

ACEC NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2026 | VOLUME 29 | ISSUE 08

THANKS FOR YOUR
SERVICE, MIKE

YOUTH LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY UPDATE

SHINING THE
LIGHT



228 Highway 31 • P.O. Box 715
Piquette, MI 49450-0715

Website: www.allamakeeclayton.com

A Sustainable Design® Company

ACEC DEBUTS NEW BILLS

See page 4



A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

RELIABILITY REQUIRES INVESTMENT

As your local power provider, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative's mission has always been simple: keep the lights on and support the communities we serve. But behind every switch, every warm home and every business that opens its doors is a complex system that requires constant care. Reliable electricity doesn't happen by accident. It requires ongoing investment in our local grid—through system repairs, maintenance, upgrades and the integration of new technologies that help us operate smarter and more efficiently.

Much of the energy system we rely on today was built decades ago. While it continues to serve us well, age alone means that components must be repaired or replaced to maintain performance and safety. From poles and wires to transformers and substations, every part of the grid has a lifespan. Routine maintenance helps extend that lifespan, but eventually equipment must be updated to meet modern standards. These proactive investments reduce the likelihood of outages, shorten restoration times when disruptions do occur and create a stronger backbone for our members' needs.

The demands on the electric grid are also evolving. Homes and businesses today use more electricity than ever, and that trend will only continue. Electric vehicles, advanced

HVAC systems, smart appliances and new commercial facilities add load to the local distribution system. As these technologies take hold, the grid must be able to support increased demand while maintaining the reliability our members expect. Strategic upgrades are essential to ensuring we can meet these needs both today and in the decades ahead.

At the same time, new technologies are reshaping how we operate. Tools such as automated switching devices, smart meters, drones and advanced monitoring systems allow us to detect problems faster and respond more effectively. These technologies can isolate problems, reroute power to minimize outages and provide real-time data that helps us plan and maintain equipment more efficiently.

Implementing innovative technologies into the grid is not just a convenience—it is a necessity for ensuring reliability in an increasingly complex energy landscape.

While these improvements require thoughtful planning and financial investment, the return is significant. A stronger grid supports economic growth, improves service quality and enhances safety for our crews and community. Most importantly, it ensures that the essential power you rely on is available whenever you need it.

Our commitment to reliability runs deeper than infrastructure alone. It reflects our responsibility to the people and communities we serve. Every upgrade, every repair and every technology we deploy is an investment in your daily life—from the comfort of your home to the success of local businesses and schools.

We know that powering our community means preparing for the future, not just maintaining the present. By investing in our local grid today, we are building the foundation for a brighter, more resilient tomorrow. ■

BOARD BRIEFS

July 27 Meeting

- Reviewed Federated Loss Control Analysis July 2025-July 2026
- Reviewed and approved IAEC Operating Procedural Changes
- Matt Marting provided a year in review for the Skyways department
- Approved a Resolution for Ulring & Sons Timber Co. to apply to DPC's Revolving Loan Fund
- Brent Ridge, CEO of Dairyland Power Cooperative, provided an update regarding Dairyland Power

August 31 Meeting

- Reviewed and approved 2026 Load Forecast Summary for Dairyland Power
- Reviewed Annual Meeting arrangements
- Approved Board Policy 9.13 Oversize Load Review and Coordination Fee
- Reviewed Dairyland Bill Prepayment information
- Approved donations to the Postville Food Pantry and Postville Emergency Services Golf Tournament

Shining a light on Jane Hasek



Jane Hasek of Harpers Ferry is the epitome of a "Shining Light," according to Marita Clark, also of Harpers Ferry.

That's why Marita nominated Jane for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's Shine the Light contest in June. Although Jane wasn't chosen as one of the three state-wide winners, she truly is deserving of the nomination.

Jane Hasek, EdD, moved to Harpers Ferry in 2006 and jumped right in, devoting her talents to various non-profits in Northeast Iowa. She served 10 years on the Board of Directors for the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. She's currently the president of the Harpers Ferry Area Heritage Society, serves as the secretary of the Lansing United Methodist Church, is active in the Harpers Ferry Booster Club and also serves on the Operation Round Up Board for ACEC. She was the founding Chancellor Emeritus of Allen College in Waterloo.

It's her work with the Heritage Society that has truly made a mark in Harpers. She is the lead individual for the "Open the Doors" capital campaign, raising funds to build the Harpers Ferry Area Heritage Museum.

"Jane truly is the epitome of the Shining Light. Her volunteer capacity, endless energy and a vision that far outshines the rest of us involved," said Marita in her application. "Our small community unofficially recognizes, and very much respects Jane's unique ability to inspire others, lead by example and serve as a beacon of hope, particularly amidst our capital campaign for the museum." **1477-36-XX**

About the museum

The Harpers Ferry museum is currently in the early stages of building. It's located next to the Oil Springs School in the Martelle Heritage Park, next to Tillinghast Park overlooking Harpers Slough and the Mississippi River.

Once completed, the museum will "preserve the past, share genealogy, educate people of all ages and showcase the region's rich history, scenic beauty and recreational opportunities." The museum is designed to resemble the regional Harper House, built in the 1880s by David Harper, for whom the town is named. The roughly 9,000 square foot building will feature historic and interactive exhibits to showcase the people, community, region, river and development of the area.

The cost of the building is estimated to be near \$800,000. The society became a 501(c)(3) organization in 2013 and has been soliciting donations and grants. They broke ground in October 2024. The goal is to complete the building structure by late 2026.

Marita notes that the committee wouldn't be where they are today without Jane's work.

"Jane's lifelong commitment to a vast array of volunteer projects precedes her residency in Harpers Ferry, but we are the current and fortunate recipients of her achievements, honed skills, network of people, know-how, friendships, alliances and abundant undertakings. Jane quickly gleaned what a gem Harpers Ferry is in the Driftless Area of Northeast Iowa and the crucial need to capture and preserve our history," said Marita in her application to the IAEC.

"Jane has literally taken the dream that generations of residents merely wished for and put action into it. With Jane's laser focus, energy and expertise, she inspired other community members to believe a museum could actually become a reality too."

To learn more about the project and to donate, visit <https://www.harpersferryheritage.org/>.

Thank you to Marita for nominating Jane! The IAEC Shine the Light contest will return in June 2027. ■

THROUGH A MEMBER'S LENS

Nothing says summer quite like a county fair. Thanks to Rhonda Lee for submitting this fair fun photo of a youngster exhibiting during the Fayette County Fair in July.



Your ACEC bill is getting a refresh



Be on the lookout for the WHITE ACEC envelope

In ACEC's continued efforts to improve our services, we are debuting a new, redesigned billing statement beginning in October.

This affects all bills from ACEC, including for electric service, AC Skyways internet/phone service and FirstCall Emergency Response System.

"The updated design is the result of our software vendor's programming upgrades which provided ACEC with the opportunity to improve our bill statements at no cost to the membership," said David Decker, ACEC Director of Finance and Administrative Services. "This new layout is designed to improve clarity and help us better serve you, our valued members."

NOTICE: WHITE ENVELOPES

You'll notice the change from the first look. **ACEC bills will now arrive in a white envelope, not the traditional canary yellow.** As Decker explains, there would be a significant cost to purchase the canary envelopes that can be avoided by using traditional white envelopes.

The remit (return) envelopes will also be white.

ACEC asks that you go through your mail carefully at billing time so it doesn't get lost in the shuffle.

What has changed

The biggest change you'll notice on the bill is a large circle graphic located at the top of page 1 of the statement, highlighting the total amount due. **4747-3**

Other notable changes include:

- A daily energy usage graph on the first page of your bill, showing you how many kilowatt hours were used every day that billing cycle.
- If you are a part of our electric water heater or electric heat/dual fuel load management program, you'll have a box in the middle right column of the first page showing your savings for the month and for the year by being enrolled in the program.
- A monthly energy usage comparison on the back page, which shows the difference for the month from 2025 to 2026.
- A cleaner layout to help you find items like account

number, due date and details more clearly.

- Members who have multiple accounts will receive a more streamlined statement, helping reduce the amount of paper received.

What hasn't changed

The billing period will continue to start on the first and end on the last day of the month. Bills will be mailed on the fifth of each month and remain due to our office by the 25th.

Your options to pay remain the same – online through SmartHub at acrec.com; by phone at 855-951-1988; by mail; through the SmartHub app; in person either in our lobby or through the drop box; or by autopay through SmartHub.

Members also still have the option to go paperless with their billing through SmartHub.

We hope this new design makes managing your account simpler and clearer. If you have any questions about your bill, call us at 888-788-1551.

Be on the lookout for the new bill format in your October statement! ■

Navigating Your New Bill

Follow the numbers as a guide to reading your new billing format:

- 1. Total Due** - Summarized total amount or budget amount due. Automatic payment is indicated if you participate in that program.
- 2. Your Service Information** - Member name(s), service address and description, service location number and billing period.
- 3. Co-op Messaging** - Can include past due amount or expiring payment method.
- 4. Daily Energy Use** - Graphic showing energy use for entire billing month.
- 5. Account Summary** - Shows account number, statement and due dates, activity since last billing and total due.
- 6. Load Management Program Savings** - If you are enrolled in this program, monthly and year-to-date savings will appear.
- 7. Remittance Stub** - Please return your stub with your payment.
- 8. Operation Round-Up** - If you wish to enroll in the program, check this box.

ALLAMAKEE CLAYTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Name: JOHN Q. PUBLIC
JANE Q. PUBLIC

Service Address: 12345 ANY AVE
ANYTOWN IA 99999

Desc: Residence With Dual Fuel

Location: 9999-88-XX

Billing Period: 07/01/2026 - 08/01/2026

Office Hours: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM M - F
Phone: (563) 864-7611 or (888) 788-1551
Pay By Phone: (855) 951-1988
Website: www.acrec.com

1

TOTAL DUE

\$136.05

AutoPay on 08/24/2026
Do Not Pay

Past Due Account, Expiring Auto Pay Credit or Debit Card or other Message appears in this area.

3

Account Summary

Account Number: 9900990000

Statement Date: 08/05/2026
Current Bill Due Date: 08/25/2026

Previous Balance	\$113.93
Payments Received 07/24/26	-\$113.93
Balance Forward	\$0.00
Total Current Charges	\$136.05
Total Due	\$136.05

5

4

Daily Energy Usage

KILOWATT HOURS

Average Temp

Day of Month

Cooperative Message

Mark your calendars! ACEC's 88th Annual Meeting is being held on September 14, 2026 at our office located at 229 Hwy 51, Postville. The meeting will be in a drive through format from 1:30 to 6:30 pm. See the annual report for more details.

Your Load Management Savings

- This month: \$13.02
- Year to date: \$98.85

6

Contact information on file:
Phone: (999) 888-7777
Email: None on file

See back of bill for charge details

7

Account Number: 9900990000
Statement Date: 08/05/2026
Service Location: 9999-88-XX

AutoPay on 08/24/2026 **\$136.05**
Do Not Pay

8

PAY YOUR BILL 24/7

ONLINE: Check or credit/debit card at www.acrec.com
Phone: Secure Pay Toll-Free (855) 951-1988

DISCOVER VISA

Check this box to sign up for Operation Round-Up! ☐

1 2398

JOHN Q. PUBLIC
12345 ANY AVE
ANYTOWN IA 99999-0000

ALLAMAKEE-CLAYTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
PO BOX 715
POSTVILLE, IA 52162-0715

New titles in AC Skyways

To better fit their current roles and changing technology, AC Skyways Internet Solutions is proud to announce new job titles for their employees. AC Skyways is a subsidiary of ACEC.

"Updating these job titles better reflects the advanced technology and expertise our AC Skyways team uses every day," said Hollee McCormick, General Manager and Executive Vice President at Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative. "This talented department plays a vital role in supporting our operations, and these titles recognize the professionalism, innovation, and dedication they bring to Allamakee-Clayton Electric and to AC Skyways." ■

Congratulations to:



Matt Marting,
Fiber Services Coordinator



Staci Malcom,
Fiber Services Representative



Kelly Blockhus,
Fiber Services Specialist



Darrin Smith,
Fiber Services Specialist

Scholarship opportunity: local youth invited to attend webinar series

Youth in the ACEC service area are invited to attend a two-part webinar series for an opportunity to learn more about electric cooperatives, leadership and advocacy as well as have the possibility to earn a college scholarship. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any high school student in our service area. They are invited to register at IowaYouthTour.com.

"This program is perfect for Iowa students who have a passion for public service, advocacy or leadership," said ACEC Manager of Marketing and Communications Jennifer Achenbach. "We want to raise students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about exciting and rewarding career paths that are available in smaller communities and help them advocate for issues they care about."

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from a computer or mobile device. Each Zoom session lasts 45-60 minutes and will focus on a specific topic:

- **Sunday, Oct. 4, 7 p.m.** – Why Cooperatives Matter and How to Effectively Advocate
- **Sunday, Oct. 18, 7 p.m.** – Being a Leader

During the sessions, participants will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and build leadership skills. Attendees will also hear about the Iowa Youth Tour. Students with an interest in



STUDENTS:
Are you
interested
in service,
advocacy or
leadership?

Attend our webinar
series in October for a
chance to win a college
scholarship! Learn more at
IowaYouthTour.com



government and public service are encouraged to apply for the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. The 2027 Youth Tour is slated for June 16-22, 2027. ACEC will have more information about the trip in late fall.

At the end of each live session, one attendee will be selected at random to win a \$500 scholarship; students who attend both sessions will be entered into a bonus drawing for a \$1,000 college scholarship. All students who register online at IowaYouthTour.com will receive a special box of co-op goodies in the mail. 6243-10

Learn more at www.IowaYouthTour.com or contact Jennifer Achenbach at 888-788-1551 for more information. ■

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.

October – CHICKEN, NOVEMBER – HOLIDAY TREATS, DECEMBER – APPETIZERS



GREEK SALAD

- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- ¾ c. chopped cucumber
- ½ c. chopped green pepper
- ½ c. chopped sweet red pepper
- ½ c. crumbled feta cheese or blue cheese
- ¼ c. thinly sliced green onions
- ¼ c. sliced ripe olives
- ½ c. fat-free Italian dressing
- ⅛ tsp. dried oregano
- Leaf lettuce, optional

Directions

In a bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Just before serving, add dressing and oregano; toss to coat. Serve in lettuce-line bowl if desired. Serves 6.

Note – If I don't happen to have the cheese, I make the salad anyway and it's just fine.

■ **June Swenson, Clermont**

FARMER'S MARKET CORN TOSS

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small sweet onion, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 2 ears corn on the cob, kernels removed
- 1 large zucchini, sliced
- ¼ c. chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ c. grated parmesan cheese, divided

Directions

Heat oil in large skillet on medium heat. Add onions and red peppers; cook and stir 3 minutes. Stir in corn and zucchini; cook and stir 5 min or until all vegetables are crisp-tender. Remove from heat. Stir in parsley, black pepper and 2 Tbsp. cheese. Top with remaining cheese.

■ **Becky Engelhardt, Postville**

FAIR PICKLES

- 4 qts. sliced cucumbers
- 2 c. vinegar
- 3 c. sugar
- 3 Tbsp. pickling salt
- 3 onions (I use white)

Directions

Stir vinegar, sugar and pickling salt until dissolved. Pour over cucumbers and onions. Let stand overnight in the refrigerator. Keep pickles refrigerated. *Note – These pickles were served at the Clayton County Fair.*

■ **Lois Nelson, St. Olaf**

RICH EGG BREAD

- 7 large eggs
- ½ c. melted butter
- 2 Tbsp. coconut oil
- 1 ½ c. almond flour
- ½ c. white or whole wheat flour
- ¼ c. ground flax seed (optional)
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt

Directions

Preheat oven to 355°F (yes, 355°). Beat eggs. Add melted butter and coconut oil and beat until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and mix until combined and thick. Scrape into 8x4" loaf pan, prepared with butter or nonstick cooking spray. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until a skewer comes out of the middle clean. Store in an airtight container in the fridge. It also freezes well.

■ **Jenny Elsinger, Guttenberg**

Looking for a recipe from a previous newsletter? Wanting to try something new?

Check out the recipe section on our website: <https://acrec.com/member-recipes>.

Every recipe submitted to the newsletter is posted on the website. Be sure to submit your recipe for publication as well – people who submit a published recipe receive a \$5 bill credit!

CYBERSECURITY Tip of the MONTH

Sponsored by

AC SKYWAYS
INTERNET SOLUTIONS
BY ALLAMAKEE • CLAYTON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Unsolicited emails promising prizes, texts about a great new supplement, robocalls offering "limited-time deals" – the flood of spam clutters our inboxes, wastes our time, and exposes us to scams and phishing. Spam is any unsolicited, unwanted digital message sent in bulk. Think of it as digital junk mail. Spam can arrive through text messages, phone calls, social media direct messages, messaging apps like WhatsApp and online comments and forums. Spam doesn't just clutter your inbox. According to a survey by NCA partner Cloaked, Americans receive an average of about four spam calls and texts every day. Those interruptions add up to roughly 27 hours each year. While you can't eliminate spam completely, you can reduce it by using spam filters, reporting unwanted messages, never responding to suspicious senders, keeping your software updated, and being cautious about where you share your contact information.

~ Courtesy of
staysafeonline.org

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

AL STEFFENS, President, Clermont

BRICE WOOD, Vice President, Lansing

CINDY HEFFERN, Sec./Treas., Harpers Ferry

JEFF BRADLEY, Wadena

NELSON CONVERSE, Postville

GREG FORMANEK, Farmersburg

MICHAEL D. GIBBS, Waterville

RON HARTMAN, Sumner

JERRY KELEHER, Elkader

MANAGEMENT STAFF

HOLLEE McCORMICK, EVP/General Manager

JENNIFER ACHENBACH, Manager,
Marketing & Communications

DAVID DECKER, Director,
Finance & Administrative Services

BRENDA HACKMAN, Manager, Economic
Development & Community Relations

JENI KOLSRUD, Manager, Information
Technology

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



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, MIKE!

Thank you to ACEC Director Mike Gibbs for your 18 years of service to the members of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative. Mike's last board meeting was August 31. He announced earlier this year he would not seek re-election to the board. We wish him all the best and thank him for his dedication to the members. Pictured are the Board Members celebrating Mike, from left – Brice Wood, Jerry Keleher, Jeff Bradley, Greg Formanek, Mike Gibbs, Ron Hartman, Cindy Heffern, Al Steffens, Hollee McCormick (ACEC General Manager/Executive VP), Nelson Converse. ■