

# InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

March 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



A WORD FROM



**Garrett Thompson**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Annual meeting is right around the corner

It's hard to believe that April is less than a month away, but that also means Franklin REC's annual meeting of the members is right around the corner, too! This year's meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, and it's going to look slightly different than in years past.

Every year the goal of the annual meeting is to speak and engage with as many of you, our members, as possible. We understand that there is a lot going on in your lives, especially if you have children and/or grandchildren, so we want to be as accommodating as we can. On the flip side, we understand there are members that enjoy the traditional annual meeting style as we've held in previous years. We believe this year's meeting will offer a little something for everyone, as we have broken it up into two (2) separate

events being held on the same date, Tuesday, April 5.

### Tuesday, April 5

- A catered meal will be provided for both events.
- Both events will be held at the Convention Center on the Franklin County Fairgrounds.
- 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Drive through annual meeting event.
  - Please bring your completed ballot in the supplied envelope unless previously mailed to the REC.
  - Meal voucher **MUST BE** presented to receive up to two (2) free meals. No additional meals may be purchased.
- 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Traditional annual meeting event (sit down meal).
  - Meal voucher must be presented for all members and their dependents (18 or younger) in attendance to receive a free meal. No additional meals may be purchased.

### Important Information

- Annual meeting packets will be mailed out the week of March 21, 2022.
  - **Ballots and meal vouchers will be included in the mailing, so do not throw away!**
  - When returned, ballots **MUST** be in the supplied envelope, whether by mail or in person.
  - Ballots received after April 5, 2022, will not be counted.
- Children's contests – There will be children's coloring and word search contests. Children will be able to take the material home to work on and then mail to or drop off at the REC at a later date. These items will be available for pick up during both events.

### Unable to Attend the Event?

- Meeting streamed live!
  - The traditional annual meeting will be streamed live on both YouTube and Facebook Live starting at 6:00 p.m. A QR code and a link will be included in/on the ballot envelopes, as well as on the drive-through-to-go containers. Of course, you can always go to our Facebook or YouTube pages directly to access the live stream.

If you attended our member appreciation drive-through event this past fall, the drive-through portion of our meeting will be set up very similar. If you have attended our traditional annual meeting in the past, the evening event will feel similar as well. No matter which event you choose to attend, we hope to see every single one of you there!

## HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS: Commitment to Community scholarship deadline approaching

Are you a volunteer? March 11 is the application deadline for your chance to be awarded one of three \$500 Commitment to Community scholarships. Visit us at [franklinrec.coop](http://franklinrec.coop) or call us at 641-456-2557 for details.



# It's safe planting season

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. It is important to be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm—use caution and think twice before acting around electricity. Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, **DO NOT GET OUT**. Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact), you are now a “pathway to ground” and you could be electrocuted if you step out. Stay where you are and call us to de-energize the power. If you must get out, hop away with both feet touching the ground at the same time.
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.
- When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.
- Even if there is no contact, an electrical current can jump or arc so keep equipment at least 10 feet from surrounding power lines at all times.
- Remember, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes, and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- Visually inspect overhead lines. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call us to remedy the situation.
- Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.
- When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- Train anyone working with or for you to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance.

**FARMERS:** Get as much rest as possible and take breaks during planting season.

## Tune up your air conditioner

Hot weather is still a couple of months away, but it's not too early to think about whether your central air conditioning system can make it through one more summer.

Spring is the perfect time to call a qualified service technician to give your central air conditioning system a once-over. You should have your a/c checked every single year, as soon as the weather begins to warm up.

The tech will make sure it's running efficiently—which will save you money in the long run—and that it's not in need of any repairs that could leave your family sweltering indoors when the weather is at its peak mid-summer.



## SPRING INTO SAFETY

Spring is in the air and that means more than just a change of season for farmers. During the busy planting season, follow these eight safety tips:



### TRANSPORT SAFELY

Ensure equipment is compliant with agriculture road and travel safety rules



### SHARE SAFETY TIPS

Teach anyone working or doing business on your farm about electrical hazards



### ENCOURAGE YOUNG WORKERS

Be sure to match age and ability level with each chore



### BE CLEAR

Explain where the “back 80” or Smith field is; not everyone may know how to get there



### WRITE IT DOWN

Keep directions (with proper road and farm ground names) at home, in the shop and in cabs



### LOOK AROUND

Inspect your space and look for hazards before you start planting



### EVALUATE PROCEDURES

Consider new safety precautions you can implement, such as lockout/tagout



### MEET AND DISCUSS

Conduct morning safety meetings to brief everyone on the day and talk about potential hazards

Sources: Rural Mutual Insurance Co., farmprogress.com

Safe Electricity.org®

# Be prepared and storm safe this spring

At any moment, 1,800 thunderstorms occur worldwide, according to the National Weather Service. That is 16 million storms a year. In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 60 to 65 fatalities and 1,500 injuries in the U.S. alone.

Beyond the items in your preparedness kit, it is a good idea to understand how dangerous storms can be and how to interpret weather alerts.

**WATCH VS. WARNING** Have you ever considered the difference between a severe weather watch or warning?

A watch means there is a significant chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado. Watch and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures, such as unplugging electronics and checking the contents of your emergency preparedness kit.

A warning means that a severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. The moment you receive a warning, take shelter in the safest part of your home.

**THUNDERSTORMS** Thunderstorms are some of the most common yet destructive weather events on Earth.

Do not ignore the potential hazards of thunderstorms. Keep flashlights or battery-operated lights well supplied with batteries or charge them regularly. Keep a supply of nonperishable food and drinking water on hand. Turn off and unplug electronic equipment. If a power outage occurs, never use a portable generator in your home, enclosed structure, or garage. Do not step into flooded basement or area since the water could be electrified.

**TORNADOES** Be aware of weather conditions during thunderstorms that could breed tornadoes. Know the best place to shelter both indoors and out, and always protect your head.

Do not underestimate the potential power of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. Take steps to protect yourselves and your property before a storm hits.

For more information about storm preparedness and electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

**WATCH**

A watch means there is a **great chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado.**

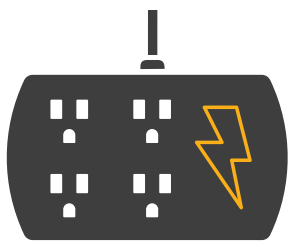
**"Watch" and wait for more information** while taking precautionary measures.

**WARNING**

A warning means that a **severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen** on radar.

The moment you get a warning, **take shelter in the safest part of your home.**

SafeElectricity.org®



## SURGE PROTECTION

Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.

Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- Easy to use (just plug them in)
- Protect electronics plugged into the device
- Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event



### REMEMBER:

Not all power strips offer surge protection. Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.



## What's cookin'?

**Have a recipe everyone loves?** Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine is always looking for recipes. If your recipe is chosen, you will earn a \$25 power bill credit! Read the magazine to learn how to submit your recipe.

**Looking for a new recipe?** Visit [ieclmagazine.com](http://ieclmagazine.com) and click on Recipes, Recipe Archive to search.

*Try a new recipe tonight!*

# Meet your candidates for Franklin REC's board of directors

The members listed below are running for the Franklin REC's board of directors. Voting will take place by mail-in ballot or at the annual meeting April 5, 2022. Annual meeting notices will be mailed mid-March.

**District 1 – Geneva, Grant, Hamilton, Lee, Morgan, Oakland, Osceola, and Reeve Townships in Franklin County; Madison and Washington Townships in Butler County; Alden, Etna, Hardin, and Hardin-Alden Townships in Hardin County; and Blaine Township in Wright County.**

## Dave Keninger, Ackley



Dave Keninger (incumbent) has been a member of Franklin REC since 1987. He is finishing his fourth three-year term

on the board and is currently secretary-treasurer. He holds a Director Gold credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). He also represents Iowa RECs on the Rural Electric Supply Cooperative (RESCO) board.

Dave lives west of Ackley with his wife, Barb. They have three grown children and seven grandchildren.

Dave holds a bachelor's degree in agronomy and earned a master's degree in soils from Iowa State University. He has farmed since he was in eighth grade,

and he also operated a small business from 1994 to 2008. He is a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Ackley, where he has served on numerous committees. He has also been active on various committees in Franklin County.

## John Snyder, Dows



John Snyder (incumbent) has been a member of Franklin REC since 1985. He is finishing his third three-year

term on the board and is currently vice president. He has achieved Director Gold certification from NRECA and has completed the Board Leadership Program.

John lives on a family farm northeast of Dows, where he raises corn and soybeans. He and his wife, LeAnn, have a son and a daughter and six grandchildren.

John is a crop agent for Farm Bureau Financial Services. He earned his bachelor's degrees in management, finance, and insurance from Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville. He has served on the Franklin County Fair Board and is a member of Alden United Methodist Church.

**District 2 – Ingham, Marion, Mott, Ross, Scott, and West Fork Townships in Franklin County; and Bennezette and Pittsford Townships in Butler County.**

## Gordon Greimann, Sheffield



Gordon Greimann (incumbent) has been a member of FREC since 1993. He has served as a director since 1995 and is

currently president. He holds a Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate and completed the Board Leadership Program from NRECA. He also serves on the state board of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Gordon and his wife, Laurie, live west of Hampton on a farm where they raise corn and soybeans. His family includes two grown stepdaughters, a granddaughter, and a grandson. In addition to farming, Gordon is a representative for Ritchie Industries, Inc. He is a member of Zion St. John Lutheran Church in Sheffield.

## FREC: Franklin County's 2021 Business of the Year

At the Franklin County Chamber Annual Appreciation Night Feb. 3, 2022, Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative was awarded the 2021 Business of the Year.

Franklin REC has been a member of the Franklin County Chamber since 1988, and this is the first year they have won the award. Newton Grotzinger, Chamber director, commented, "The Chamber committee always asks themselves one question, what had the most impact to our county? The lighted parade was at the top of the list with such a wonderful turn out."

"I'm so proud of all our employees, especially Emily Rush and Madison Alert who spearheaded the event," said Garrett Thompson, CEO of Franklin REC. "Every single one of our employees helped in some way, and it was a lot of fun to be able to serve our community. We are already planning and gearing up for next year's event to be even better!"



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