

# WIPCO Informer

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## Holiday Closings

Western Iowa Power Cooperative's offices and warehouses will be closed Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th for the Christmas holiday as well as Monday, January 1st for New Year's Day. If you are needing to contact us during these times, please call our 24 hour customer help line at 1-800-253-5189.

From all of us at Western Iowa Power Cooperative, we wish you all a blessed holiday season!



*Western Iowa Power Cooperative's mission is to enhance our members' quality of life by providing safe and reliable electric services.*

## WIPCO Offers Scholarship Opportunities

Western Iowa Power Cooperative (WIPCO) in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC) will be awarding six scholarships for the 2024-2025 school year. This program, now in its 34th year, recognizes and encourages academic and community achievements of students whose parents are WIPCO members.

BEPC will award one \$1,000 scholarship and WIPCO will award one \$1,000 and four \$500 scholarships. Two of the \$500 scholarships will be designated specifically for students enrolling in vocational and/or technical schools.

The scholarship must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter college in the fall of the school year for which the scholarship is given. Scholarships will be awarded without regard to other awards, loans, or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained. Previous scholarship award winners are not eligible.

A selection committee will choose the recipients of the scholarships. The selection committee's decisions are final. Awards are based on the following criteria: grade point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals, and a written recommendation by a third party. We ask that if the student has taken a college entrance exam (ACT and/or SAT), that score be included with their application materials. Should a student plan to attend a college that does not require ACT/SAT, please indicate that on the application form.

Applicant must be a US citizen and the dependent of a WIPCO member. Applicant must be a student who is enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.

Applications must be received at a WIPCO location (Denison or Onawa) no later than February 9th, 2024.

To learn more, visit our website at [www.wipco.com/scholarships](http://www.wipco.com/scholarships).

## WESTERN IOWA POWER COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS





**Marcus Rihner**  
*General Manager*

The holiday season is a great time to reflect on the year that was and the opportunities that the new year will bring. In that spirit, let's take a look at 2023 and the day-to-day operations completed by WIPCO during the year in a couple of different areas.

**Line Construction** – Building new line and rebuilding old line is a core function for any rural electric cooperative such as WIPCO. Aging infrastructure can have an adverse impact on electric service reliability, so electric cooperatives work through plans over the course of many years to improve our systems in a reasonable and responsible manner. Many new services are also installed each year as new homes, farms, and businesses are built or expanded on WIPCO lines.

In 2023 to date, WIPCO has completed 175 work orders, ranging from simple new service installations to multi-mile rebuild projects. Many projects involved installation of overhead line, but over 16 new miles of underground line have also been installed on our system year-to-date. When feasible, underground line can remove many variables that can cause outages, particularly those caused by weather.

Taken together, these construction projects improve WIPCO's electric system and the vast array of components that make up our portion of the electric grid. Our primary goal has always been, and continues to be, to keep the power on for you, our members. These improvements to our system help us to continue to do just that, as efficiently as possible.

**Electrical & Wiring** – One of our relatively unique offerings at WIPCO is our full-service electrician team. Our electricians are certified for just about any job our members could have a need for, from wiring, lighting, and water heater installations to HVAC, geothermal, or solar work.

In 2023 to date, WIPCO electricians have completed 725 projects specifically for our members, and hundreds more to serve our cooperative as a whole (such as joint projects with our line crews, or installation of new load management equipment to help our entire membership save money on the power WIPCO purchases and distributes). The work we complete for our members is very diverse and includes in-home HVAC installations, wiring of irrigation pivots, repairs and replacements of existing equipment, and countless other areas. The bottom line is that if you can think of something you need done by an electrician, our team can likely be a resource for you. If you have an electrical or wiring project coming up, we would encourage you to reach out to us for an estimate!

As we look ahead to 2024, we continue to look into new and meaningful ways we can serve you more effectively, from updated construction plans to use of new technologies – all with the goal of improving our reliability and efficiency as your trusted energy provider.

We are always grateful for our members and the opportunity to serve you. From our cooperative family to yours, we wish you Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!



## Sharing Success Program: Donations to Area Fair Associations

In the spirit of community and collaboration, WIPCO is thrilled to share the success of our recent participation in CoBank's Sharing Success program. Through this impactful initiative, WIPCO, alongside CoBank, had the privilege of contributing a total of \$3,400 to the Monona County Fair Association and an additional \$1,840 to the Crawford County Fair Association. This joint effort underscores our commitment to supporting local communities and fostering the growth of agricultural traditions. The funds donated will undoubtedly play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of these county fairs, providing opportunities for families and neighbors to come together and celebrate the rich agricultural heritage that binds us. WIPCO is immensely proud to be a part of initiatives that make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to CoBank for spearheading such impactful programs.



*Pictured above: Mari Miller, Onawa Office Supervisor and Communicator, presents check to Curtis Sturgill, Monona County Fair Association for \$3,400.*



*Pictured above: Stephanie Wiese, Assistant Manager, presents Brian Brodersen, with check to Crawford County Fair association for \$1,840.*

## Community Connections

We are thrilled to share a heartwarming moment from our on-going partnership with Denison Elementary School! Here is a snapshot of our Assistant Manager, Stephanie Wiese, with her 3rd-grade Dual Language Business Partner class.

For 17 years, WIPCO has been an active participant in Denison's Business Partnership Program! This program is a commitment to nurturing future leaders. Later in the year, this group will visit Western Iowa Power Cooperative to explore our facilities and gain valuable insights into local careers.

We are proud to be part of this program and excited about the opportunities ahead!



**Download the WIPCO App!**

Google Play Store

Apple App Store

## Electric cooperatives power Iowa's economic growth

By Chuck Soderberg, Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives

You depend on your local electric cooperative to power your life every day, but did you know that your co-op also powers economic growth in your region?

Earlier this year, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives commissioned an economic impact study through Goss & Associates of Omaha to confirm what we've long known about our association members: Iowa's locally owned electric co-ops contribute greatly to the state's economy.

For the five years ending in 2021, the study found that Iowa electric co-ops generated a total impact on the state of \$4.8 billion, produced \$688 million in wages and salaries, directly supported 1,961 jobs, generated self-employment income of \$79.5 million and paid \$144.7 million in state and local taxes.

Powering lives and empowering communities are core to our cooperative mission. This economic analysis is useful as we talk with legislators, policymakers and other decision-makers about how electric cooperatives invest in rural Iowa. For over 80 years, electric co-ops have maintained reliable and affordable electric service, provided stable career opportunities and paid taxes which have vast ripple effects throughout the regions we serve.

Not only have electric co-ops' economic impacts been historically significant, but the study also concludes that co-ops have assisted local and state organizations in the retention, attraction and expansion of businesses in the state. Separate from their spending impacts, electric cooperatives invest in efforts to attract and retain jobs and investment within their communities. 60-01-26037

In addition to their daily duty of providing safe, reliable and affordable power, the study found that Iowa electric cooperatives had an impact of \$14.7 billion in economic development projects between 2018 and 2022, supporting 7,366 jobs (retained, attracted or expanded) during that same time period.

Your electric cooperative has no doubt supported many economic development initiatives over the decades by serving as an intermediary for USDA revolving loan funds, among other programs and projects. For example, several Iowa electric co-ops have been instrumental in developing industrial speculative buildings to accommodate local business expansion or to attract new businesses and jobs to the community. Iowa's electric cooperatives also give generously to local charitable causes and support youth education initiatives, which we often write about in the pages of this magazine.

You should be proud of your local electric co-op's contributions to Iowa's economy. As a member-owned and locally governed entity, your electric co-op is more than a service provider; it's a major economic engine of progress for your community.

You can access a PDF of our 2023 economic impact study at [www.iowarec.org](http://www.iowarec.org).

## THE LAST WATER HEATER YOU'LL EVER NEED TO BUY

Rheem® Marathon® water heater is the most durable electric water heater ever made. Its industry-best warranty makes it a smart purchase you can count on for years to come.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
WESTERN IOWA POWER COOPERATIVE  
**1-800-253-5189**



## 5 Ways to Safeguard your Home this Winter

As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, there's a natural inclination to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months.

Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

**1.** Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

**2.** Inspect electrical cords. We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. Use them efficiently (to heat smaller spaces) and safely. Never plug a space heater into a power strip. Speaking of power strips...

**3.** Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. For a safer bet, look for power strips that include surge protection.

**4.** Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency. There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves air flow and limits the amount of carbon monoxide that seeps indoors.

**5.** Practice safety in the kitchen. As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stove-top unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

Western Iowa Power Cooperative wants you and your family to stay safe during the winter season. Visit our website for additional safety tips.

**THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS SAFETY!**

- 1** EXAMINE YOUR ELECTRICAL DECORATIONS
- 2** FACTOR IN ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS
- 3** NEVER OVERLOAD ELECTRICAL CIRCUITS
- 4** PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO HOW MANY CONSECUTIVE STRINGS OF LIGHTS YOU PLUG IN TOGETHER.
- 5** BE SURE THAT OUTDOOR DECORATIONS ARE APPROVED FOR OUTDOOR USE
- 6** PROTECT EXTENSION CORDS FROM DAMAGE
- 7** MAKE SURE OUTDOOR CIRCUITS ARE PROTECTED
- 8** EXAMINE YOUR ELECTRICAL DECORATIONS
- 9** LIVE TREES CAN BE A SERIOUS FIRE HAZARD
- 10** MAKE SURE YOUR ARTIFICIAL TREE IS FIRE RESISTANT
- 11** REPLACE TRADITIONAL WICK CANDLES WITH BATTERY OPERATED IMITATIONS
- 12** DON'T LEAVE YOUR KITCHEN UNATTENDED WHILE COOKING.

The infographic features a dark blue background with a yellow crescent moon and a red sleigh with reindeer at the top. At the bottom, there is a colorful illustration of a winter town with snow-covered roofs and buildings.

## Ready to Hit the Road, Energy Trail Tours 2024

Flip a switch, and the lights come on. Behind this simple action lies a complex network of people, power plants, and transmission lines working around the clock. Their mission is to ensure safe, affordable, and reliable electricity flows to more than 140 member cooperatives in nine states.

This summer, WIPCO members will join members from thirteen other Western and North Central Iowa electric cooperatives on a three-day excursion through the Dakotas to learn about where their electricity comes from and have some fun along the journey. The tours are part of WIPCO's commitment to providing education for directors, employees, and members. 26-05-11221

If you would like to be a part of this experience this year, please find more information below, on our website, or on our Facebook!



Western Iowa Power Cooperative and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of three Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to experience, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are then returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Enjoy interactive walking tours through a hydroelectric and coal-fired energy generation facility and other stops along the way. Meet other cooperative member-owners while traveling together across the Dakotas on-board a motor-coach bound for the North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by Western Iowa Power Cooperative. Nine lucky couples from Western Iowa Power Cooperative will be selected at random from those who sign up.



YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

June 26-28    1st   2nd   3rd   (please circle)  
 July 10-12    1st   2nd   3rd  
 July 24-26    1st   2nd   3rd

I/we  have  have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person \_\_\_\_\_

Second Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by May 1, 2024.*

## 2023-2024 Iowa Home Energy Assistance Program

### ATTENTION: RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS NEED HELP WITH YOUR HEATING BILL?

The 2022-2023 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season.

The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing.

If you are not sure where to apply, Dial 2-1-1, or visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply> to contact your local community action agency, or write to:

LIHEAP  
Iowa Department of Human Rights  
Capitol Complex  
Des Moines, IA 50319

INCOME MAXIMUMS	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$27,180
2	\$36,620
3	\$46,060
4	\$55,500
5	\$64,940
6	\$74,380
7	\$83,820
8	\$93,260

For households with more than eight members, add \$9,440 for each additional member.

#### WHEN TO APPLY:

- **Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled:**  
October 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023
- **All other households:**  
November 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023

#### WHAT TO TAKE:

- **Proof of Income** (for all household members age 18 and over) Depending upon your household income type, income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or last calendar year, whichever is easier or more beneficial for you.
- **Proof of Social Security Numbers for all household members** (documentation required)
- **Most recent heat bill**
- **Most recent electric bill**

#### WAGE EARNERS:

Please bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

#### FIXED INCOME:

This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, and pensions. Please bring copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

#### SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS:

Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

**If you receive alimony or child support, it will also need to be verified. Additional income not listed here may be required.**

## RECare - Members Helping Members

WIPCO maintains an RECare program facilitating assistance for members in need through winter heating bill payments and home weatherization via local community action agencies. Donations, which are tax-deductible, can be made as one-time contributions, monthly pledges added to electric bills, or as part of a matching fund initiative. Even small pledges like a dollar per month can make a significant difference.

## Member Authorization Form

*Yes, I want to be part of Members helping Members and contribute to RECare.*

\_\_\_\_ I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_ I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

\_\_\_\_ My fund is a matching fund gift.

The matching fund is \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Western Iowa Power Cooperative, PO Box 428, Denison, IA 51442-2705

(USPS 9340)

## Contact Us

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712-263-2943 OR 800-253-5189  
FAX 712-263-8655  
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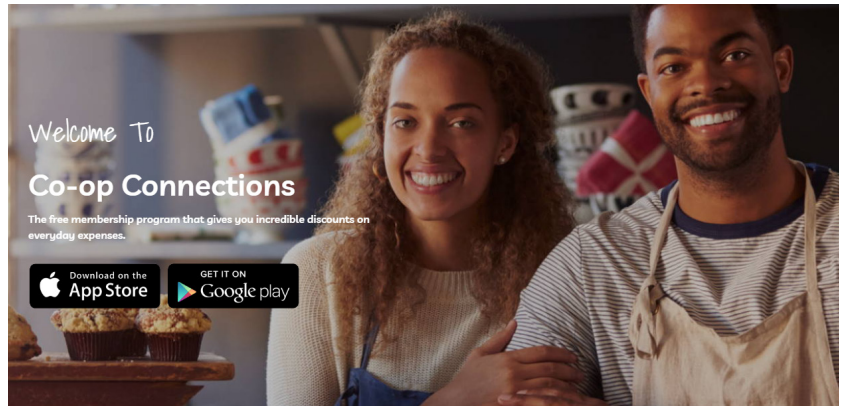
**“This institution is an equal  
opportunity provider and  
employer”**

## Safety Tip

Individuals attempting to steal copper from electrical equipment can lose their life over what they believed to be ‘easy’ money. If you see suspicious activity, contact your electric utility.



Safe  
Electricity.org



Hidden somewhere within these pages are **two** Member location numbers. Find *your* location number in this newsletter, call the REC office by the 20th of the month, and you will receive a \$25.00 credit on your energy bill!

The location numbers in the November newsletter belonged to Lucas Podery and Dennis McCandless

**SAVE  
\$25**

