



# WATTS CURRENT

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative  
Reliable. Affordable. Responsible



January 2018

## Electric Cooperatives Discuss Important Issues at Legislative Reception

More than 150 directors, managers and staff members from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with state legislators and policy makers on January 9 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception at the State Historical Building in downtown Des Moines. Other guests of honor included: Governor Kim Reynolds, Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg, Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey, State Auditor Mary Mosiman, Attorney General Tom Miller, Iowa Utilities Board Member Nick Wagner, and Iowa Department of Economic Development Director Debi Durham. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives, the Iowa Communications Alliance and the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Stores of Iowa, host the annual reception. 12.17.03

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including items central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, the directors, managers, and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues allowing Iowa's member-owned electric cooperatives to continue providing safe, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans.

Electric cooperative representatives from all parts of the state will come to the state capitol in the next couple of months to visit with their legislators. The annual REC Day on the Hill will be held on March 14, 2018, at the capitol.



*RVEC Director Jeff Cranston (center) and Mark Ludwig (right) visit with Representative Brian Best during the Welcome Back Reception*



### Pam Rix Retires

Pam retired on December 31, 2017, after 15 years of service. "Pam was always willing to help with any project and is a caring person," said CEO Jim Gossett. She was a dependable and hardworking employee.

In retirement, she plans to spend more time with her family, grandkids and friends.

Thank you for your dedication, hard work and we wish you the very best. Enjoy your retirement!



— CEO Comments —

By Jim Gossett, CEO

**Proactively Providing Safe and Reliable Service**

When RVEC member-owners are asked what they value most about their electric service, two things consistently rank near the top – reliability and affordability. With an annual average reliability rate of 99.98%, we know reliability does not happen by chance. It takes constant effort to maintain systems, improve where necessary, and anticipate our member-owners’ increasing needs for electric service.

When outages occur, one of the most frequent causes is trees or other vegetation coming into contact with power lines. These types of outages are not only inconvenient for our member-owners but also costly to your cooperative’s bottom line, which impacts affordability over the long-term.

Because our distribution system connects thousands of people across our service territory, one tree coming in contact with a power line may impact your neighbors near and far. The Iowa Electrical Safety Code requires electric utilities, including cooperatives, to have a schedule and procedures for regular tree trimming and vegetation management, which is critical in minimizing these instances.

Under our vegetation management program, maintaining line clearance is our primary objective. We do this while ensuring we trim vegetation in a responsible manner. The tree trimming process has two purposes – to remove elements that may already be coming into contact with utility equipment, such as wires and conductors – and to create a clearance that will provide hazard-free operation of electric service for at least two years.

RVEC member-owners received a letter in January advising that annual inspection and vegetation management is under way. If you have questions or special requests, or would like to be present when your trees are trimmed, please contact us.

Like many things in life, preventative maintenance is a key to health. The same is true with your cooperative’s electric system. By proactively clearing vegetation before it reaches power lines, RVEC will be less impacted during severe weather and we will avoid longer, more costly outages. 14.36.11

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**RVEC WILL BE  
CLOSED  
FEBRUARY 19th  
FOR  
PRESIDENTS  
DAY.**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Are You On Life Support?**

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) has a list of members who depend on electricity to run life support equipment. If you are on this list, you have priority during an outage or you are notified when a planned maintenance is scheduled.

If you, or someone in your family, is on life support call RVEC and verify your name is on our list.



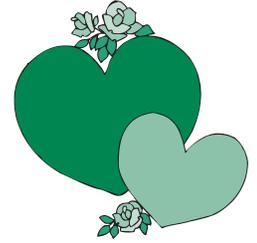
## Give your Valentine the Gift of Energy Efficiency

If you want to give your Valentine a useful and unique gift, offer to make the home more energy-efficient.

A few ideas: 38.25.04

- ♥ Buy a bagful of LED light bulbs and use them to replace the standard incandescent bulbs your Valentine probably has in lamps and overhead fixtures. LEDs use 75 percent less energy than the old bulbs and last up to five years.
- ♥ Change the heating and air conditioning filters, which could require climbing a ladder or removing a grate. A dirty filter can be clogged with dust, pet hair and other debris that prevents air from passing through it — and that will force your loved one's furnace or a/c to work extra hard — and waste energy — to keep the home comfortable.

- ♥ Switch the direction of all ceiling fan blades to the “winter” position. That makes the blades gently push warm air — which rises — back into the room so your Valentine will feel more comfortable without turning up the heat.
- ♥ Replace your Valentine's old thermostat with a programmable model that will automatically lower the heat as soon as everyone leaves the house for the day and crank it back up a little just before the family gets home.
- ♥ Buy your Valentine a casual, washable sweater or a flannel quilt to curl up in while reading or watching TV. Your gift will keep them warm and make it unnecessary for her to crank up the thermostat.



## Stay Safe and Warm in Snow and Ice Storms

Power outages due to snow and ice storms are especially threatening because of extreme cold temperatures.

After a snow or ice storm, avoid going outside if possible. Downed power lines could be submerged in snow and ice, making them difficult to identify. When outside, treat all downed and hanging lines as if they are energized. Stay away and immediately contact RVEC. Remember that downed power lines do NOT have to be arcing, sparking, or moving to be “live” — and deadly.

When the power is out because of a snow or ice storm, RVEC and Safe Electricity suggests these tips to help you stay safe and warm:

- Stay inside, and dress in warm, layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards, and be sure to properly ventilate. Always keep a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.
- Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- Cover windows at night.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you can't keep your home warm.

## Line Patrol

Annual maintenance of our entire system has started. The linemen will be inspecting the lines for defective items, checking meters and looking for any safety hazards.

During the inspections we look for, shot insulators, blown arrestors, loose guy wires, split or bad poles, poles have nothing stapled or bolted to them and trees are not close to our electric lines. We are also looking for inadequate clearances from buildings and other driveways.

We have maintenance programs to upgrade lines and ensure that you have the most reliable and safest system possible.

Anytime you have questions about the trucks in your neighborhood, give us a call.

# WATTS CURRENT

Published monthly by  
Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative

-- Directors --

David Onken, Pres. .... Glidden  
Jeff Cranston ..... Odebolt  
Dennis Kennebeck ..... Carroll  
Mark Ludwig ..... Breda  
Steve Seidl ..... Coon Rapids  
Mark Tigges ..... Glidden  
Karen Werner ..... Schaller

-CEO-  
Jim Gossett

-Office Address-  
Headquarters  
PO Box 486, 28725 Hwy 30  
Glidden, IA, 51443  
Phone: 712.659.3649  
800.253.6211  
Fax: 712.659.3716  
Monday - Friday  
7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

www.rvec.coop  
e-mail: info@rvec.coop

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative  
(RVEC) is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.



Follow us on facebook

Reliable. Affordable. Responsible



Touchstone Energy®  
The power of human connections

## What Exactly is an Electric Cooperative?

You receive this publication because you buy your electricity from an electric cooperative. That's a utility that operates like no other.

Cooperatives are consumer-owned businesses, which means that you and your neighbors actually own your electric utility. In fact, you may have noticed that the utility refers to you as a "member" rather than as a "customer."

The cooperative's board of directors is a group of consumer-members just like you, and, in fact, you can run for a seat on the board yourself if you'd like to. When the directors' terms expire, the cooperative will hold an election—and you will get to vote. So the cooperative is governed by its consumers, and those who govern it are elected by the consumers.

Cooperatives have their roots in their local communities, so they never sell stock. That way, consumer-members retain local control.

Take advantage of the opportunity to participate as an owner-member of your electric cooperative by attending its membership meetings and voting in board elections. 34.33.12

## Outage Information

If you don't have power  
or have an emergency  
call 712.659.3649.

RVEC phones  
are answered  
24 hours a day  
7 days a week.



**VIEW YOUR KWH  
USAGE AND  
PAY YOUR BILL**

Save yourself some time.  
Go to [www.rvec.coop](http://www.rvec.coop)  
and pay your bill online.

## Spot Your Number

Read Watts Current and watch for your location number. If you spot it, call Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) by the 20th of the month and you will receive an electrical bill credit for \$25.00.