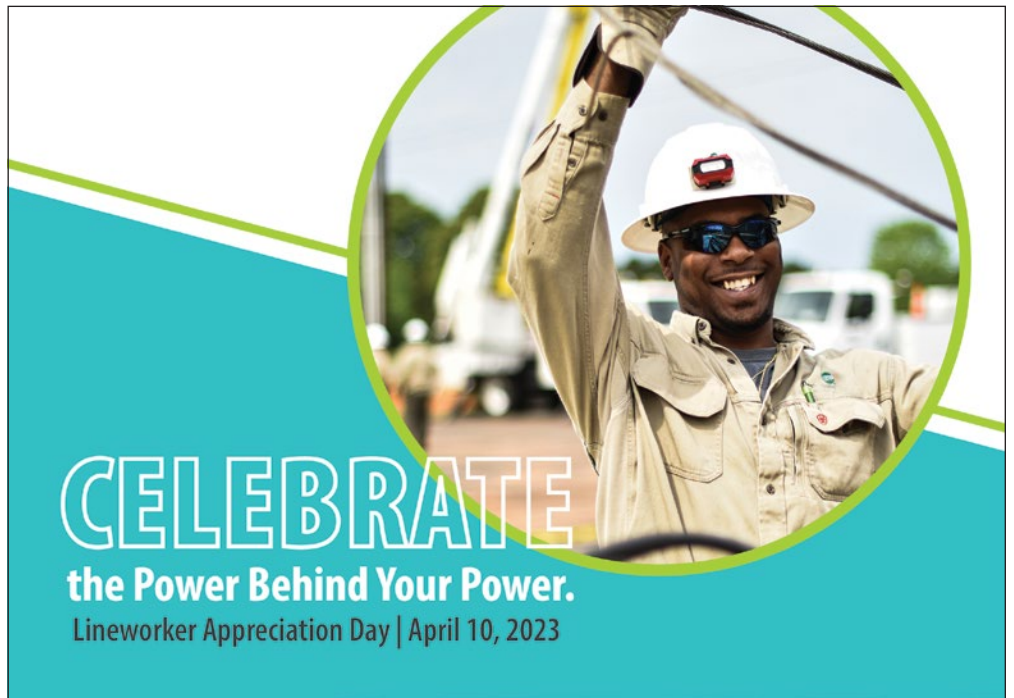
RYAN WAGNER, Manager, Member Services



Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.
PO Box 715 - Postville, IA 52162-0715

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
DPC



LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY APRIL 10

Lineworkers serve on the frontlines of our nation's energy needs, and on Monday, April 10, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and other Co-ops throughout the country will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on during National Lineworker Appreciation Day.

Line crews work around the clock, sometimes in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations and birthdays.

ACEC invites all Co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do.

Be sure to stop in our lobby or check us out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AllamakeeClaytonElecCoop/> for details on a coloring contest we're hosting to celebrate our lineworkers.

   **STAY CONNECTED**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 