

# WIPCO Informer

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

## Stay safe and warm: Your winter home readiness guide

Preparing your home for winter involves several key steps to ensure safety, efficiency and warmth.

Here are top tips to help you prepare before the temperatures drop and a few ways to stay safe if a power outage leaves you snowbound.

### Inspect your heating system

- Have your heating system professionally serviced.
- Replace air filters if needed.
- Ensure vents and radiators are unblocked for efficient heat distribution.
- Prepare pipes and water supply

### Insulate exposed pipes to prevent freezing.

- Drain and shut off outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Know the location of your water shut-off valve in case of emergencies.

### Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test detectors to ensure they are functioning properly.

### Prepare your home's exterior

- Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent ice dams. 48-24-19654
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house to prevent damage from heavy snow.
- Ensure downspouts extend away from your home's foundation.
- Drain and store garden hoses to prevent freezing.
- Service and store outdoor equipment such as lawnmowers and trimmers.
- Gather winter tools such as snow shovels and ice melt.

### Increase home energy efficiency

Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors with weatherstripping or caulk.

Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise to circulate warm air.

Lower your thermostat a few degrees to save on heating costs.

### Stock emergency supplies

At home, have enough nonperishable food and water for 72 hours in case of power outages or severe weather. Experts suggest storing one gallon of water per person per day.

*(Continued on page 5)*



**Marcus Rihner**  
General Manager

## Stay Informed on your WIPCO Membership

Being a member of your electric cooperative truly is different from being a customer of another utility. All electric utilities build and maintain electric line, but only cooperatives are owned by our members. This member-driven governance structure entitles you to vote to elect your representation on our Board of Directors, and to have any profits WIPCO makes returned to you over time in the form of patronage dividends.

Depending on how long you have been a WIPCO member, it is likely that you received a packet in the mail from us when you first moved onto our electric lines, including a member handbook explaining what it means to be a member of your cooperative. While we hope that information was valuable at the time, we certainly understand if you haven't held onto that paper copy for your months or years as a WIPCO member. With this in mind, we are pleased to announce that our member handbook has been digitized and is available on our newly redesigned website!

Even if you have been a WIPCO member for decades, we would recommend taking a look at this updated handbook. In it, you will find information on who we are, what we stand for, and what it means to be a cooperative member. The handbook also contains practical and useful information regarding power outages, methods available to pay your bill, and services we offer exclusively to our members. There may be some services or aspects of cooperative membership that you haven't considered in the past which would be of interest to you. The member handbook can be found at [www.wipco.com/newmember](http://www.wipco.com/newmember) - just click the "Member Handbook" link.

In addition, our website has undergone many updates and improvements over the past several months. Beyond the handbook itself, you will find information on just about every area of your cooperative as you navigate through our site. We would encourage you to give our website a visit at [www.wipco.com](http://www.wipco.com), and as always, we stand at the ready to answer any questions you may have!

The screenshot shows the top portion of the WIPCO website. At the top left is the WIPCO logo with the text "WESTERN IOWA POWER COOPERATIVE" and "Member-Owned, Locally Controlled". To the right of the logo are two buttons: "One-time Bill Pay" and "Access My Account". Below these is a search bar with the text "Search...". Underneath the search bar is a horizontal navigation menu with the following items: "ABOUT US", "MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION", "SERVICES & REBATES", "RENEWABLE ENERGY", "SAFETY & EDUCATION", "COMMUNITY", and "CONTACT US". At the bottom of the screenshot is a dark blue banner with the text "POWERING & EMPOWERING" in large white letters, followed by "Western Iowa and the communities we serve." in smaller white text.



## WIPCO Mutual Aid Efforts

This past month, a few from our dedicated team at Western Iowa Power Cooperative answered the call for mutual aid in South Carolina in response to the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene. Our linemen worked tirelessly alongside other utility crews to restore power and assist communities affected by the storm.

Cameron Youll, Mark Trotter, Wyatt Schoenherr, and Marcus Imhoff experienced the challenges of working in the aftermath of such a significant disaster. Our crew was provided shelter and essential amenities during their stay in South Carolina. The warm hospitality from local residents made a lasting impact, with many providing home-cooked meals and unwavering support to the crews.

Our team primarily focused on restoring power to housing developments and accessing lines that were more manageable, as the most severe damage occurred in higher elevation where our trucks were too large to navigate. Though they were unable to reach those areas, their determination and hard work ensured that they made a significant difference where they could.

After two weeks of mutual aid, we are pleased to announce that our team has safely returned home. Their hard work and commitment exemplify the spirit of WIPCO, showing how we stand together in times of need. We are proud of the resilience and teamwork displayed by our linemen and we are grateful to the communities in South Carolina for their warmth and appreciation during this challenging time.



## Congratulations to Jaxson Pauley!

We are excited to announce that Jaxson Pauley has successfully completed his internship with Western Iowa Power Cooperative and is now officially a journeyman lineman. His hard work, dedication, and commitment to safety and service have made him an invaluable part of our team. We are proud to see him reach this important milestone in his career and look forward to his continued contributions in serving our members. Congratulations, Jaxson!

## WIPCO Scholarship Opportunities

Western Iowa Power Cooperative (WIPCO) in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC) will be awarding six scholarships for the 2025-2026 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 7th, 2025.

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

### Harness the Power of Geothermal with Western Iowa Power Cooperative



Hassle free heating

Clean, green energy

30% Tax Credits

5 year payback

Rebates Offered

Low maintenance

Cut heating costs by up to 50%

- ✓ Utilizes the renewable geothermal energy right under your feet
- ✓ Long lifespan
- ✓ No building too big or too small.
- ✓ Extreme low use of electricity, even at maximum power use
- ✓ Seasonal energy storage
- ✓ No outside noise
- ✓ More efficient than conventional heating systems

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[WWW.WIPCO.COM](http://WWW.WIPCO.COM)**



## 2024-2025 IOWA HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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

The 2024-2025 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 you can **Dial 2-1-1**, visit <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/liheap> to locate and contact your local community action agency, or write to:

LIHEAP  
Iowa Department of Health & Human Services  
Capitol Complex  
Des Moines, IA 50319

#### WHEN TO APPLY:

- **Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled:**  
October 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025
- **All other households:**  
November 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025

#### WHAT TO PROVIDE:

- **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 provide 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 provide copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

#### SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS:

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

**Note - Additional countable income and/or income verification not listed above may be required for eligibility determination**

INCOME MAXIMUMS	
<i>Household</i>	<i>Annual</i>
<u>Size</u>	<u>Gross Income</u>
1	\$30,120
2	\$40,880
3	\$51,640
4	\$62,400
5	\$73,160
6	\$83,920
7	\$94,680
8	\$105,440

For households with more than eight members, add \$10,760 for each additional member.

# 6 Safety Spotlight

## Stay safe and warm: Your winter home readiness guide *(continued)*

Include these essentials in your emergency kit:

- First-aid kit
- Flashlights and batteries
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Phone chargers and backup charger sources

Gather important documents, medical supplies/medicines and medical records. Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough supplies for them as well.

### What to do if the power goes out

Winter weather is unpredictable, with high winds, whiteouts and ice storms. These conditions can cause hazardous roads and power outages.05-08-1152

If the electricity goes out due to a winter storm, you might be in for a prolonged power outage as crews work through the harsh weather to get the power back on.

If this happens, contact your electrical utility as soon as you can so they know you have lost power.

### Other actions you can take to stay safe are:

- Avoid travel. Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Place a draft block at the bottom of doors to minimize cold drafts from entering the house.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions and be sure to ventilate properly.
- Keep grills, camp stoves and generators out of the house, basement and garage.
- Use a tarp and portable canopy when using a portable generator if conditions are damp or wet.
- Move fuel-powered generators at least 20 feet away from the house.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are often more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.

For more information on keeping your family safe during and after a winter storm, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

**KEEP SAFE AND WARM THIS WINTER**

When the chill of fall and winter set in, be aware of **potential fire hazards that are lurking in your home**. Whether keeping warm with heat from your furnace, space heater, fireplace, or electric blanket, **Safe Electricity offers these tips to prevent a fire in your home:**

-  **Have your furnace inspected** annually.
-  **Inspect electric blankets** for scorch marks or visible damage regularly.
-  Be sure your **chimney is clear** before each use, and cover your fireplace with a screen to keep children and pets away from flames.

Always place your space heater on a **steady surface** and away from curtains, tablecloths, or other flapping fabrics. Use a space heater with an automatic shut-off switch.



REC's are always willing to extend a helping hand to those who need it. RECare provides local community action agencies with funds to help low-income families pay for winter heating bills and weatherize their homes. This program allows you to help other less fortunate electric cooperative member-owners. Through RECare, you may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will automatically be added to your monthly electric bill. Even one dollar a month will help others.

To contribute to RECare, fill out the form below or visit [www.wipco.com/payment-options](http://www.wipco.com/payment-options) to complete the form online.

## Yes! I want to be part of members helping members by contributing to RECare.

First name

Last name

Account Number

Email

Phone

Address

Donation Options:

- I will make a one-time contribution to RECare by sending a check to WIPCO.
- I will donate each month to RECare. I understand this amount will be added to my monthly electric bill.

Amount to be donated:

## HOW TO

# Contact Us

*Reach out to our offices for any inquiries, assistance, or information you need.*

[wipco@wipco.com](mailto:wipco@wipco.com)



809 Highway 39, Denison



418 E Iowa Avenue, Onawa



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



1-800-253-5189



# WIPCO Informer

from your member-owned Western Iowa Power Cooperative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

(USPS 9340)

## Contact Us

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712-263-2943 OR 800-253-5189  
FAX 712-263-8655  
wipco@wipco.com

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418 East Iowa Avenue - P.O. Box 115  
Onawa, Iowa 51040  
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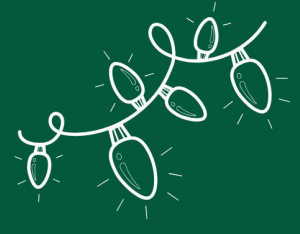
Marcus Rihner, Executive V.P./General  
Manager

Sadie Reisz, Editor

*“This institution is an equal  
opportunity provider and  
employer”*

## Safety Tip

When decorating outside, look up and look out. Never throw holiday lights or other decorations into trees near power lines. Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep ladders, equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from power lines.



Safe  
Electricity.org



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

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 October newsletter belonged to Bruce Aldag and Nick Goslar.

**SAVE  
\$25**



**DOWNLOAD OUR  
MOBILE APP!**

