

# living with energy

IN IOWA

**Grundy County REC**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

JULY 2020

Inside: Grundy County REC announces director candidates ▶ See Page 5



Visit our website at [www.grundycountyrecia.com](http://www.grundycountyrecia.com)

**Grundy County REC  
returning patronage in July**

**Iowa companies pivot to  
address COVID-19 needs**

**Summer's best  
burger recipes**

*Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine (ISSN: 1935-7176) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase **Living with Energy in Iowa** is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

**Editorial Office:** 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350. E-mail address: editor@livingwithenergyiowa.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and length before publication. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

**Website:** www.livingwithenergyiowa.com

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

**Change of Address:** Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

© Copyright 2020, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. No portion of the editorial, photographic or other content of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine or its website may be reproduced without written permission of the editor.

**You'll find more than 1,500 free recipes on our website!**

[www.livingwithenergyiowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com)



## CONTENTS

JULY 2020

### Features

#### 6 Managing home energy use through a summer of social distancing

Save money on your summer energy bill with these tips from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.



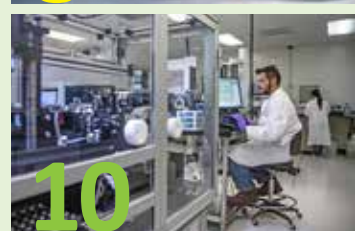
#### 8 Summer's best burger recipes

July is National Grilling Month! Co-op cooks share their best burger recipes for summer. **PLUS:** Find out how you can receive a \$25 credit on your power bill!



#### 10 Iowa companies pivot to address COVID-19 needs

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges and also some unforeseen opportunities for Iowa businesses and industries.



### Favorites

#### 3 Statewide Perspective

Outsmart utility scammers this summer

#### 3 Editor's Choice Contest

Win a \$160 grilling package

#### 14 Advancing Technology

E-transportation zips along

#### 15 Out Back

A letter to summer

### ON THE COVER

#### Soak up summer!

Flags are common sights during Iowa's summer activities, including the Fourth of July. To celebrate the season, we're giving away a special grilling package. Grilling with family is a perfect way to soak up summer! See Page 3 for details. ⚡



# You can outsmart utility scammers this summer

BY ERIN CAMPBELL

With all the confusion and uncertainty in our world today, scammers are taking advantage of these circumstances to target consumers by phone, email and text. These con artists claim to be from your local utility and the caller ID on your phone or their email address may even look legitimate.

Consumers in good standing with their utilities are often caught off-guard by the aggressive tone of these impersonators. They will usually speak with a sense of urgency, ensuring consumers do not have time to ask questions or verify their claims.

The best defense against a utility scammer is an educated consumer; follow these tips from [UtilitiesUnited.org](http://UtilitiesUnited.org) to protect yourself from a potential scam.

## Protect personal information

Never provide or confirm personal information (Social Security number, date of birth) or financial information (banking account information, debit or credit card information) to anyone initiating contact with you and claiming to be from your local electric co-op. Never give out information or provide any payment type to any callers or unexpected individuals appearing at your door claiming to represent your co-op. Your local co-op will already have your relevant personal and account information.

## Take your time

Do not be rushed. If you receive a call, text, email or visitor saying you have to pay your bill immediately to avoid disconnection, tell them you would like to verify that they are a legitimate co-op



representative by calling a verified number for the local co-op office. Beware if a representative exhibits impatience, annoyance or anger when you question their authority. While a scammer will discourage you from hanging up and calling the number on your utility bill, a real co-op representative will encourage you to do so for your peace of mind.

## Always ask questions

Ask the person contacting you to provide you with your account number, last payment amount, date of payment and their employee identification number. If he or she is a legitimate utility representative, this information will be readily accessible. If not, hang up or shut the door, and call your utility directly to report the suspicious activity.



## TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS

Scammers can threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

## Contact your electric cooperative directly

If you receive a suspicious call or visit, please contact the local police and your electric co-op immediately. Share details that the scammer told you, which might aid in a possible criminal investigation. ⚡

Erin Campbell is the director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

# Win a \$160 grilling package!



July is National Grilling Month, and we're giving away \$80 in beef and pork certificates (courtesy of the Iowa Beef Council and Iowa Pork Producers Association) along with a Classic Super-Fast® ThermoPen® digital read thermometer. Originally designed for commercial kitchens, labs and manufacturing plants it is often named a top consumer cooking thermometer for home use. The total grilling package value is \$160. ⚡

## Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com) no later than July 31, 2020. You must be a member of one of Iowa's electric cooperatives to win. There's no obligation associated with entering, we don't share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified. The winners of the weather radios from the May issue were Dennis Barrick, Franklin REC, and Matt Bakker, North West REC.

## RELIABILITY MATTERS

## Meter testing begins in August



Chapman Metering will be testing Grundy County REC meters around Conrad, Liscomb, Whitten and Beaman beginning Aug. 10 and will continue until all meters are tested in those areas.

If you have any questions, please call our office at 319-824-5251 or 800-390-7605. ⚡

## OFFICE CLOSING

Our office will be closed Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.

Have a safe and happy holiday!

Our phones are answered 24/7 at 319-824-5251 or 800-390-7605.



**Office:** Grundy County REC  
303 N Park Avenue  
P.O. Box 39  
Grundy Center, IA 50638

**Phone:** 319-824-5251 or 1-800-390-7605

**Fax:** 319-824-3118

**Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):**  
800-292-8989

**Website:** www.grundycountyrecia.com

**Facebook:** facebook.com/GrundyCountyREC

**E-mail:** vdaily@grundycountyrecia.org

**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Call our office 24/7: 319-824-5251

**General Manager/CEO:** Vicki Daily

**Officers and Directors:**

District 1: Kevin Pruisner  
District 2: Norbert Boyle  
District 3: Nick Strohhbehn  
District 4: Larry Rohach  
District 5: Matt Kopriva  
District 6: David Schmidt  
District 7: Jason Paper

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

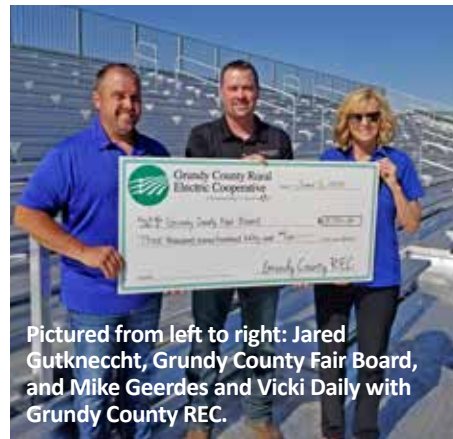
## CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

## Grundy County REC makes donations to Grundy County Memorial Hospital Foundation and Grundy County Fair Board

Grundy County Memorial Hospital Foundation was the recipient of a \$1,250 matching donation from Grundy County REC and our business partners Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and CoBank. The foundation is investing in a new STERRAD system that will be utilized to sterilize personal protective equipment and routine surgery instruments.



Pictured from left to right: Jody Schipper RN MSN, director of clinical services, and Adam Scherling, MHA, administrator, for Grundy County Memorial Hospital; and Mike Geerdes, member service manager and Vicki Daily, general manager/EVP for Grundy County REC.



Pictured from left to right: Jared Gutknecht, Grundy County Fair Board, and Mike Geerdes and Vicki Daily with Grundy County REC.

Grundy County Fair Board was the recipient of a \$3,750 matching donation from Grundy County REC and our business partners Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and CoBank. With concerns for safety, along with continued growth and expansion of the fair, the fair board began construction of new grandstands this spring. GCREC is proud to be a part of bringing new grandstands to the fair that will be safer, family-friendly and ADA compliant. ⚡

## BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP

## Patronage will be returned to members in July

When you began receiving power from Grundy County REC, you became a member of the electric cooperative. This means that you share in the co-op's excess revenue. While other businesses return their profits to investors/stockholders, we return that excess revenue, called patronage (or capital credits) to you.

In May, Grundy County REC's board of directors approved a \$310,851.33 patronage retirement for our members. This retirement includes the remaining 100% of the years 2003 and 2004 along with 37%



of the 2019 current year allocations.

**Members usually receive retirements as bill credits in December; however, due to COVID-19, the board decided on an early retirement to help members who might be experiencing financial hardships created from these challenging times.**

All current members will receive a bill credit on their July electric bill, while those who were members that have moved off our lines will receive a check. Please call our office at 800-390-7605 if you have any questions. ⚡

# What is involved in replacing a pole?

Distribution poles can be found all along roads and neighborhoods, bringing power to homes and businesses. The Grundy County REC board and employees take great pride in our system's reliability. To keep the system working properly, Grundy County REC hires a company to regularly test and inspect our poles. In 2019, 1,712 poles were tested with 26 needing replacement.

## Steps to replacing a pole



The GCREC line crew replaces a lift pole in a member's yard.



**STEP 2:** First-Class Lineman Erik Freese, in the bucket, removes the old pole while Bird monitors the process of drilling a hole for the new pole.



**STEP 3:** Freese operates the digger to drill the new hole while Nielsen and Bird clean off the drill bit.



**STEP 4:** The new pole is set in place, and then gets backfilled and tamped (packed). Nielsen runs the hydraulic pole tamp while Freese and Bird fill the hole with dirt.

When the steps are completed, the crew reattaches the wire and turns the service back on. This is one of many jobs performed by our GCREC line crew to ensure your overall reliability! ⚡

## HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

# Nominating committee announces director candidates

Grundy County REC's nominating committee met via conference call on May 21 to select the 2020 director candidates for Districts 4 and 6.

The Articles of Incorporation state that the nominating committee shall prepare a list of nominees identifying each candidate by name, address, and the director district in which they reside. The nominating committee shall make a good faith effort to nominate two (2) candidates for each director position to be filled but may nominate only one (1) candidate for the position.

Edwin Berends and Kenneth Fogt nominated the following director candidates, each for a three-year term:

- **District 4:** Larry Rohach
- **District 6:** David Schmidt

The written list of nominations of

the nominating committee will be posted at the office of the Grundy County REC not less than 30 days prior to mailing the notice of the annual meeting of members. For 10 days after posting of the list of nominations by the committee, additional nominations of members residing in the district of the vacancy may be made by written petition on forms provided on request of any member and signed by not less than 15 members. Any member nominated shall give prior consent to such nomination whether by committee or petition.

A list of nominations as selected by the nominating committee will be posted by Aug. 1, and nominations by petition will be accepted through Aug. 11.

**If you are interested in serving on Grundy County REC's board and live in District 4 or 6 or know of someone who would be interested in serving as a director, please contact the cooperative.** ⚡

## CONGRATULATIONS

### Harmsen wins \$50 bill credit

**Todd Harmsen of Traer is the winner of the \$50 bill credit for signing up for auto pay.** Now, he won't have to worry about remembering to pay his bill because it will be automatically drafted from his bank account on the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month! If you would like more information on how to take advantage of this service, call our office at 800-390-7605! ⚡

# Managing home energy use

BY PAUL WESSLUND

If you want to make the best use of your efforts to save money on your energy bill, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) can show you where to start.

Nearly half of the electricity Americans use in their homes – 43% – goes to heating and cooling air and water. Almost a third of our electric use, 31%, goes to running our heating and air conditioning systems. Another 12% powers our water heaters.

In second place for residential electricity use is a grab bag of appliances and lighting. One-fifth of the electricity we use in our homes goes to refrigeration (6%), lighting (5%), clothes drying (4%), and TV and video games (4%).



## OF THE ELECTRICITY AMERICANS USE IN THEIR HOMES

43%

GOES TO HEATING AND COOLING AIR AND WATER



31%

GOES TO RUNNING OUR HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

12%

POWERS OUR WATER HEATERS



That means if you want to get the quickest and biggest return on energy savings, focus on how you use your heating and cooling system, and your water heater. That's according to Keith Dennis, vice president of

consumer member engagement for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

“Turning off an LED light bulb may come to mind when you think about saving energy,” he says. “But in the grand scheme of things, looking at EIA’s numbers, it’s adjusting your thermostat that’s going to make the biggest difference.”

Other appliances and devices consume even smaller shares of our total energy use. Eight percent of residential electricity use comes from a combination of computers, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers and cooking appliances. Other home energy users include a range of devices like small appliances, exterior lights, outdoor grills and spa heaters.

## How COVID-19 is impacting energy use

Even with the recent disruptions to daily life during the COVID-19 pandemic, the advice to focus on heating and cooling to save energy holds up. EIA has started revising its energy use predictions for 2020, and because of business closures and social distancing, they project that electricity sales to commercial and industrial customers will decline by 6.5%. With more people staying home, you might expect residential sales to increase, and they will, but not enough to overcome the weather. Even with more people staying home and using more heating and air conditioning, the weather is

# through a summer of social distancing

LOWERING YOUR WATER HEATER  
TEMPERATURE TO

120° 

IS AN EASY WAY TO SAVE ENERGY

FOR EVERY **10°**  
**REDUCED**

SAVE 3% TO 5%  
ON

**WATER HEATING COSTS**

expected to be mild leading EIA to project a 1.3% decline in residential electric sales this year. However, those predictions could be adjusted depending on how quickly businesses reopen and whether they adopt new ways of operating.

With many unknowns in 2020 patterns of energy use, EIA's forecast tried to imagine what's going on inside our homes to make their projections for the year. EIA's May 2020 Short-Term Energy Outlook says that as a result of the actions to control

the spread of COVID-19, use of household electronic equipment will increase, and other uses of electricity, such as cooking or water heating, may also increase. Residential air conditioning use during the summer months is also likely to increase.

### Small adjustments for significant savings

During summer months, setting your thermostat a few degrees higher than normal can make a significant difference in energy use. The Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher when possible. Consumers can achieve additional energy savings by investing in a smart or programmable thermostat.

In addition to monitoring your thermostat, Dennis suggests keeping an eye on another significant energy user, your water heater.

According to the Department of Energy, lowering your water heater temperature to 120 degrees is an easy way to save energy. For every 10 degrees reduced, consumers can save 3% to 5% on water heating costs. Dennis also recommends replacing an older, less efficient water heater with a newer, energy-efficient model that could pay for itself in the long run.

For persistently high energy bills,

**DURING SUMMER MONTHS, THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RECOMMENDS SETTING YOUR THERMOSTAT TO 78 DEGREES OR HIGHER WHEN POSSIBLE.**

78°



Even though many of us are spending more time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Energy Information Administration projects that 2020 residential energy use will decline by 1.3%. But those projections may change depending on how quickly businesses reopen and Americans get back to work. If you're looking to reduce energy use, monitor how you cool and heat your home, which is where the biggest potential for saving energy lies.

contact your local electric co-op for a thorough evaluation of your home and how you use energy. Consumers can also find a wide range of additional ways to save energy at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

Small changes to energy use habits, like turning off lights when you leave a room or unplugging devices when not in use, can help you save. But to make the most significant difference in energy use – even during a global pandemic – pay attention to how you heat and cool your home. That's where the biggest potential for saving energy lies. ⚡

*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.*

SUMMER'S BEST  
★ ★ ★  
**BURGER**  
RECIPES



## Spinach and Sun-Dried Tomato Burgers

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ cup onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoon sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 pound ground turkey breast

Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes. Add tomatoes, spinach, salt and pepper. Cook for an additional 1-2 minutes until spinach is wilted, set aside to cool. Once cooled, combine with turkey and mix to form burgers. Freeze or grill immediately.

Courtney Walter • Exira  
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

## Bacon Onion Burgers

- 1 pound bacon
- 2 pounds beef
- 1 medium onion, diced

Cook bacon and crumble. Combine beef, bacon and onion. Form into patties and cook.

Rebecca Hancox • Plano  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## Grilled Pineapple Burgers

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 3 tablespoons Italian salad dressing
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- 1 15-ounce can unsweetened sliced pineapple
- bacon
- ¾ cup barbecue sauce
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Mix ground beef, dressing, salt and pepper. Shape into patties. Press pineapple into each burger and wrap with bacon. Mix barbecue sauce, brown sugar, honey and lemon juice in a pan and cook until hot. Pour hot mixture over patties. Marinate overnight before grilling. May use some of the sauce on burgers while grilling.

Becky Pierschbacher • Chariton  
Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## Krautburgers

- 1½ pounds ground beef
- 2 eggs
- 8 ounces sauerkraut
- ½ cup cracker crumbs
- ½ cup mushrooms
- 1 tablespoon pimentos
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons barbecue sauce

Mix all ingredients together. Grill, pan fry or broil.

Denise Anderson • Ocheyedan  
Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Source for grilling tips:  
Kevin Kolman, Weber's  
"Head Grill Master"  
and leading barbecue  
expert in the country.  
For more tips, visit  
<https://bit.ly/2B727y4>.

### PREHEAT THE GRILL

Preheat your grill with the lid closed for 10 to 15 minutes. With all the coals glowing red, or all the gas burners on high, the temperature under the lid should reach 500 degrees F.



**Search** our online recipe archive for thousands of recipes from Iowa's rural kitchens.

[www.livingwithenergyiowa.com/recipes](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com/recipes)



## Better Burgers

- 1 can mushrooms
- 2 pounds of ground beef or pork
- ½ cup sauerkraut
- ¼ cup Italian dressing
- salt and pepper
- bacon

Drain and chop mushrooms into small pieces. Mix meat, mushrooms, sauerkraut, dressing, salt and pepper. Form into patties and wrap a strip of bacon around each of the patties. Secure with toothpicks. These are delicious when grilled but can also be broiled or fried.

**Allyson Bailey • Hamilton  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

## Country Kitchen Burgers

- 2 pounds ground hamburger
- 1 cup raw potatoes, grated
- 1 cup raw carrots, grated
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- salt and pepper

Mix hamburger, potatoes, carrots and onion (can use chicken, turkey or veal in place of hamburger). Add eggs, tomato sauce, breadcrumbs, salt and pepper, or other spices to taste. Make patties. Grill, cook in a skillet or put mixture in a large pan and cover with ketchup to make meatloaf (bake at 350 degrees F for 1 hour).

**Patti Carson • Osceola  
Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

## Tangy Pork Patties

- 2 pounds ground pork
- 1½ teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ⅓ cup vinegar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 can sliced pineapple, drained
- 8 to 10 bacon slices

Mix the first seven ingredients well. Shape into 8 to 10 patties and top with pineapple rings. Wrap bacon slice around each patty and secure with wooden toothpick. Grill pineapple side down first, 10 minutes per side.

**Sue Warner • Rock Rapids  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Pimento Cheese Bacon Burgers

- 1 pound ground sirloin
- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- ¼ cup mixed chopped herbs of choice (basil or oregano)
- optional toppings: pimento cheese, crisp cooked bacon slices, sliced tomato, lettuce, hamburger buns

Preheat grill to 350 degrees F. Combine first four ingredients. Stir herbs into the mixture, then shape into 6 patties. Grill with the lid on for 4-5 minutes on each side so burger is no longer pink in center. Place burger on bun and add toppings.

**Dave Duit • Nevada • Consumers Energy**

### DIRECT VS. INDIRECT HEAT

Direct heat (when the fire is directly below the food) is best for relatively small, tender pieces of food that cook in 20 minutes or less. Indirect heat (when the fire is on either side of the food) is best for larger, tougher cuts of meat that require more than 20 minutes of cooking.

GRILLING TIPS

### TAME THE FLAME

Too many flare-ups can burn your food. Keep the lid on as much as possible. This limits the amount of oxygen inside the grill, which will help extinguish any flare-ups.

GRILLING TIPS

## Wanted: Thanksgiving Pie Recipes! The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!



A Thanksgiving feast isn't complete without pie! Whether the recipe has been handed down for generations or it's a new one, share your favorites! If we run your recipe in the magazine, we'll send a \$25 credit for your electric co-op to apply to your power bill. Recipes submitted also may be archived on our website at [www.livingwithenergyiowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com).

The deadline is July 31, 2020. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

**EMAIL:**  
[recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com](mailto:recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com)  
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

**MAIL:**  
**Recipes**  
*Living with Energy in Iowa*  
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48  
Des Moines, IA 50322-2992

### KEEP YOUR GRILL CLEAN

When bits of food have stuck to your cooking grate, and the grate is hot, clean it with a stainless steel brush. This step is not only for cleanliness, it also prevents your food from sticking.

GRILLING TIPS

# Iowa companies pivot to address COVID-19 needs

BY KAY SNYDER

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges and also some unforeseen opportunities for Iowa businesses and industries. Many Iowa companies have adjusted, innovated and stepped up to fill needs in the form of personal protective equipment, sanitizer and testing components. Iowa's electric cooperatives serve a number of these companies.

For nearly 35 years, the Iowa Area Development Group and its electric utility partners have presented Iowa Venture Awards. In total, 272 organizations have been recognized for their significant contributions to Iowa's economy through entrepreneurial leadership, innovation and job creation. In this article, we spotlight companies who, during the pandemic and in the course of typical business operations, continue to demonstrate the qualities they were recognized for as Iowa Venture Award recipients.

## Iowa's ethanol producers

As travel and the demand for fuel plummeted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ethanol industry experienced a significant downturn. With an available product and the desire to help in a time of need, many plants have sold or donated ethanol and glycerin to produce hand sanitizer.

Members of the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association (IRFA) donated products to Iowa Prison Industries to make hand sanitizer. To date, these donations helped to create more than 25,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, which is equivalent to 46 million single uses. The hand sanitizer is provided free of charge and distributed through the State of Iowa emergency center. Recipients include major state agencies, hospitals, daycares, jails and more.

"It's incredible to watch this project

grow as Iowa ethanol producers continue to step up to fight the spread of COVID-19," says IRFA Executive Director Monte Shaw. "We applaud Gov. Reynolds and Iowa Prison Industries for working to make this manufacture of hand sanitizer possible."

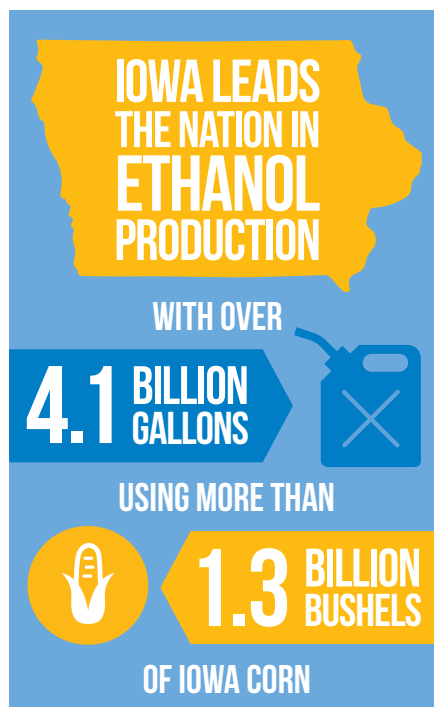


including weekend shifts, to produce up to 30,000 face shields per day. Brownmed also produces protective gloves and shoe coverings to support frontline medical workers.

Brownmed has adopted the motto "find a way" and lives that mantra every day. In anticipation of increased demand for personal protection, the company began producing cloth masks for the general public. This effort was even before the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that everyone wear cloth masks in public places. Brownmed established a satellite production site in Spencer by partnering with Community Insurance Group to use its facility. Enthusiastic students from Spencer and Lake Park have also joined Brownmed's efforts at the production facilities.

Brownmed continues to give priority to Iowa hospitals and other in-state facilities. As its production capabilities have expanded, the company has been able to grow to nationwide distribution.

"Every person on staff in our Iowa locations is a hero," says Brownmed President Kyla Garver. "They exemplify the hard work and determination Iowans are known for, and I hope they know they are saving lives."



Iowa's electric cooperatives have honored 11 ethanol plants with an Iowa Venture Award.

## Brownmed, Inc.

In early March, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread to Iowa, Spirit Lake manufacturer Brownmed quickly identified ways it could help provide necessary personal protective equipment to local medical facilities. The company, which manufactures innovative orthopedic products like cast and bandage protectors, arm slings, cold therapy wraps and kinetic sleeves, added additional products to its company offerings. The staff is working extended hours,

Brownmed is a 2013 Iowa Venture Award recipient, nominated by Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative.



### Hy-Capacity

Humboldt’s Hy-Capacity is another Iowa manufacturer that felt an immediate desire to help the medical community safe as they work amid the coronavirus. Molly Varangkounh, president of Hy-Capacity, says Humboldt County Memorial Hospital (HCMH) needed masks and asked if the company could help.

Hy-Capacity, a manufacturer and supplier of heavy-duty tractor parts, also has a sewing department that makes tractor seats that could accommodate the request for masks. Workers made a couple of prototypes, then reached out to Jensen Trailers, who produced aluminum nose pieces that could be sewn into the mask to provide the necessary fit. Hy-Capacity is also sewing hospital gowns at the request of HCMH.

“It is important for us to support our community,” Varangkounh says. “Many Hy-Capacity employees and their family members have helped with making hundreds of cloth masks.”



Hy-Capacity is a 1998 Iowa Venture Award recipient nominated by Midland Power Cooperative.



### Integrated DNA Technologies

Coralville company Integrated DNA Technologies (IDT) was the first company in the nation to have its primer and probe kits approved by the CDC for use as a key component of the testing protocol for the diagnosis and detection of COVID-19. IDT quickly achieved large-scale manufacturing. As of early June, it had produced primer and probe kits sufficient to enable more than 34 million tests to be conducted in the U.S. pursuant to the CDC Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) testing protocol.

In early June, IDT and Sherlock Biosciences announced the companies’ strategic collaboration to enable large-scale manufacturing of the Sherlock™ CRISPR SARS-CoV-2 kit to detect the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. This new test is the first CRISPR-based diagnostic test to receive EUA use for the detection of SARS-CoV-2. It does not require specialized instruments to complete the test and uses standard laboratory equipment, providing a turnaround time of approximately one hour, significantly faster than other testing methods. IDT supports the manufacturing of the kit by supplying several key components on which the test is based. IDT’s product quality, speed and ability to scale are key factors in bringing the Sherlock kit to market.

“Sherlock has developed a unique methodology for quick and specific detection of SARS-CoV-2, and IDT is proud to leverage our high-quality products to support this groundbreaking testing method,” says Trey Martin, president of IDT.

In addition to its manufacturing headquarters in Coralville, IDT has manufacturing sites in California, North Carolina, Belgium and Singapore.



Integrated DNA Technologies is a 2001 Iowa Venture Award recipient nominated by Linn County REC.



Stories of people, companies, and communities stepping up to support efforts to address the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic are many. Iowa’s electric cooperatives thank our members and others who have donated time, talents, resources and care to navigate these turbulent times. ⚡

Kay Snyder is the director of marketing and communications for the Iowa Area Development Group.

# CIPCO's Wartsila engines arrive in Creston

BY SARAH HEGGEN

Central Iowa Power Cooperative's (CIPCO) new Summit Lake Generation project is quickly progressing and is on track to be operational early in 2021.

The \$85 million project will repower the natural gas-fired Summit Lake Generating Station in Creston. The project includes demolition of the 70-year-old steam plant, installation of efficient natural gas-fired reciprocating engines, construction of a new operations and dispatch center, and substation upgrades. The plant was built in 1948 and has been a reliable source of electricity for electric cooperative members in southwest Iowa ever since.

The new engines arrived in Creston in early May with more than a few spectators watching as huge pieces of equipment traveled right through the center of town.

The process was slow, but steady, with more than 200 wheels on the hydraulic platform trailer supporting roughly 450,000 pounds per engine block moving at walking pace out to the Summit Lake site. Add the weight of the 145-foot-long trailer and the

total topped out at 625,254 pounds of load, according to Sean Lipinski, project manager/engineer for Vic's Crane and Heavy Haul. He says there are 40 independent components to the trailer that can all be set to different heights or rotated and are controlled through an operator and a complex system of hydraulics to ensure the load is stable.

"The transport went extremely well," Lipinski says. "City and county officials were great to work with and overhead utility providers ensured we had no issues with height restrictions due to overhead lines."

According to Dan Burns, CIPCO vice president of utility operations, the arrival of the low-voltage switchboards and auxiliary transformers in late June completed the delivery of all major generating equipment to the site.

In June, the Generator Step Up (GSU) transformer arrived, and the substation commissioning, which includes testing and safety evaluation, was expected to be complete by the end of the month. With those in place, contractors were able to pull wire and set electrical



Avery McNichols, daughter of CIPCO Boiler Room Operator Matthew McNichols, documents the engine transport.

equipment, begin finishes on the administration building, and install the gas and sanitary sewer. ⚡

Watch a video of the engines' arrival:  
<https://youtu.be/IZSnr-dPoco>

Sarah Heggen, CCC, is the communications content supervisor for Central Iowa Power Cooperative.



# UNDERSTANDING THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance.

These principles are a key reason why America's electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of our members first.



## VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender or economic circumstances.



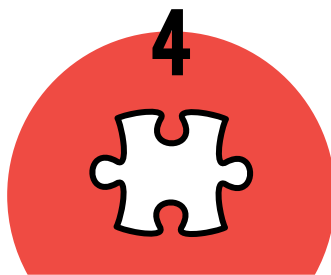
## DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.



## MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.



## AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.



## EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.



## COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs.



## CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.

THESE ARE  
THE WORDS  
WE LIVE BY.

# E-transportation zips along

BY MARIA KANEVSKY

Ten years ago, electric vehicles were a rare sight, but today, you see them on roadways across Iowa. Advancements in battery technology have led to smaller, even more efficient batteries, which has opened the door to new forms of electric transportation, or e-transportation.

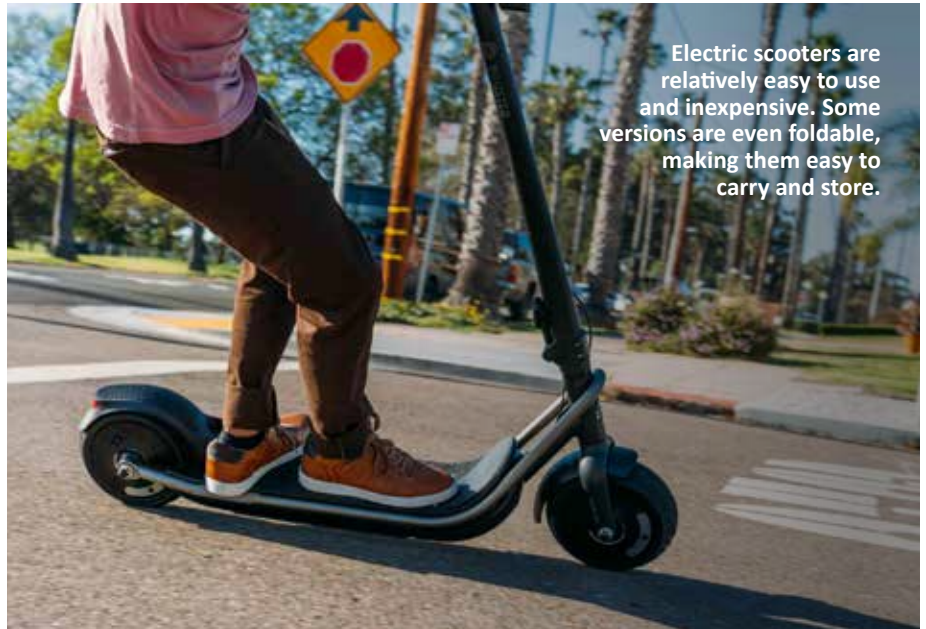
## Electric scooters

One of the newer forms of electric transportation is the electric scooter. They're relatively easy to use and inexpensive. Some versions are even foldable, making them easy to carry and store. Several electric scooter rental companies offer their services in many major cities, making it especially easy to find a nearby scooter to use for a limited time. Electric scooters' small wheels are only meant to be ridden on paved surfaces like sidewalks, and their limited range and speed also make them unsuitable for long-distance travel.

## Electric bicycles, skateboards, unicycles and motorcycles

Another newer form of electric transportation is the electric bicycle. These modern versions of the familiar bicycle offer the same ease of use while requiring much less physical exertion. Travelers can ride longer distances without being as fatigued, and they can be parked easily at bike racks.

Some of these electric forms of



Electric scooters are relatively easy to use and inexpensive. Some versions are even foldable, making them easy to carry and store.

Photo Source: Boosted

transportation can be used for recreation in addition to everyday use. For example, the electric skateboard has additional power that a typical skateboard does not have, and the user can still perform tricks while riding it. Electric roller skates are another example, which are just as entertaining as regular roller skates, and users can maintain fast speeds without the effort. While these electric modes of transportation are fun, their faster speeds can also make them more dangerous, which makes it especially important to wear helmets and knee pads.

For those looking for more exciting forms of e-transportation, there are many innovative options being developed. One of these is the electric unicycle, which is a self-balancing device. You can speed up and slow down the device by simply leaning forward or backward. The electric unicycle is easy to store or carry

around, and its large wheel can drive on a variety of terrains like grass, gravel, curbs and potholes. The major drawback is that it's relatively difficult to learn how to ride the electric unicycle, so be prepared to spend a few hours learning how it works.

For even faster speeds, there is the electric motorcycle. This mode of transportation has many benefits compared to gas-powered motorcycles, such as increased performance, less maintenance and lower fuel costs.

Since these technologies are relatively new and more complex, price tags for all these modes of transportation will be higher than their conventional counterparts. Each mode includes a variety of features, so it's essential to consider all options. Before purchasing any of these newer forms of e-transportation, make sure you do research to find the mode of transportation that best matches your needs. ⚡

Maria Kanevsky is a program analyst for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



For those with the need for speed, electric motorcycles offer many benefits when compared to their gas-powered counterparts.

Photo Source: Zero Motorcycles

# A letter to summer

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

Dear Summer,

As you appear to be making your annual debut, I'd like to request a few things for your consideration. We go back a long way, you and me, and I feel secure enough in our relationship to broach this subject.

First, could we cut the number of outdoor picnics that involve schlepping food to a filthy, bug-encrusted picnic table in a shelter house somewhere? I'm all for eating al fresco, but my prepared food barely makes it from the oven to the table, let alone from my kitchen to the wilderness. The heat makes the gelatin melt, and the meatballs usually slop sauce into my backseat. In case you are not amenable to this request, I will invest in some foil pans that can be dumped when I don't claim said item. Who brought that pink glop? Not I.

And then, can we nix flip-flops unless we're at the beach or getting a pedicure? The plasticky squelch-squelch that they make when walking drives me nuts. You have to proceed strangely while wearing them so that the front doesn't get caught and curl underneath. And I won't even start on why they're called "flip-flops" now, and they were called "thongs" when I was a girl. You don't have time.

Of course, you knew I was going to mention humidity, and you're right, it stinks, but not for the reasons most people hate it. Friends say their hair gets all crazy and kinky. However, for those of us with fine, limp hair, ours goes even flatter. Could I have a bunch of crazy instead this year?

Let's talk about summer air conditioning. It may be 95 degrees with 90 percent humidity outdoors, but I guarantee you that once I walk into a movie theater or my office,



I will freeze. As in, the-heater-is-going-under-my-desk frozen. It's crazy to walk into a movie and see the patrons there all bundled up in sweaters and scarves ... in July. What gives?

Can we set a schedule and stick to it? Once September rolls around, can you gracefully bow out? I hope this doesn't hurt your feelings, but fall is really my favorite. Summer is a steppingstone to fall. Have your fun over Labor Day weekend, and then skedaddle. I get testy when it's the end of September and I can't light my pumpkin-spice candle. You've had your season; then it's time to bid adieu.

I don't have time here to discuss tornadoes, mosquitoes, inappropriate swimwear or the misery of camping. No time to expound on sand in everything, the way my dog smells or gas prices that spike in the summer. But I'm sure you've heard all those things before.

Thanks for listening, Summer. We can get along okay together with a few concessions. At least, we can until after Labor Day. ⚡

---

Valerie Van Kooten is a writer from Pella who loves living in the country and telling its stories. She and her husband Kent have three married sons and two incredibly adorable grandsons.



Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperatives

# DRIVE ELECTRIC

*The average electric vehicle can save a driver who drives 15,000 miles in a year about \$850 annually on fuel. All-electric vehicles start to pay for themselves a long time before they reach the end of their expected lifespans, leading to significant savings over time.*

*-Fleet Carma*

**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CO-OP FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperatives of Iowa  
[www.touchstoneenergy.coop](http://www.touchstoneenergy.coop)

