

A WORD FROM



**Garrett Thompson**  
General Manager

## Why don't utilities bury more overhead power lines?

Across the country, we've experienced several natural disasters that have caused widespread outages – wildfires out west, hurricanes down south, a destructive derecho that swept through our own state in August, and of course blizzards and snowstorms.

Following widespread or prolonged outages, folks often ask why electric utilities don't bury more overhead power lines to prevent future outage events. This question really boils down to the reliability and affordability of electric service.

### Reliable service is our daily priority

First, you should know that your local electric cooperative works hard to maintain safe, reliable electric service to member-consumers. In fact, the five-year average reliability rating for Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative is an impressive

99.98%. This means that from 2015 to 2019, your electric co-op kept the lights on for an average of 99.98% of the time, despite severe weather threats like blizzards, tornadoes, thunderstorms, and ice storms. According to our five-year data, a member-consumer experiences one outage per year, lasting 119 minutes on average.

### Maintaining affordable electricity

With extremely reliable service in place, decisions about burying power lines or building overhead usually come down to cost. In our local experience, sometimes the cost to bury infrastructure can be more expensive than building it overhead, depending on several variables like terrain and population density. Whatever option is selected, the costs ultimately need to be paid by co-op member-consumers.

For our service area and terrain, it's often cheaper and more cost effective for Franklin REC to maintain reliable service of overhead infrastructure through pole testing, vegetation management efforts, and locating strategic sections of the distribution system underground.

### Local decision-making

Franklin REC considers several options and variables when reviewing ways to improve system reliability. Sometimes, your co-op will make the decision to bury strategic sections of power lines when it's feasible to do so.

At your cooperative, the elected board of directors work diligently with operations and finance employees to balance the reliability, affordability, and safety of electric service to you. Because your co-op is owned and governed by the members it serves, our only priority is working for you and serving the needs of your community.

## Update to the 2020 Youth Tour cancellation

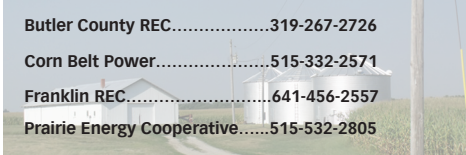
In April 2020, Franklin REC was informed the 2020 Youth Tour was unfortunately canceled due to COVID-19. Prior to this announcement, Franklin REC had conducted the search for our local Youth Tour representative. We had three outstanding candidates compete by quiz, essay, and interview process. With the cancellation of the all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C., the board of directors decided to award the applicants scholarships for future educational expenses. The award amount is the value of the trip split among the three applicants based on their placement during the interview process, respectively.



# Grain bin requirements

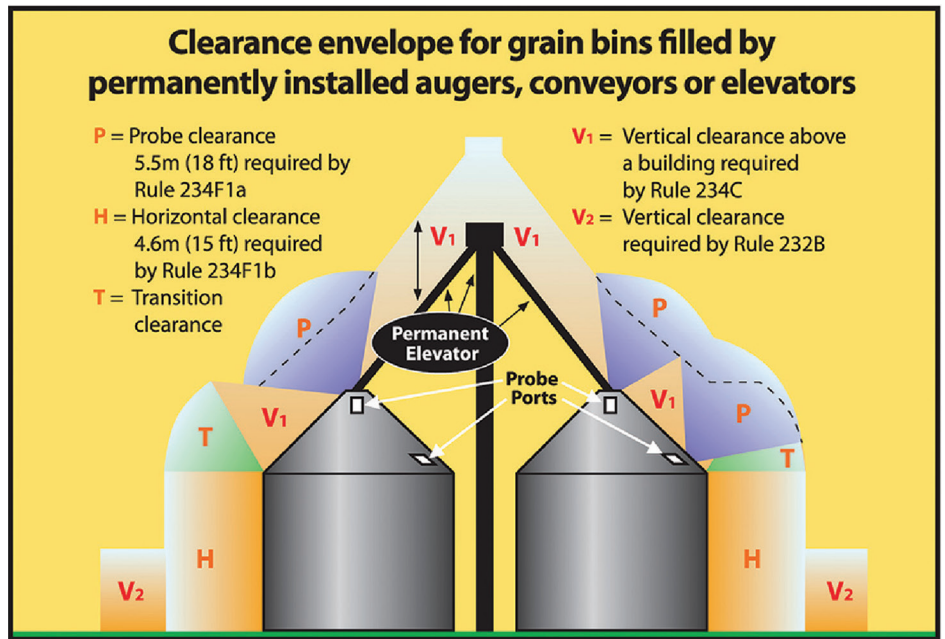
When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact your electric cooperative. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

The drawings at the right show the specific clearances required for both scenarios. If you have any questions concerning the drawings, please contact your cooperative listed here.

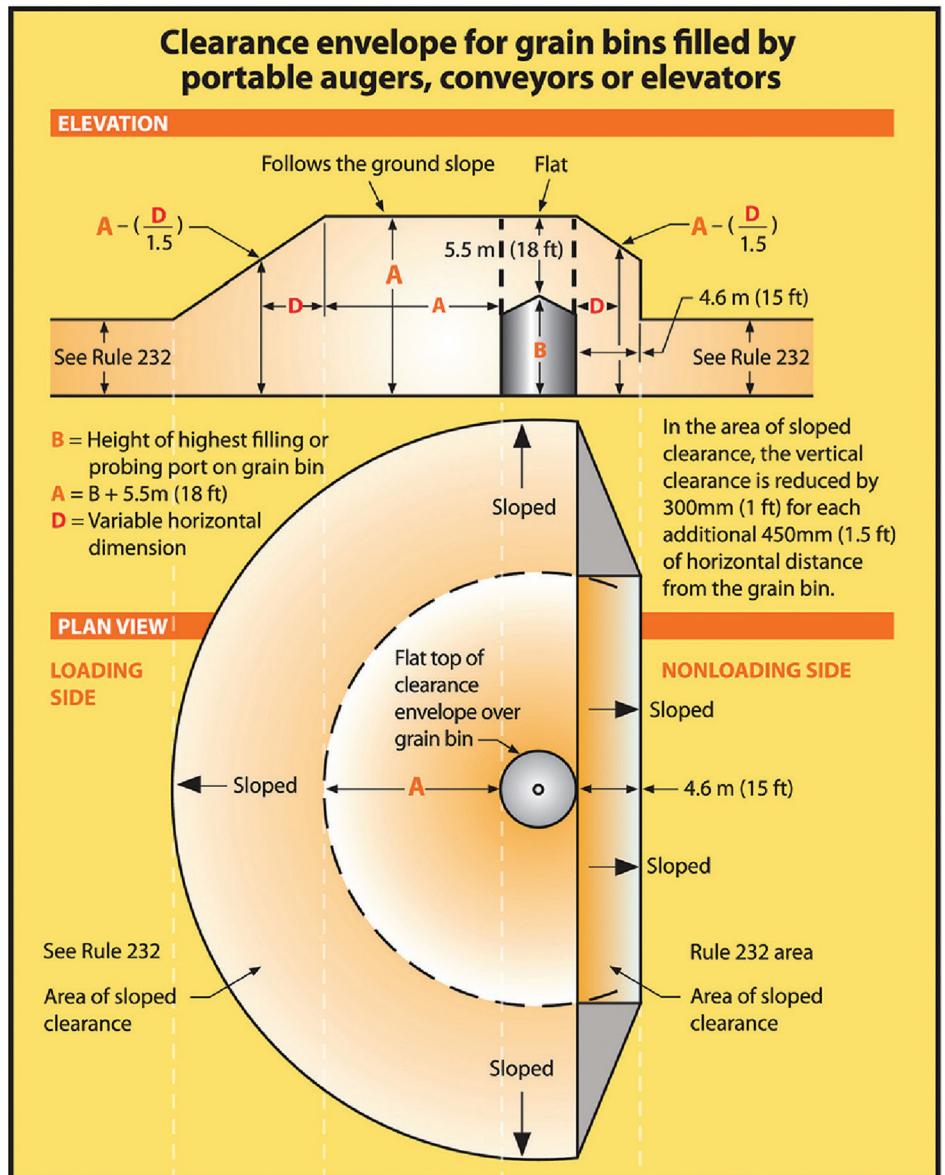


According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 -- 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (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. (The Iowa Utilities Board has adopted this language.)

**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 of 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 for 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.



From IEEE Std. C2-2017, "National Electrical Safety Code." © Copyright 2016 by IEEE. All rights reserved. The IEEE disclaims any responsibility or liability resulting from the placement and use in the described manner.



# LINEWORKERS BRING THE LIGHT.

**Lineworker Appreciation Day**  
On April 12, remember to  
#ThankALineworker.

## Thank a lineworker on April 12

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training; ongoing education; dedication; and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent your cooperative, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 12, or any time you see a lineworker, thank them for their exceptional service.



## Farmers: Stay safe during planting

As farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, your cooperative urges farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines.

- Always be aware of the location of power lines.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds.
- Remember that electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects.
- If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it.
- If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help.
- If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members.

RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one-time contribution or a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others.

## RECare MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

### RECare Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will make a one-time contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_



Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperatives

Return to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



(L to R) First row – Al Fink, Hunter Sutter, Chace Klein, and Tom Demro; second row – Brenda DeYoung, Cole Marzen, Emily Rush, Jens Hovenga, Madison Alert, Justin Wenzel, and Christy Mason

## Thank you to our employees!

At Franklin REC we appreciate the commitment and loyalty of our employees. On Monday, April 12, we will observe National Lineworkers' Appreciation Day, and on Wednesday, April 21, Administrative Professionals' Day. From working safely every day to being dedicated to our membership, thank you!



Jim Wolfe (left), Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives job training and safety instructor, presents John Quasdorf, Franklin REC line superintendent, with the Certificate of Safety Achievement for Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative.

## Congratulations!

Franklin REC is excited to announce the addition of two babies to employee families.

Brexley Ann was born to Robert and Madison Alert (consumer accountant) on February 11.

Leland James Marzen was born to Cole Marzen (apprentice lineman) and Kelsey Putman on March 3. They also have a son, Jaxson.

*Welcome to the Franklin REC family, Brexley and Leland!*



## Basin scholarship recipients announced



Congratulations to Joshua Bartling, Ackley, Franklin REC's \$1,000 Basin scholarship recipient. Joshua attends Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny. His parents are Steven and Michelle Bartling.



Congratulations to Benjamin Sauke, Sheffield, Franklin REC's \$500 Basin scholarship recipient. Benjamin attends Hampton-Dumont High School. His parents are Chris and Amy Sauke.

## SPARKS of news

### Board room highlights

At their most recent meetings, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment.
- Appointed voting delegates for CRC annual meeting.
- Approved tariff changes for co-generation.
- Approved Level-1 Interconnection Agreement changes.
- Approved policy changes.
- Approved the 2020 Reliability Report.
- Approved estate patronage retirements.
- Reviewed monthly financial reports.



**FRANKLIN RURAL  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

INTouch® is published monthly for members of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative  
1560 Highway 65 • PO Box 437 • Hampton, IA 50441  
PHONES: 641.456.2557 • FAX: 641.456.5183  
OFFICE HOURS: Mon. - Fri., 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
GENERAL MANAGER: Garrett Thompson • EDITOR: Anne Sesker, CCC



Like us on Facebook

Online bill pay at [www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

**smart choices**

Sign up for our e-newsletter at [www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)



Visit us online at [www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.