

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY



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UPDATE YOUR
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DUEL FUEL
REMINDER

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YOUTH TOUR
APPLICATIONS

POWERED BY SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES



**Hollie
McCormick**
EVP/General
Manager

A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

As you may know, Allamakee-Clayton is guided by Seven Core Principles. In fact, you've probably heard us talk about our "Concern for Community." It's not just a nice phrase—it's one of the core principles that makes electric cooperatives like ours different from other utilities. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the people we serve—our members, our neighbors and our communities.

We truly enjoy supporting our local communities; keeping them strong and helping to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

Take our Operation Round-Up program, for example. Thanks to the generosity of members like you who round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar, we're able to provide assistance to local, community-based groups and projects. Every little bit adds up—and it makes a big difference. Recently, we were able to award our first grant (stay tuned for the announcement!). We look forward to growing our Operation Round-Up program to continue to award deserving organizations with grant dollars.

To assist families during the winter, ACEC established the RECare program. In this program, ACEC members donate to assist families in our service territory who are unable to pay their bills. Those donations help many families on our lines stay warm during the winter.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we annually send two of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. That's giving in the most meaningful way—by investing in tomorrow's leaders. We also offer scholarships to high school seniors.

We care deeply about safety, so we also spend time attending various school events to discuss safety, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift too—and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work—coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on non-profit boards and as members of local fire departments, and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options, or you simply have questions—please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help, not just during the holiday season, but all year long.

At ACEC, we believe concern for community is more than a value—it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.

From all of us at Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful, safe and bright holiday season. ■ 6656

BOARD BRIEFS: September 29 Meeting

- Approved 2024 Tax Returns
- Approved LACBWR Settlement Funds
- Approved retiring \$474,842.32 in Patronage Capital
- Approved an RLF Loan to Upper Iowa Resort and Rental
- Approved revisions to Policy 3.1 Salary & Wage Administration and Policy 5.1 Contributions
- Approved ACEC's Strategic Plan for 2025-2028
- Kristin Dolan, of CFC, visited and presented Key Ration Trends Analysis
- Approved donation to VMH Postville Clinic



2026 YOUR TOUR

APPLICATIONS DUE JANUARY 31, 2026

The 2026 Youth Tour Application period is now open! Students who are sophomores or juniors in high school and whose parents or guardians receive their electricity from Allamakee-Clayton

Electric Cooperative are eligible to apply for the all-expenses-paid Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C. June 14-20, 2026. The one page application is due January 31, 2026, at which point applicants will receive a packet of information on cooperatives and ACEC. The top-five applicants will be asked to do an in-person interview, where the judges will select two students to represent ACEC on the tour. The application can be pick up at ACEC Headquarters or can be found online at www.acerc.com/youth-tour. Applications can be mailed back to our office at ACEC, Attn: Youth Tour, 229 Highway 51, Postville, IA 52162 or can be emailed to jachenbach@acerc.coop. For more information, please contact Jennifer Achenbach at 888-788-1551. ■



NOTICE

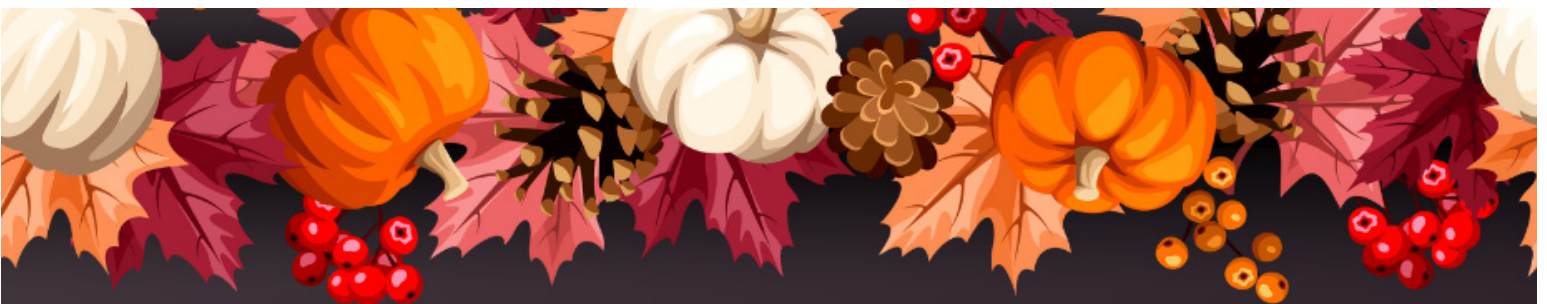
The 2025 Winter Preparedness Event for Interruptible Heat (Dual Fuel) accounts is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 19.** ■

IDLE SERVICE NOTICE

As a part of our ongoing efforts to enhance service reliability and maintain the integrity of our infrastructure, we recently notified our affected members of updates to our idle service policy, which goes into affect January 1, 2026. Members who are affected by this policy change were notified by letter. If you have any questions, you can learn more at acerc.com/idle-service-fee or by calling **888-788-1551.** ■

SOLAR UPDATE

The federal residential solar tax credit expires January 1, 2026. Systems must be installed and operational before Jan. 1, 2026 to receive the federal tax credit. Allamakee-Clayton will not be held responsible for system connection **after December 23, 2025**, due to the holidays. If you have any questions, please contact ACEC at 888-788-1551. ■



WE WISH YOU A HAPPY THANKSGIVING

**OUR OFFICE IS CLOSED
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27.**

A DAY WELL SPENT AT YELLOW RIVER

On a beautiful fall day in early October, nearly 40 cooperative employees gathered at Yellow River State Forest near Harpers Ferry to volunteer for a day of manual labor.

The event was the Day of Service, sponsored by Dairyland Power Cooperative, our G&T. This year, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative was selected as a host site for their day of volunteer work. It was all a kick-off to October's Cooperative Month, where Co-ops of all types recognize and honor the cooperative spirit and the positive differences these types of organization make in the lives of their members and the broader community.

DAY OF SERVICE HISTORY

Dairyland began their Day of Service tradition in 2023. Every year, Dairyland works with four to six of their distribution cooperatives to select sites in their service territories for volunteer clean up efforts. Past projects have included painting dugouts at baseball fields, picking up litter, brush cutting in the driftless area and more.

"When the Day of Service was first proposed three years ago, we wanted to develop an event that would make a difference and help get cooperative employees out into our service territory," said Dairyland EVP and General Counsel Joyce Peppin.



SCOPE OF THE PROJECT



Dairyland reached out to ACEC in late January 2025 to begin planning for the Day of Service. The goal was to work with an organization in ACEC's service territory. Ideally, each organization has a project that can be completed in roughly 5 hours volunteers are available. It's also ideal to have projects that can be done regardless of weather conditions.

Yellow River State Forest is an over 8,900 acre forest located off Highway 76 outside of Harpers Ferry. Dairyland representatives and Cody Barloon, a Natural Resource Technician with the Iowa DNR at Yellow River, worked to coordinate a project.

After doing a site visit in late spring, it was decided to work on a clean-up of an old retention pond. The land was once privately owned farmland that was donated to the forest. While the forest staff has cleaned portions of the land, a big section hadn't been cleared yet. What remained was fence posts, lines of barbed wire, old appliances and lots of box elder trees.

Clearing the retention pond was pared with basic cleaning of an office building. Projects there included inside and outside painting and general tidying.

Once the details were confirmed, planning was under way to make sure everything was ready to go. Staff at Dairyland, including Senior Communications and Public Relations Specialist Ellie Rundahl and Senior Communications and Member Services Specialist Dana Bolwerk, worked with Cody and others to make sure everything was ready. In addition to safety equipment and PPE, other things on the agenda included having restrooms available, equipment to remove the items pulled from the retention pond, and coordinating water and lunch.

THE BIG DAY

On Wednesday, Oct. 1, nearly 40 co-op employees met at Yellow River to begin their day. ACEC sent 14 volunteers, and Richland Power Cooperative from Richland Center, Wisconsin, had three. The remaining came from Dairyland Power.

The day started with a safety moment and project brief. After stretching, getting the necessary PPE and going over more in-depth details at the site, the volunteers went to work. For five hours, they were pulling out garbage,

dragging metal scraps out of the woods, cutting down dead or dangerous trees, digging up old bottles and broken glass and filling dump trucks to be carted away.

Yellow River wasn't the only site for the Day of Service. There were four other volunteer groups working throughout the Dairyland Service Territory.

- **Andersen Scout Camp** – Houlton, Wisconsin: cleaning buildings/cabins, brush cleaning and storm clean-up
- **Birchwood Senior Center** – Birchwood, Wisconsin: cleaning, brush removal, painting, landscaping and staining
- **Camp Nawakwa** – Cornell, Wisconsin: outdoor painting/staining, winterizing cabins/shower house, deep cleaning lodges, wood splitting
- **United Way of Freeborn County & Albert Lea YMCA** – Albert Lea, Minnesota: staging pantry, unloading food truck, winter gear drive prep, painting and cleaning.



"To have five community service events happening all on the same day in three states with 150 volunteers is incredible. We are proud to unite with our member cooperatives on these projects and embrace the Cooperative Principles of Cooperation Among Cooperatives and Concern for Community. We are grateful for the enthusiasm shared by our member cooperatives and their employees to support these impactful events," said Peppin.

Brad Foss, Dairyland director of regulatory affairs, was one of two Dairyland site captains at YRSF. He has volunteered at all three Day of Service events, saying he enjoys meeting employees from other co-ops while giving back to the communities.

"One of our seven Cooperative Principles is Concern for Community. That not only means concern for people in the community but also, concern for the environment. What better way to showcase that principle than with the activities at Yellow River," he said.

JOB WELL DONE

When the final dump truck carried away what was pulled from the pond, the YRSF staff hauled 14,000 pounds of scrap metal away, resulting in over \$1,100 being donated to the Friends of Yellow River State Forest.

"Without the help of the cooperatives, these projects would have taken staff time at Yellow River much longer. What would have taken us weeks to complete, the cooperatives did in 5 hours," said Barloon. "Not only did this day of service help with the painting and the clean up of an area, it resulted in a donation to the friends group, which will be reinvested back to Yellow River State Forest." 4109-X

ACEC Director of Operations Jason Troendle was one of the volunteers at Yellow River.

"Participating in the Cooperative Day of Service reflects Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative's commitment to the communities it serves. By giving employees the opportunity to dedicate their time to events like this, strengthens our bond with the community and ourselves," said Troendle. "We are happy to participate in a local project and give back to the community we call home."

"We'd like to thank the Yellow River staff for working with us and we'd like to thank Dairyland Power for giving us the platform to donate our time to assisting one of our members during this Day of Service." ■



Snowbirds Leaving for the Winter?

Please call the Co-op to notify us of your temporary address and to make billing arrangements while you're away.

AN ADDED LAYER OF SECURITY AT EVERGREEN



Kim Kloke

Residents at the Evergreen Court Independent Living Apartments in Waukon have an added level of comfort thanks to the FirstCall Emergency Response System by Allamakee-Clayton Electric.

Recently, FirstCall representative Robin Palmer, along with ACEC's Kim Kloke, put 12 units into the assisted care facility, allowing each resident to have their own fall-detection pendant and base machine in their room.

What is FirstCall?

Allamakee-Clayton has provided the FirstCall Emergency Response System since 1992, when it was known as the MainStreet Messenger. At that time, several RECs joined to create a division of response operators at the Cooperative Response Center (CRC) in Austin, Minnesota. Those responders are specifically trained to handle FirstCall.

Since its inception, the concept of the system has remained the same. Customers wear a pendant around their necks or on their wrist. With the push of a button, they can summon someone at CRC. When a call is received at CRC, the operators check with the customer to assess the situation. If it is a non-emergency, the operator contacts the list of responders the client has pre-approved. In an emergency, they'll contact emergency services.

ACEC offers the Essence Model, which uses cell phone towers. The pendant communicates with the base every 13 hours, ensuring proper connection. In the event of a power outage, low battery or loss of pendant signal, CRC is contacted, followed by Robin at ACEC. Battery back-ups last 24-48 hours.

Pendants can go up to 600 feet from the base unit. The necklace-style pendant also has fall-detection mode, alerting CRC if it detects the customer has fallen. While the pendants are water resistant and can be worn in the shower, they can't be submerged.

Installation at Evergreen

Lori Treangen at the Good Samaritan Society, Evergreen Court Apartments, contacted ACEC to inquire about a FirstCall unit for each resident. The facility previously had a system in place for residents. However, it had become unreliable, with challenging customer service. While Lori didn't have experience with FirstCall, a few of the residents utilized the system in their homes previously.



Robin Palmer

Lori worked with Robin to set up the units in the 12-apartment complex. Robin also utilized the expertise at CRC to make sure everything went smoothly.

What makes this situation different than others is the set up. Each resident has their own base machine in their room and were able to choose the pendant that worked best for them.

Robin typically does installations for individuals in their homes. However, she said it doesn't have to be limited to single-dwelling use. Individual residents in care facilities can also use the system or they can be installed in entire facilities, such as at Evergreen.

"One thing that makes FirstCall unique is that it operates independently, without using a facility's IT infrastructure. Each resident has their own unique pendant that connects with their own unique base machine," she explained. "We're also local, so if you have any issues, we're here to help solve the problem quickly."

"Our FirstCall service is available throughout Northeast Iowa, as long as we're able to get a clear cell phone signal. It's a reliable way to have an extra layer of protection for those people we love."

Common questions

Prior to installation, Robin and Kim met with the Evergreen residents to answer any questions and explain the units.

The questions they asked are the same anyone utilizing the FirstCall machines ask.

They explained that in order for the system to work properly, residents must wear the pendants. It doesn't work if it's sitting in a drawer. Because the pendants connect to the machines every 13 hours, residents can wear them to the grocery store or out for

Enjoy Peace of Mind Knowing Help is Just
a Press of a Button Away with a

FirstCall Emergency Response System

by Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative

By pressing a water-resistant pendant worn around the neck or wrist, clients are able to receive help from a trained emergency response operator, available 24/7.

Available to REC members
and non-members

FIRSTCALL
Personal Emergency Response

Call Today
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FirstCall Emergency
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888-788-1551
firstcall@acrec.coop



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the day. However; if they are leaving for a multi-day vacation, the pendant should be kept at home with the machine.

Accidents happen. If customers accidentally press their button, that's normal. The CRC operator will answer the call and make sure everything is ok. If the pendant is too sensitive to the customer's activities, the sensitivity can be adjusted.

In order to make sure everything is running smoothly, customers are to press their button once a month to test it. During that test, a CRC operator will answer the call and confirm the machine is working as it should. **5798**

"It works. We hope you'll never need it, but if you do, you'll be thankful," explained Kim to the residents. "It helps your families sleep at night."

Security for everyone

Now that the installation is complete, Lori said the residents and the staff have an extra piece of mind.

"Having a system in place that is reliable not only gives the staff at Evergreen a piece of mind but their family members as well," said Lori. "There is the bonus to have someone local if issues should arise."

"Kim and Robin have been great to work with. They made our residents feel at ease with them. The system is new to us but we have been very pleased with it so far."

To learn more, call Robin at ACEC at 888-788-1551.

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.

December – **HOLIDAY APPETIZERS**

January – **COOKIES**

February – **MAIN DISHES**



PUMPKIN PIE CROISSANTS

- 2 tubes refrigerated crescent rolls
- ½ block 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 c. pumpkin
- 1 ½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 3 Tbsp. sugar

Directions

Mix the pumpkin with spices, sugar and softened cream cheese. Spread 1 Tbsp. (or more) filling on spread out rolls and re-roll. Roll croissant in mixture of: 4 Tbsp. sugar, 1 Tbsp. pumpkin pie spice. Bake at 375°F for 15-18 minutes.

■ Carol Deering, Postville

PUMPKIN PIE MUFFINS

- 1 pkg. spice cake mix
- 1 c. pumpkin pie mix
- 2 eggs
- ¼ c. vegetable oil
- ½ c. water

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line muffin tins with paper baking cups. Combine cake mix, pumpkin pie mix, eggs, oil and water. Beat with a mixer until thoroughly mixed. Spoon batter into baking cups, about ¾ full. Bake 20-25 minutes or until inserted toothpick comes out dry. Yields 24 muffins. Optional, sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

■ Carol Deering, Postville

PUMPKIN CHOCOLATE CHIP MUFFINS

- 1 c. canned pumpkin
- ¾ c. milk
- 6 Tbsp. melted butter
- 2 eggs
- 2 ½ c. flour
- 1 c. packed light brown sugar
- 1 c. chocolate chips
- ½ c. chopped walnuts (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder
- 1 ½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ tsp. salt

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease or paper-line 18 regular-size muffin cups. Combine pumpkin, milk, butter and eggs in a bowl until blended. Combine dry ingredients. Add to mixture until just moistened. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake 15-17 minutes or until toothpick inserted into centers comes out clean.

Optional – Try with white chocolate chips or ½ chocolate and ½ white chips for a whole new taste.

■ Angela Winters, Nashua

CYBERSECURITY Tip of the MONTH

Verify independently

Then: You'd double-check a request by calling a neighbor or your bank.

Now: Criminals spoof caller IDs, create fake websites, and even use AI voice clones. If you're suspicious that a scammer is targeting you, don't respond immediately. Pause and contact a trusted source directly, such as looking up a phone number on an official website instead of the link in a scammy email.

~ Courtesy of staysafeonline.org ■

Sponsored by



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 \$7.50 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

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Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

PO Box 715 - Postville, IA 52162-0715

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



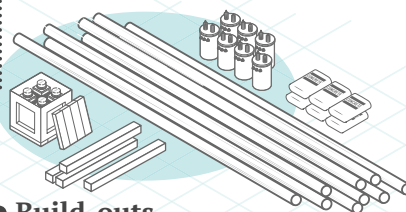
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Infrastructure Costs

The past five years have been a period of exploding costs for the electric utility industry and for broadband providers, pushed by soaring demand, supply chain challenges, raw materials shortages, increased labor costs and tariffs. The impact has been rapid increases in the cost of producing power, longer and more unpredictable project timelines and the need for more financing, all of which have driven electric rates up for residences, businesses and other end-users. Here's a look at what's contributing to the trend. **Percent increase since 2020:**

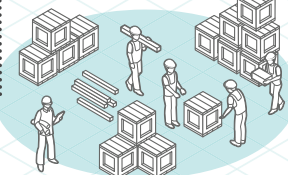
Infrastructure

Utility poles (wood, steel, composite)	+25-40%
Crossarms & braces (steel/wood)	+20-35%
Conductor wire (aluminum/copper)	+30-50%
Transformers	+70-100%
Grain-oriented electrical steel	+80-100%
Oil/dielectric fluids	+25-40%
Copper wiring	+50%
Concrete	+25-35%
Smart meters	+20-35%
Pad-mounted switchgear	+25-40%
Circuit breakers/reclosers	+20-35%



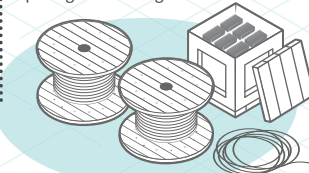
Build-outs

Utility construction labor	+20-40%
Freight/logistics	+30-60%



Broadband

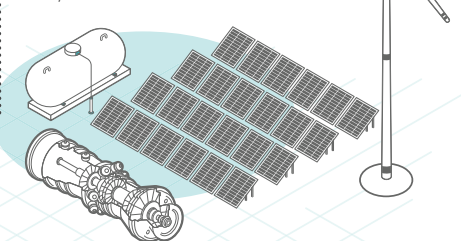
Fiber-optic cable	+25-40%
Splicing & telecom gear	+20-30%



Design: Kevin Kepple

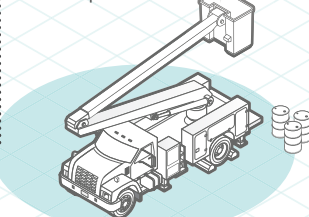
Generation

Diesel gensets	+20-40%
Gas turbines	+20-30%
Solar PV systems	+25-35%
Wind turbines	+25-35%
Hydropower components	+20-30%
Battery storage	+25-40%
SCADA/EMS systems	+20-30%
Inverters	+20-30%
Relays & switchgear	+25-40%
Natural Gas	+20-120%
Coal	+30-60%
Diesel/fuel oil	+40-70%



Fleets

Light trucks	+25-40%
Bucket trucks, digger derricks	+20-50%
Fuel costs (especially diesel)	+20-30%
Maintenance	+15-25%
Insurance premiums	+20%



Sources: BLS; energynews.com; Reuters; Wood Mackenzie; NREL; IEA