

Pole testing to ensure reliability

Just like your home and your car, your electric utility poles require maintenance, too. That's why you may see someone tapping your electric poles with hammers. They are pole testing, one way Franklin REC can ensure reliable power.

Any pole on the cooperative line that is older than 15 years is tested on a 10-year cycle. Franklin REC hires an independent contractor to perform this work. The workers' UTV/ATV or trucks will have a Franklin REC magnet attached so you know they are with us.

The testing includes workers tapping the pole with a hammer for a sound test. Next, they check to see how solid the pole is by drilling a hole in it. The hole is then plugged. Each pole is tagged with a metal tag to indicate whether it is sound or in need of replacement.

Later this summer, poles will be tested in our Cerro Gordo County townships of Grimes, Mt. Vernon, Pleasant Valley, and Union.

As we head into cooler weather, you can rest assured that we are performing the maintenance needed to continue providing you with the service you deserve.



One of our contract workers preparing to drill a pole to check how solid it is.

SPARKS of news

Board room highlights

At their most recent meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Appointed a board member to the Franklin County Development Association.
- Locked in a long-term interest rate for the solar project.
- Reviewed the special equipment capitalization.

Let's be friends!

Like "Franklin REC" on Facebook and be among the first to see Franklin REC news, such as updates on major outages, energy saving tips, information on rebates, and much more.



Franklin REC loans funds to Hampton Dental

Franklin REC's commitment to community extends to businesses serving our members. We are invested in our communities in a variety of ways.

Recently, through our United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) loan program, we provided funding to Hampton Dental to build a new office. This was the second opportunity we have had to support Hampton Dental, as we also helped in the purchase of the practice in 2015.

The dental office, located at 27 N. Federal in Hampton, employs seven people and offers a variety of dental services. Be sure to take a look at their website to learn more: hamptoniowadental.com.

Franklin REC is honored to help local business owners realize their dreams and to help keep services local for our members. If you are interested in our USDA loan program, please contact us at 641-456-2557.



The new Hampton Dental office.

The everyday value of electricity

Most people don't think much about the electricity they use. We expect the lights to turn on when we flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or maybe when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our lifestyle, it's a great value, especially when compared to other services and expenses. Think back to the cost of a gallon of gasoline or groceries 20 years ago. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat.

Most of us have a cell phone, and we pay for television channels. Many of us consider these necessities. Maybe it's because we can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the cost of medical care increased 3 percent from 2014-2019 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). Education was not too far behind at 2.6 percent. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4 percent.

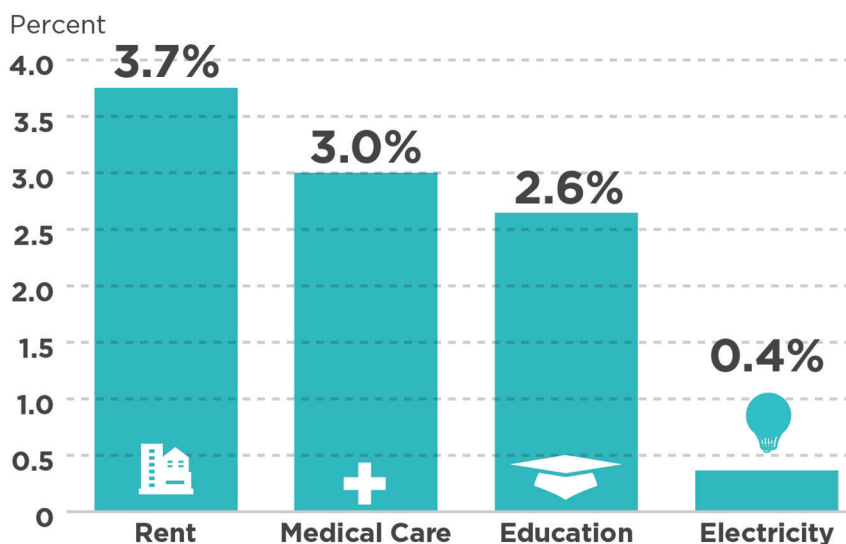
Your electric cooperative provides the reliable service you expect and deserve as a valued member of the co-op. And as your trusted energy advisor, we want to help you save energy and money.

The past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy, please give us a call. We are your electric co-op, and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index



Run ceiling fans to save energy

Ceiling fans don't actually cool the air in a room. Instead, they circulate the air. Anyone who is in the room while one is running will feel a sort of breeze. That makes the person feel cooler, so there's no point in running a ceiling fan in an empty room.

But for rooms that are usually occupied, a ceiling fan can make the room feel like it's almost 10 degrees cooler than a room without one. And because the fan circulates cool air, it gives the air conditioning system a break.

In fact, with a ceiling fan running, you can turn your thermostat up by about four degrees without sacrificing comfort, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

A few tips for getting the most energy savings from ceiling fans:

- In the summer, ceiling fans should rotate counter-clockwise to push cool air down. In the winter, they should rotate clockwise, to draw warm air up to the ceiling and recirculate it.
- Hang the fan seven to nine feet above the floor and about a foot below the ceiling.
- Fan blades should be at least eight inches from the ceiling and 18 inches from the walls.
- Fans with an ENERGY STAR label are about 20 percent more efficient than standard models.

Duane Arnold Energy Center to cease operations

In 1969, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Central Iowa Power Cooperative and Iowa Electric Light and Power Company, broke ground on the construction of a 550 MW capacity nuclear power plant - the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC) near Palo, Iowa. At the time and ever since, Corn Belt Power has been a 10-percent stakeholder in the plant.

Today, Iowa's electric providers prepare for the imminent closure of the facility.

The construction on the nuclear power plant spanned several years, with commercial operation commencing in February 1975. It was the state of Iowa's largest single construction project at the time.

The plant's consistent and reliable operating strategy, along with \$1 billion in additional investments over the years, led to a series of upgrades increasing DAEC's capacity from 550 MW to 614 MW, today's generating capacity. The plant's successful operation was never on greater display than in 2008 when it survived the 500-year historic flood. Through thoughtful planning, the plant sits at 20 feet above the Cedar River, providing the protection needed from the flood. In 2008, with the river cresting at record levels, DAEC's operation

continued without faltering.

"The plant was an important generator for Corn Belt Power in the 80's, 90's and early 2000's," said Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. "For years it has been one of the best run nuclear facilities in the country. It has provided affordable and reliable power to Iowans for decades."

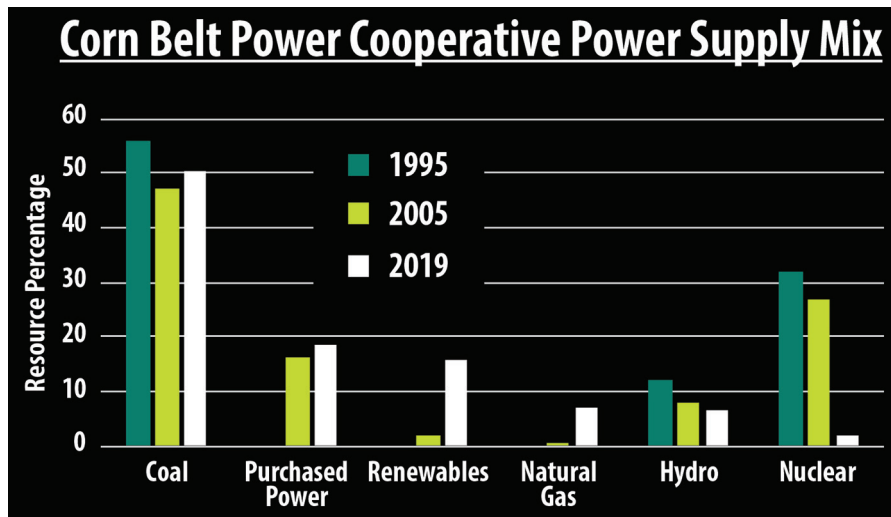
fired generation, in early 2018, NextEra Energy – the company that purchased Iowa Electric Light and Power's (Alliant) 70 percent share of DAEC in 2005 - announced a likely end to production at DAEC in 2025 when Alliant Energy's purchase power agreement (PPA) ended, despite having a license to operate through 2034.

Ultimately, NextEra Energy released Alliant Energy from the PPA early. NextEra Energy, as the majority owner, made another announcement in July 2018 that the plant would cease operations in October 2020.

"Having joined Basin Electric, we are well positioned to absorb the closure of DAEC," Kuyper said. "It's important to remember that we

now rely on a vast amount of generators to supply power to Corn Belt Power members. Gone are the days of just having three or four resources. Today we have an all-of-the-above strategy, which makes our power supply more reliable and flexible in the future."

Duane Arnold will cease operations later this year. It will take years before the area where the plant is located will return to green fields. Until that time, plant employees will still be monitoring and guarding the facility.



Before Corn Belt Power joined Basin Electric Power Cooperative as a Class A member, Duane Arnold made up a large portion of energy supplied to members. Since joining Basin Electric, Corn Belt Power's generation mix has diversified. Today, the co-op's 10-percent stake or about 62 MW makes up only 1.6-percent of power supplied to members.

With increasing regulations on nuclear plants putting pressure on the cost of operations, and enhanced competition from lower cost natural gas-

UPDATE: FARM PROGRESS SHOW

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the 2020 Farm Progress Show, scheduled for Sept. 1-3, has been cancelled.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative encourages you to **MOVE OVER AND SLOW DOWN** when you approach a vehicle with flashers on.

Let's make sure everyone arrives safely!



MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN

Franklin REC'S newest employee

We are pleased to announce that Cole Marzen has joined us as an apprentice lineman. A graduate of the powerline program at Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon, he began his employment on July 6.



Cole grew up in Hampton and graduated from Hampton-Dumont High School. His family includes his girlfriend of seven years, Kelsey, and their six-year-old son, Jaxon.

In his free time, he enjoys shooting, spending time outdoors, and being with his family.

Welcome to Franklin REC, Cole!



Moving?

Before you move, please notify us at the Franklin REC office.

We will need to know the date of transfer and your forwarding address so your dividend records can be updated.

**Contact our office
at 641-456-2557**

Save energy while binge-watching your shows

It seems like everyone is binge-watching movies and TV shows while they're spending more time at home. Constant use of the TV can push up the family energy bill.

Here are five ways to conserve energy while watching TV:

- 1. Consolidate.** If three or four family members are watching different TVs in separate rooms, you're using three times more energy than if the whole gang agreed on a show and watched it together in the same room.
- 2. Record.** Watching a recorded show via VCR, DVR, or TiVo can save energy in two ways. First, it allows your family to view their favorites any time, so you can choose to watch during off-peak hours—early in the day or late at night when fewer people are using electric appliances all at once. Second, it lets you fast-forward through the commercials, so you'll spend less time watching TV and, therefore, less time with the TV turned on and burning energy.
- 3. Dim.** The lower the contrast and brightness of your TV screen, the less energy the device uses. Factory-set levels are usually higher than necessary.
- 4. Listen.** Lowering the volume by as little as 2 percent saves some energy, even if you only lower it during commercials.
- 5. Alternatives.** Instead of watching shows on TV, view them on a laptop, desktop, tablet, or phone.



Sign up for SmartHub to access your account

SmartHub is a great place to obtain information about your account, including your daily usage, as well as tracking up to 24 months of billing history. Also, you're able to easily pay your bill online using SmartHub! To sign up for SmartHub access, just go to our website, franklinrec.coop, and click on the SmartHub logo.

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