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

June 2023
Volume 1, No. 112

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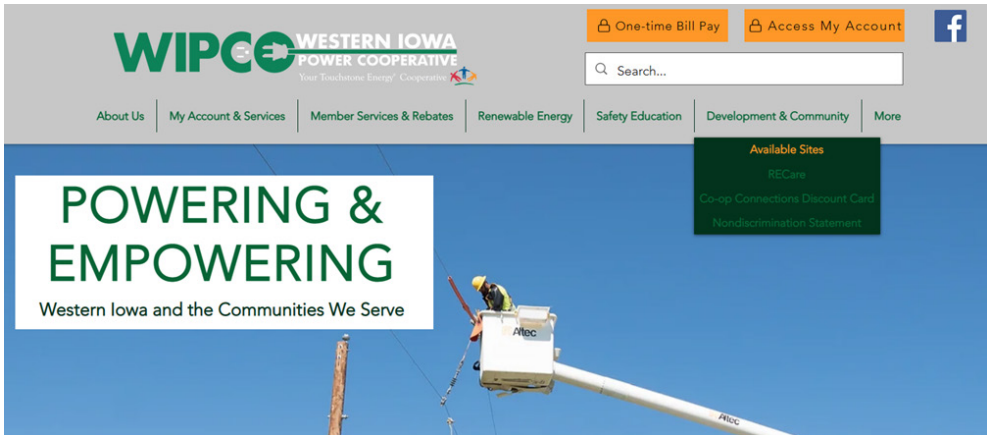
Offices Closed

Western Iowa Power Cooperative warehouses & offices will be closed Tuesday, the 4th of July, for Independence Day.

Call 800-253-5189 for outages or other emergencies. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday!

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

WIPCO.com Website Gets a Fresh New Look



WIPCO takes great pride in reaching out and keeping in touch with our member-owners. After all, we are a cooperative owned by and operated for the benefit of you.

We communicate through a variety of channels including this printed newsletter, bill stuffers, Facebook and due to the ever changing world of digital media, our **www.wipco.com** website.

Because our website is such an important information channel, we recently completed a site redesign, which we hope you will find user friendly and informative.

If you like to pay your electric bill online or access your account information, we added updated quick links. There is also a menu bar with drop-down topics on some of our members' most frequently asked questions, including About Us, My Account & Services, Member Services & Rebates, Renewable Energy, Safety Education, and Development & Community.

The More menu item includes a link called Cooperative News, which has interesting short-read news articles. For example, this month we added "Electric Safety While Boating," "How Do They Do That: Electric Vehicles," and "Ask An Expert: Time-of-Day Savings."

Want to know what services our skilled, licensed electricians can do for you? Click on the Member Services & Rebates link to find out.

We love to interact with our members in person and over the phone, but let's face it, sometimes you just want the answer to a quick question, and hopefully you are able to find some of those answers on our website. Please feel free to explore our website and let us know if you have any questions or comments. We are here to serve you.

Drum roll, please!! Turn to page 2 for more exciting news about a new way you can get information from your Cooperative.

Connecting with Our Members

Marcus Rihner, Executive Vice President & General Manager

One question that we ask ourselves frequently at WIPCO is "How can we connect with our members more effectively?" In today's day and age, so much information is available that it can be difficult to know how to provide relevant information in a way that is meaningful and accessible. As your trusted energy provider, there is a lot of information that we can provide to you, and we strive to provide this information via the best possible means. 54-01-22355

It is these questions and conversations which led us to work with Professional Computer Solutions, one of our key software partners, to develop the WIPCO Mobile App. This application is now available to download on your mobile devices, and I wanted to utilize this space this month to introduce you to a few key features of the app.

Once you download the app and link it to your WIPCO account, you will reach a home screen with many options available to you. A few of the key options on this screen include:

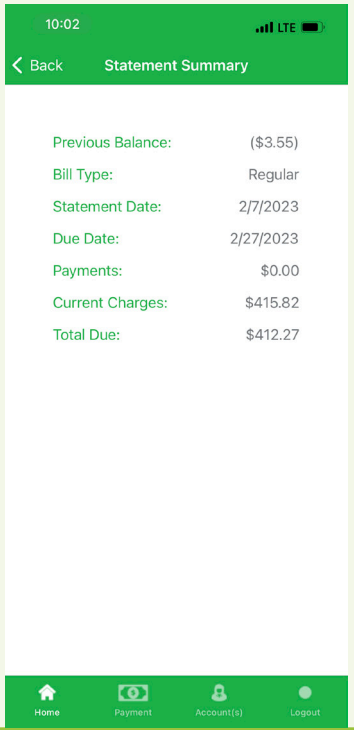
- Make a Payment – Log in via our secure online payment portal and pay your bill via credit card, debit card, or e-check. If you already have an online account with WIPCO, this payment process should feel very similar to the methods you have utilized before, but will now be handled from the convenience of the app.
- History screens – View your current or historical statements, payments, usage, and notifications. The Usage History screen in particular provides dynamic data which can be modified to show different time ranges, allowing you to analyze your energy usage in greater detail. You can also use the app to sign up for certain notifications such as e-mailed energy statements or payment due date reminders.
- Contact Info – This screen contains many methods available to contact WIPCO, including our phone numbers, e-mail address, website, and mailing addresses. Quick and easy access to this information will allow you to contact us directly from your mobile device.

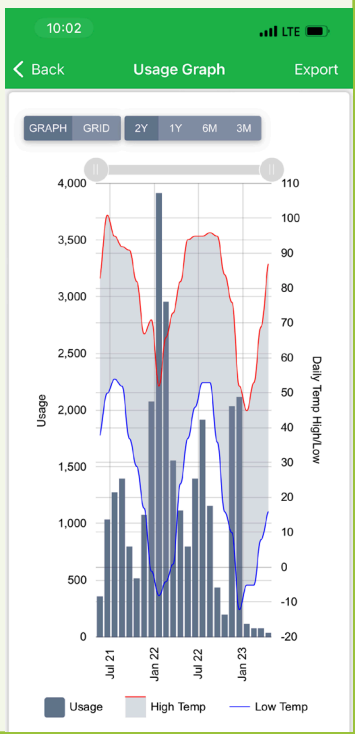
There are other features available within the app, and we will work diligently to ensure that the app stays up-to-date and provides information that is relevant to you. We would encourage you to download the app and start utilizing it as a method for us, your electric cooperative, to connect with you, our member. As always, we would be happy to answer any questions you may have or to assist in any way we can. We look forward to connecting with you via this app, and will continue to work on additional ways we can connect with you!

This is what the WIPCO App looks like when downloaded to your phone home screen. You can download the WIPCO App by visiting ***www.wipco.com*** *and clicking on the link for either an iOS or Android device. Look for these links on our homepage or visit the appropriate App Store to download.*

Get it on iTunes

GET IT ON Google play





Shining the Light - Nominate a Local Volunteer by June 30!

Do you know someone in our community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference? Nominate them for our Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win $2,500 for their local charity or nonprofit.

"We're really excited to participate in this statewide effort to celebrate our cooperative commitment to community," remarked Marcus Rihner, Executive Vice President & General Manager. "There are many volunteers throughout our service area who deserve to be recognized."

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this is the third year of the Shine the Light contest, which celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced in September, and each will receive a $2,500 donation for their charity or nonprofit. The winners will also be featured in the September issue of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine.

How to Nominate

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity from Western Iowa Power Cooperative, you're a co-op member-consumer, and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community.

The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

Go to ***www.IowaShineTheLight.com*** by June 30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules. Nominators will need to provide contact information and answer this question in 500 words or less: How has your nominee made a difference in the community and how might their local charity/nonprofit use the $2,500 donation?

Help us shine the light on our community volunteers; make a nomination by June 30!

WIPCO's Appliance Rebates

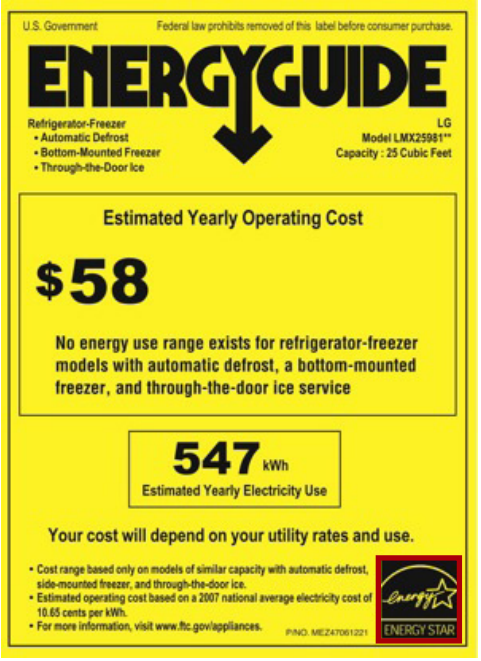
As part of WIPCO's energy efficiency program, rebates are offered for the following new appliances:

- Clothes washer.....$50/unit
- Refrigerator.....$25/unit
- Freezer.....$25/unit
- Dishwasher.....$25/unit
- Dryer.....$25/unit

The new appliance must be electric and ENERGY STAR® certified to get the rebate. Member needs to submit to WIPCO the receipt showing purchase of the new appliance and provide a copy of the yellow and black Energy Guide showing the ENERGY STAR® logo in the lower right hand corner to receive the rebate. The maximum new appliance rebate is $250 per member per year.

The image below shows an example of a refrigerator Energy Guide label with the required ENERGY STAR logo® in the lower right-hand corner.

Call us at 800-253-5189 if you have questions on how to apply for an appliance rebate.



BENEFITS OF TREE TRIMMING

Clearing trees and overgrown vegetation is vital to provide safe, reliable power to our consumer-members.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights of way, to:

- **Keep power lines clear of tree limbs**
- **Restore power outages more quickly**
- **Keep crews and members of our community safe**
- **Reduce unexpected costs for repairs**

Vegetation management improves service reliability for you – our members!

Providing reliable power to you is and always will be a top priority at WIPCO. With summer storm season upon us, now is a great time to tell you about measures we take to ensure you receive the reliable power you depend on.

Trees are a valuable resource and while they provide shade and add beauty, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages.

That is why we strive to keep WIPCO's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas. A ROW area is the area WIPCO uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. The ROW enables WIPCO to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines. The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our area.

Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to improve power reliability. WIPCO follows a yearly inspection and maintenance plan, which includes working with spray contractors and using our line crews for tree trimming.

Although it may seem counterintuitive, we sometimes use planned, controlled outages to perform system repairs and upgrades, which ultimately improve electric service. We make every effort to notify members in advance of a planned outage, so make sure we have your up-to-date contact information. And, as always, contact us at 800-253-5189 if you have any questions or concerns.

When you start to plan for a new grain bin or move an existing one, please contact WIPCO.

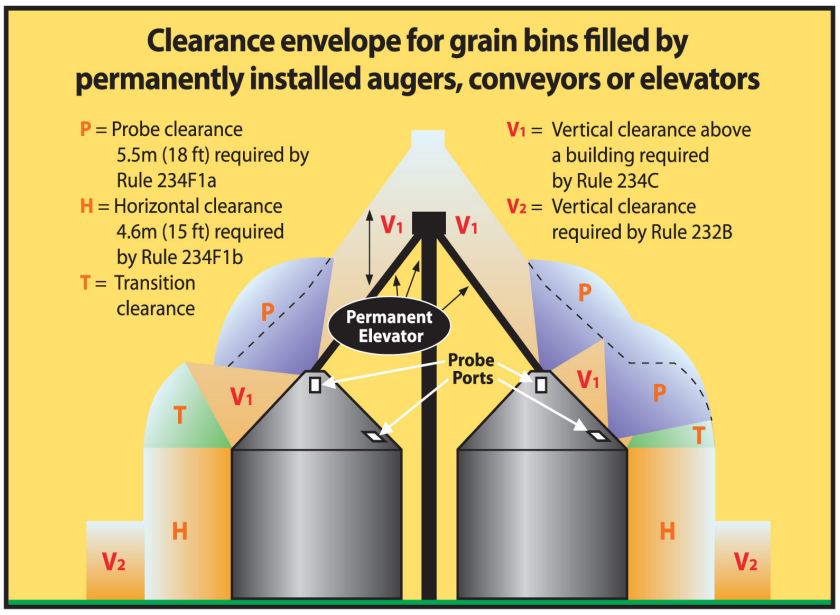
WIPCO and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators. 20-05-2244

The attachment to this article shows a drawing of the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact WIPCO.

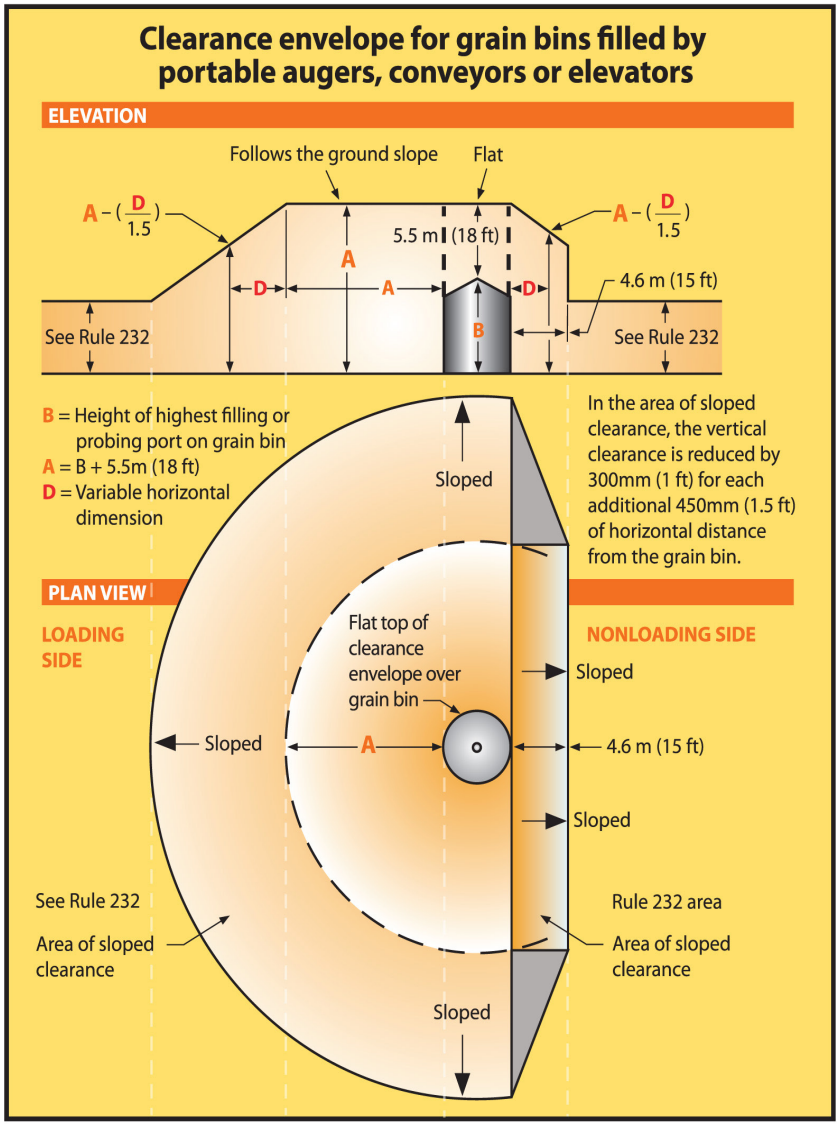
According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)C2-2017 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (As adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board)

WIPCO is required by the Iowa Utilities Board to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants, and city and county zoning officials. If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please call the Cooperative.

Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives' annual public information campaign and are based on the 2017 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings, refer to that publication. Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents for these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



From IEEE Std. C2-2017, "National Electrical Safety Code." © Copyright 2016 by IEEE. All rights reserved.



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Planning Underway for District & Annual Meetings

WIPCO's District Meeting will be held Tuesday, August 29 at the Onawa Community Center, and the Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, August 31, at The Stables at Copper Ridge in Denison.

All members will receive a ballot for Director elections in Districts 1, 2, 7, and 8. Please watch for your official WIPCO election ballot to be mailed to you in July. Each member is entitled to one (1) vote. Also included in the mailing will be an Official Notice of the Annual Meeting, director candidate profiles, a ballot envelope and a return envelope to be mailed or returned to one of our office locations.

All ballots returned by close of business (4:00 p.m.) on Thursday, August 31, 2023, will receive a $10 bill credit and be eligible for the grand prize drawing and bill credit drawings in amounts up to $50. If you plan to attend one of the meetings, you can bring your ballot to either the District Meeting or the Annual Meeting, and you will receive a $10 bill credit for attending.

The 2022 Annual Report will again be made part of the August *Informer* newsletter. We will post Director election results to our website and Facebook page following the meeting.

A catered meal prepared by Staley's Food Service, Inc. will be served from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at both events.

Kids activities (including our kids' coloring contest) and special booth areas are being planned, so be watching for more details on that in the July *Informer*.

ATTENTION IRRIGATORS:

If you have an irrigation service and the service is on the load control rate (shuts off the system when NIPCO deems necessary), you will receive an e-mail and/or text notification when the system is being controlled. If you have not provided

WIPCO with your e-mail address and/or cell phone number, and you would like to receive load control information via e-mail and/or text, please contact our office.

If you have other questions pertaining to irrigation services, please call our office, 712-263-2943 or 800-253-5189.

Welcome Summer Help

WIPCO welcomes our 2023 summer help, who will work alongside our line crews this construction season!

Pictured first below is Brady Melby. Brady is from Moorhead and recently graduated from West Harrison High School. Brady plans to attend Northeast Community College's Utility Line program this fall.

Pictured second below is Benett Dozler. Benett is from Harlan and graduated from Harlan High School. This fall, Benett will start his second year at Northeast Community College, where he is studying in their Utility Line program.

Sign up for

smart choices

Plug into the power of Smart Choices!

Smart Choices is a FREE, monthly newsletter digest that is emailed directly to your inbox from Western Iowa Power Cooperative. Articles feature local news from your cooperative, electric safety information, and energy efficiency tips to help you save money!

Subscribe by scanning the QR code with your mobile device or visit our website: www.wipco.com/smart-choices

Become a new subscriber to Smart Choices and receive a one-time, $10 bill credit from Western Iowa Power Cooperative!

Do you ever feel like you are on information overload? We understand and know that your time is precious, so our Smart Choices e-newsletter news items and articles can be read in a few minutes. So what? Who cares? What's in it for me? Sign up for Smart Choices and find out!

Welcome to Smart Choices

Volunteers are a vital part of our community. To celebrate those good works, we want to know about the volunteers you most admire. Get contest details in the article below. May is also National Electrical Safety Month; find out how you can protect yourself and your home. If you have questions about safety or energy efficiency, please contact us.

https://www.wipco.com/co-op-news

All Posts | Safety | Summer | Energy Saving | Utility Scams | Smart Choices | Holidays | Co-op News | More

Smart Choices · 6 days ago · 2 min

Electric Safety While Boating

Water and electricity don't mix. If you own a boat, follow these 6 safety tips.

6 views · 0 comments

Smart Choices · 6 days ago · 1 min

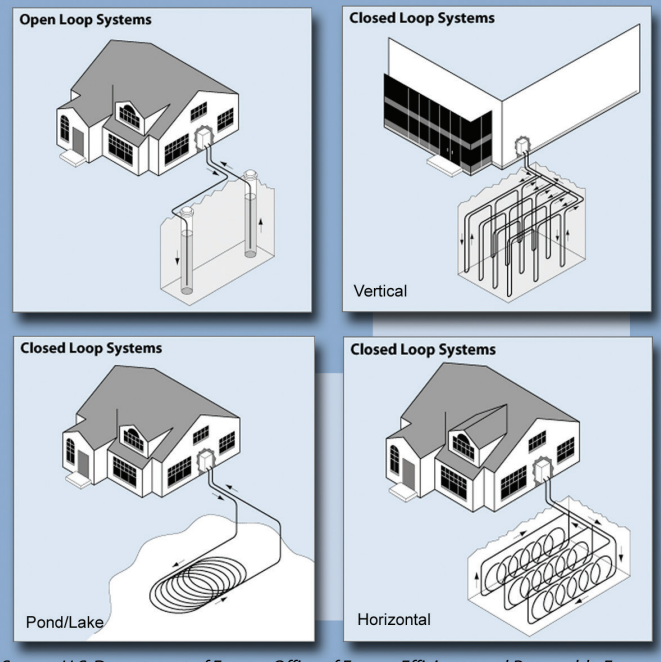
How Do They Do That: Electric Vehicles

How do electric vehicles provide clean, high-performance driving? Peek under the hood and find out!

4 views · 0 comments

Types of Geothermal Heat Pump Systems

There are four basic configurations for geothermal heat pump ground loops. Three are "closed-loop systems," where a water and antifreeze solution is continually moved through pipes; the fourth is an "open-loop system," where groundwater or well water is used.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Geothermal heating and cooling is a proven and extremely reliable method of delivering energy efficient, environmentally friendly heating and cooling to homes and businesses located in Iowa and neighboring states by using the earth's constant ground temperature to provide heating, cooling and hot water in both new and retrofit construction.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) signed into law last August by President Joe Biden provides Geothermal (ground source) heat pumps a 30% tax credit for systems installed in years 2022 through 2032. This can be coupled with the up to $10,000 rebate available through WIPCO. Geothermal significantly reduces energy usage and utility bills for homeowners and business owners and installation is available through our Member Service Department.

Contact our Member Service Department at 800-253-5189 for more information on our current rebates and the Switch Makes Cents program.

More details about this tax credit and other residential clean energy credits can be found at ***https://www.energystar.gov/about/federal_tax_credits/renewable_energy_tax_credits***.

The information we share should not be interpreted as tax advice. Please consult your accountant and/or lawyer for guidance on claiming any tax incentives.

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(USPS 9340)

809 Highway 39 North - P.O. Box 428
Denison, Iowa 51442
712-263-2943 OR 800-253-5189
FAX 712-263-8655
wipco@wipco.com

418 East Iowa Avenue - P.O. Box 115
Onawa, Iowa 51040
712-433-1622 OR 800-253-5189
FAX 712-433-2725
wipco@wipco.com

www.wipco.com

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https://www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Iowa-Power-Co-Op/160024430687171

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Marcus Rihner, Executive V.P./General Manager
Mari Miller, Editor

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer"

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for additional ways to save energy this summer? Your laundry room is a great place to start. Wash clothes with cold water, which can cut one load's energy use by more than half. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up when you can. When drying clothes, separate the heavier cottons. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Save $25.00 on your REC bill

Read this newsletter carefully. Hidden somewhere within these pages are two Member location numbers. Find <u>your</u> 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 May newsletter belonged to Erwin Moeller and Kirk Rose.