

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

March 2023

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Annual meeting time again!

Another year flew by and it's annual meeting time yet again. The employees and board of directors of Franklin REC genuinely hope to see you, our member-owner, at this year's meeting on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at the Franklin County Convention Center in Hampton, Iowa. We truly enjoy seeing all the smiling faces and having the opportunity to get to know our membership even better.

If you attended our annual meeting last year, this year's event will be comparable. Below are the details of the event, but as always, we welcome your questions.

DATE: Tuesday, April 4, 2023

LOCATION: Franklin County Convention Center

TIME: Drive-thru from 4:00–5:30 p.m.; traditional meeting from 6:30–7:00 p.m. (doors open at 6:15 p.m.)

MEAL: Ribeye sandwich prepared by the Franklin County Cattleman's Association

Similar to years past, you will be receiving an annual meeting mailing from Franklin REC. The mailing will include the annual report with a letter from Gordon Greimann, board president, and me; the board of director candidate biography; and the cooperative's 2022 financial report. Also included will be your voting ballot and meeting information with a detachable meal voucher. The mailing will arrive in your mailbox around the middle of March, so please watch your mail. We will also keep you informed on our Facebook and Instagram pages and our website with the exact date of the mailing.

Members choosing to attend the drive-thru will receive two free meals. Those that attend the traditional meeting will receive a meal for the member(s) and their dependents in attendance. No additional meals may be purchased in the drive-thru or at the traditional meeting.

Remember: You must have your meal voucher with you at the time of the event!

BALLOTS: To be counted in the voting process, completed ballots must be returned in the official envelope provided with the ballot. You may bring the ballot with you to the traditional meeting, drop it off during the drive-thru, mail it to our office, or drop it off at the Franklin REC office.

Remember: All ballots must be received no later than 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, 2023.

No matter which event you choose to attend we hope to see you there!

Hagenson named line superintendent

Franklin REC is pleased to announce Scott Hagenson (*right*) as the cooperative's new line superintendent. Scott began his duties on Jan. 30. No stranger to northern Iowa, Scott was born and raised in Thompson, Iowa, and has resided in Lake Mills for the past 24 years.

After graduation from Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon, Hagenson began his career in line work at Heartland Power Cooperative, Thompson. He then transitioned to line supervisor for Lake Mills Municipal Utilities, where he has served for 20 years. Prior to his lineman career, Scott was a full-time paramedic with the Boone County Hospital. This passion has continued through his involvement in local fire departments and emergency management agencies.

Scott and his wife Shelley enjoy spending time with their two sons Peter and Sam, daughter-in-law, Madison, and latest family addition, grandson Cooper Allen! The family enjoys spending time together boating on Clear Lake.

Scott looks forward to working with fellow employees and getting to know the members of Franklin REC.



A WORD FROM



Garrett Thompson
Chief Executive Officer

Spring cleaning = energy savings

Many of your once-a-year spring cleaning chores can save energy all year. Some examples:

- Clean windows inside and out. The cleaner the panes are, the more sunlight that can shine in, making it less necessary to turn on lights and run space heaters in the spring.
- Check the air filters in your HVAC systems monthly. If they're full of dust, dirt, and pet hair, replace the filters, because air will have a hard time passing through. Poor airflow makes your systems work harder.
- Clear fallen branches, leaves, and other debris that might have fallen on the outdoor unit of your air conditioning system over the winter.
- Dust ceiling fan blades. When the fan starts running, it can knock accumulated dust into your room, which is bad for air quality and can wind up in your air conditioner vents or filters.
- Snake your dryer vent or hire a pro to do it for you.
- Pull your refrigerator slightly out from the wall and vacuum behind it. If your fridge has exposed coils, vacuum those, too.

Play it safe around power lines

As the weather begins to warm up, our activities begin to move outside, including activities with children. Before hitting the great outdoors, discuss electrical safety with your children.

Flying fun

While flying kites, model airplanes, remote-control flying toys and drones, stay in large, open areas (such as parks or fields), far away from power lines.

If an item becomes caught in a power line, teach children to never try to retrieve it. Instead, an adult should call their electric utility for help.

Water play When spending time by the pool, look overhead when using pool skimmers or other long objects to be sure you are not getting close to an overhead power line. If you are swimming and feel a prickly or tingling sensation, do not stay in the pool. There could be a stray electric current from a downed power line or a damaged electrical device. Also, never play in a flooded street or ditch; a downed power line could be hidden by the water and fallen debris.

General outdoor safety tips Other important safety guidelines for kids and adults include:

- Never throw objects at power lines.
- Stay far away from downed, damaged, or low-hanging power lines. An adult should call 9-1-1 to report a downed or damaged line.
- Be cautious after a severe storm that caused a power outage. Downed power lines could be hidden under water, snow, or storm debris. Wait to go outside until power has been restored.
- Do not climb, sit, or play on pad-mount transformers (green boxes).
- Do not climb trees that have overhead power lines near or running through them.

Prevention is key Electric shock and injuries are often preventable.

Empower your family with electrical safety knowledge to avoid preventable electric injuries. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Wishing farmers a safe, successful planting season

FARMERS: When planting this spring be alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Operating large equipment near these lines is often overlooked, but can be a deadly hazard of working on a farm.

Make sure everyone knows to maintain a 10-foot clearance minimum from power lines. If your equipment should contact power lines, **stay in the cab and call for help**. If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until help arrives.

If exiting the cab is absolutely necessary, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet together, hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.



Only certified workers can trim trees near power lines

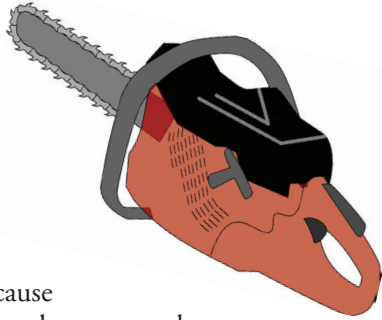
Can anyone trim trees near power lines? The answer is no. Specialized tree trimmers, certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in utility clearance, are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

OSHA requires this certification because electricity is a serious and widespread hazard to tree workers. According to the Tree Care Industry Association, electricity is the leading cause of death in the tree care industry. Tree care industry workers do not have to directly contact a power line to be electrocuted; about half of all electrocution fatalities are the result of indirect contact.

Qualified line-clearance trimmers must be specially trained in how to safely work in proximity to energized lines. They must understand how an electrical grid functions, the effects of tree growth patterns and tree damage, and how to implement directional pruning, as required by the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations' safety standards.

According to OSHA, there are numerous duties for a certified line-clearance tree trimmer. Visit osha.gov for more information.

Please contact Franklin REC at 641-456-2557 if you have questions about line-clearance tree trimmers or tree trimming near power lines.



It's time for an a/c inspection

When the weather starts to warm up—but before it is hot outside—call an air-conditioning technician to inspect your home's cooling system.

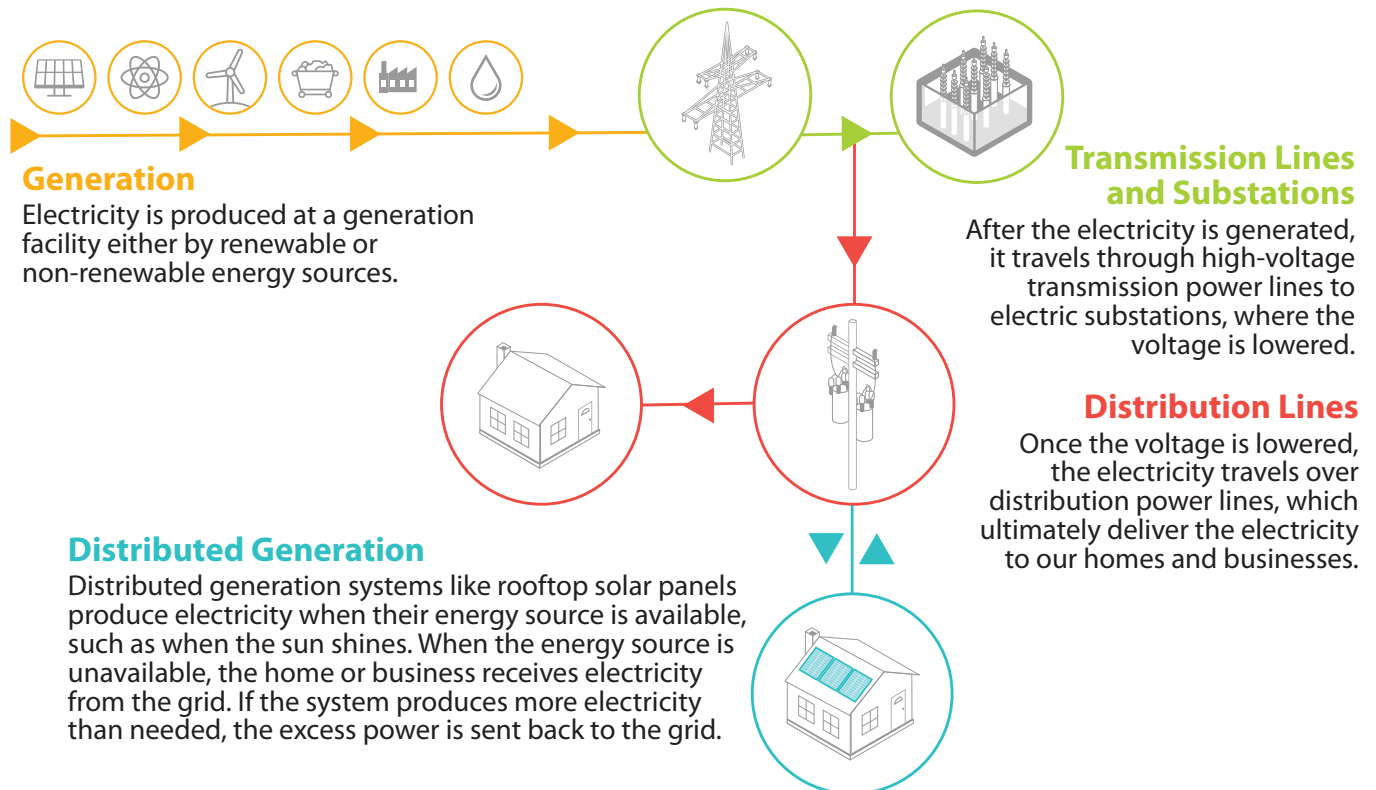
It's important to have this tune-up approximately a month before you may need your a/c.

An early check-up ensures that the a/c works on the first day when it's hot enough to need it.

The tech will clean the coils, inspect the parts, and spot any problems-in-the-making.

Once the summer heat is history, have the technician return to take a look at your heating system.

HOW ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



Your Franklin REC board of directors' candidate

At the April 4, annual meeting of Franklin REC members, Darwin VanHorn (*right*), representing District 3, is running unopposed for a three-year term.

VanHorn has been a member of Franklin REC since 2019. He and his wife, Koreen, live on an acreage seven miles west of Chapin where they manage and operate the family farm. Their oldest son Ben and his wife Lily live and work in California, middle son Jacob lives and works in Ames, and youngest son Sam lives at home and is a junior at Hampton-Dumont-CAL High School.

A 1987 graduate of CAL Community High School in Latimer, VanHorn went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism and mass communications from Iowa State University in Ames.

Upon graduation, he served as an account executive and project manager in the advertising field. In 1999, Darwin began a second career as a youth ministry director. He went on to help launch Youth for Christ in Hampton in 2009 and served as the area director until 2020. Darwin continues to serve as a lay minister in the surrounding area.

He has enjoyed the past two years serving on the Franklin REC board and learning about the cooperative business model, which benefits its members. He is actively pursuing the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Certificates offered by the NRECA. These courses have broadened his knowledge and skills required to govern and serve on the REC cooperative board. Darwin is grateful to have had this experience over the past two years and looks forward to serving another term with the great staff and board members assembled at Franklin REC. It requires a tremendous team to provide electricity for Franklin REC members.



Chili Cook-Off Champion named

In December, Franklin REC employees and directors accepted the challenge to gain the title of Franklin REC 2022 Chili Cook-Off Champion.

After tasting the eight entries, employees and directors submitted their votes. Reigning champion, CEO Garrett Thompson (*left*), was announced as the champion, with second place awarded to Dale Schaefer (*right*), board director.

Greimann takes top prize

Congratulations to Gordon Greimann (*right*), board president, Franklin REC, on winning the 2022 Touchstone Energy Challenge Grand Prize. Greimann donated his \$500 winnings to the West Fork Food Pantry in Sheffield.

Greimann has volunteered countless hours mowing for the Franklin County Historical Society at the site of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) Museum located inside the old REA power plant, next to Corn Belt Power Cooperative's Hampton Substation.

The Volunteer Challenge is one way Corn Belt Power highlights the work system-wide employees and directors do in their communities.



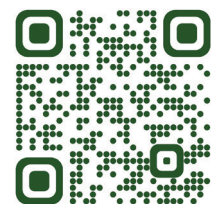
BOARD ROOM highlights

At their February meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization totaling \$128,700.47



Download the SmartHub app or visit SmartHub on our website at www.franklinrec.coop to view your usage, pay your bill, and contact us!



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