

## Beat the Peak

If you look around your home, you likely have more devices and equipment that require electricity than ever before. Our connected lives are increasingly dependent on more electricity to function. At the same time, as demand for electricity rises, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative (CCECA) must deliver an uninterrupted 24/7 power supply—regardless of market conditions or other circumstances.

As you would expect based on your family's habits, electricity use fluctuates throughout the day based on consumer demand. CCECA must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy needs of all members during times of highest energy use or "peak hours." These peak times are typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes.

What you may not know is that electric utilities including CCECA typically pay more for electricity—either from a power plant or from another utility with excess power—during those morning and evening "energy rush hours." In addition, the demand for electricity is even higher when it's especially cold outside, when heating systems must run longer to warm our homes.

If the "peak times" concept is a bit puzzling, here's an easy way to think about it, and it's similar to a major entertainment event. We know costs go up when there is strong demand for tickets (or electricity), and both are subject to the basic economic laws of supply and demand. When a lot of people want the

same thing, it's more expensive. When they don't, it's cheaper—like a bargain matinee or an "early bird" special at a restaurant.

During peak periods when the cost to produce and purchase power is higher, we encourage you to take simple steps to save energy, such as turning your thermostat down a few notches, turning off unnecessary lights and waiting to use of large appliances during off-peak times.

You can also save energy by plugging electronics and equipment such as computers, printers and TVs into a power strip, then turn it off at the switch during peak hours. If you have a programmable thermostat, adjust the settings to sync up with off-peak periods. When we all work together to reduce energy use during periods of high electricity demand, we can relieve pressure on the grid and save a little money along the way.

Another benefit of this time-of-use approach to electricity use allows greater control over your bill. Reducing the peak impacts the power-supply cost to every co-op member. This is particularly noticeable as energy costs have risen across the U.S. Collectively, everyone conserving energy and making small changes can truly make a difference.

Remember, taking simple steps to save energy throughout the day and shifting energy intensive chores to off-peak hours is a smart choice for you and our community.

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Shifting Energy Use

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Find the answers within the newsletter for a chance to win a bill credit

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Bret McAlister  
**Title:** Line Superintendent  
**Years of Service:** 27 years

**Tell us about your family** - My wife Amy works at the Calhoun County Courthouse. I have three children - Chase, graduated from ISU recently and works at an accounting office in Boone, Blake is currently attending line school in Sheldon and Brenna is a sophomore at South Central Calhoun and is active in sports.

**Favorite Coop Memory** - Due to an ice storm, we worked 11 days straight and it was a great feeling to get the last member their electricity back!

**Where did you grow up?** - Bayard, IA

**What food could you eat every day?** - Cheeseburger & Fries

**Thank you for your commitment to our electric cooperative!**

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Cooperative Association  
Rockwell City, IA 50579  
(712) 297-7112 • (800) 821-4879  
[www.calhounrec.coop](http://www.calhounrec.coop)

# Recent Legislative Events

Over the past month, staff and directors have met with local legislators to discuss issues facing electric cooperatives and the communities we serve. Each year we monitor the legislative session and advocate the Cooperative's position on issues that could affect our member-owners.



*Staff and directors met with area legislators in Fort Dodge on December 20, 2022.*



*Pictured L to R: Director Jim Miller, State Senator Tim Kraayenbrink, State Representative Mike Sexton and Director Steve Boedecker at the IAEC Welcome Back Reception on January 10, 2023.*



REC providing some morning entertainment!

A few of Trent & Dee Blair's grandkids enjoyed watching our lineman out the window as they are installing new meters for our RF metering project. About 27% of the new meters have been installed as of January 20th. While installing meters, linemen are able to inspect each service and ensure safe, reliable power.

**Students  
can apply  
now for a  
trip to our  
nation's  
capital from  
June 17-23!**



Area high school students interested in government and public service are encouraged to apply! Learn more at [IowaYouthTour.com](http://IowaYouthTour.com)



# 2022 OPERATIONS BY THE NUMBERS

The numbers are in after another year of construction and maintenance on Calhoun County Electric Cooperative's 758 miles of line.

In 2022, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative rebuilt 6.3 miles of line and completed 121 system improvements.



**Bret McAlister**  
Line Superintendent

1 NEW HOME  
3 GRAIN BINS  
6 MACHINE SHEDS



## HOMEMADE KETTLE CORN

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 TB vegetable oil or coconut oil
- 1/3 cup popcorn kernels
- 1 TB sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt

### DIRECTIONS:

Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet or cooking pot over medium heat. Add 4 popcorn kernels and cover with the lid.

Once all 4 pop, that will indicate that the skillet is hot enough and ready. Add in the rest. Shake the pan for a few seconds to allow all kernels to get coated in oil.

Add sugar and salt. Toss well to coat and close the lid. The kernels should spread out in a single layer. Shake skillet constantly to prevent sugar from burning. The kernels will start popping quickly, about 30 seconds.

Cook for 2-3 minutes, until the popping has slowed to once every 2 seconds. Remove the pot from the heat and shake for a few minutes until popping stops completely.

Immediately transfer the popcorn to a large serving bowl and allow to cool for 5 minutes before eating.

## 5 Ways to Save During Winter

Winter weather typically means increased energy use at home. Keep your bills in check with these tips to save energy—and money!

**Mind the thermostat.** If you have a traditional heating and cooling system, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. Consider a smart or programmable thermostat for additional savings.

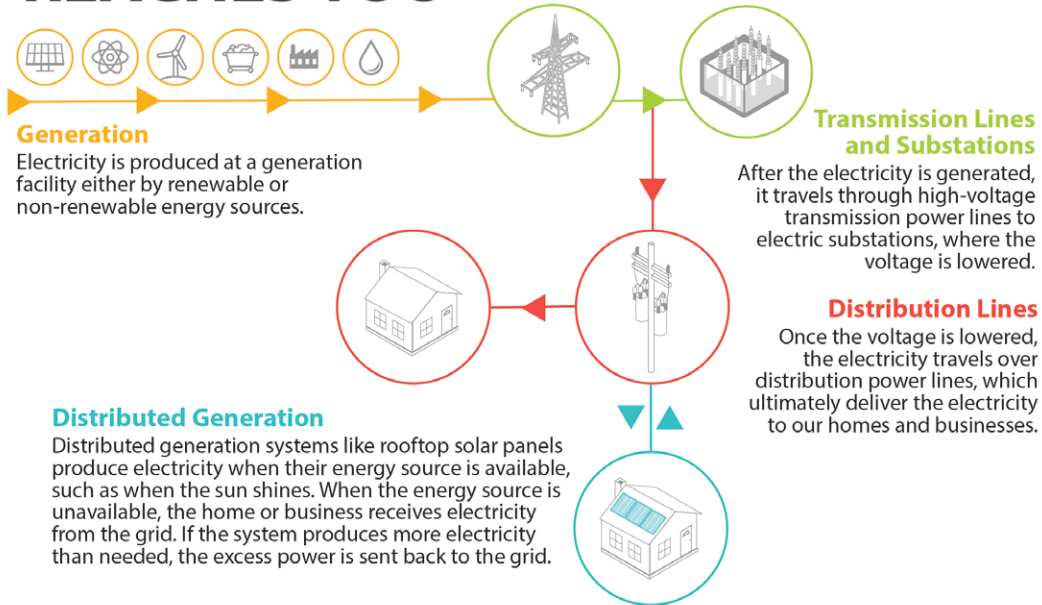
**Get cozy.** Add layers of clothing for additional warmth, and snuggle up under your favorite heavyweight blanket.

**Don't block the heat.** If your air vents or heating elements (like radiators) are blocked by furniture or rugs, your home isn't being adequately heated.

**Take advantage of sunlight.** Open window coverings during the day to let natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to block the chilly night air.

**Block air leaks.** Seal windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping to improve indoor comfort and decrease the amount of energy used to heat your home.

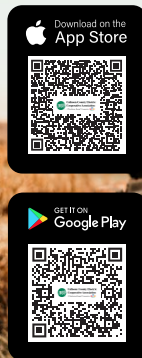
# HOW ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



## Access your account anywhere!

Step-by-step instructions on how to download the CCECA app and instructions by going to [www.calhounrec.coop/how-use-our-mobile-app](http://www.calhounrec.coop/how-use-our-mobile-app). Features: Pay Your Bill, Report Outages, Notification Sign-Ups, Usage History.

Available for Apple or Android phones – open the camera on your mobile device to scan the appropriate QR code to the right and download the app.



## Reach Us

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
(Mon-Fri)

Contact 24/7 with the following numbers:

**General Phone:**  
(712) 297-7112

**Toll Free:**  
(800) 821-4879

**Fax:**  
(712) 297-7211

**Visit us online:**  
[www.calhounrec.coop](http://www.calhounrec.coop)

**Email:**  
[info@calhounrec.coop](mailto:info@calhounrec.coop)

### DIRECTORS:

Jim Miller, President – Fonda  
Steve Boedecker, Vice President – Rockwell City  
Jason McKenney, Secretary – Somers  
Ron Hanson, Treasurer – Pomeroy  
Duane Beschoner – Lohrville  
Darcy Maulsby – Lake City  
Joe Parker – Lohrville  
Keaton Hildreth, CEO



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

**IOWA ONE-CALL  
AT 811 OR  
(800) 292-8989  
BEFORE YOU DIG**

### EASY WAYS TO PAY BILL:

**Online:** Access through [www.calhounrec.coop](http://www.calhounrec.coop) and pay online 24/7.

**Mobile App:** Download our app

**Auto Bill Pay (ACH):** Deduct from your bank account. Find the form on our website or stop by the office.

**Phone:** Call the office and make a payment over the phone with a card or checking account.

**Outside Drop Box/  
Front Corner:**  
Rockwell City, IA

**U.S. Postal Mail**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## February Member Challenge

1. T/F - Taking simple steps to save energy throughout the day and shifting energy intensive chores to off-peak hours is a smart choice for you and our community.
2. Name a director that participated in a recent legislative event. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ miles of line were rebuilt in 2022.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Find the answers within the stories, features, and content of this newsletter and you could win a prize. Send your answer to [kwiederin@calhounrec.coop](mailto:kwiederin@calhounrec.coop), clip and mail to: Calhoun County Electric Cooperative, PO Box 312, Rockwell City, IA 50579 or submit on our website: [www.calhounrec.coop](http://www.calhounrec.coop). You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember there is a deadline! Entries for this issue **must be received by March 1st**. Three names will be drawn from all correct entries. Members will receive a \$10 credit on their account. Members who answer the questions correctly and participate at least three times throughout the year will be eligible for a \$100 bill credit, through a random drawing, at the end of the year.

**Congratulations to the December member challenge winners:  
Stephen Kral, Donna Whitehill and Roger & Linda Coon  
Overall 2022 \$100 Winner: ITS Land Improvement**