



# Highline Headlines

Access Energy is dedicated to exceeding members' and customers' expectations for safe, reliable, efficient service and environmental responsibility.

**OFFICE CLOSED**  
**Memorial Day**  
**May 26th**

**For after hours**  
**emergencies call**  
**800.452.7819**  
**or 319.385.1580**

**May is**  
**National**  
**Electrical**  
**Safety Month**

**Safety**

[www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com)

## Dividends Allocated to your Account

**Y**our patronage dividend notice has been mailed! At the regular Board of Directors meeting in April, dividend allocations were set for 2013 margins. Notice of your portion of allocations has been mailed. You will NOT receive a check for this amount. It is a notice stating the amount of dividends that will be allocated to your dividend account for the year 2013.

### WHAT IS ALLOCATING?

Once a satisfactory level of margins or profits has been determined by the Board, the cooperative assigns the rest of the margins to you, the members (each of who owns a portion of the cooperative), according to the amount of energy purchases you made that year.

Each member has a dividend account at the cooperative where your dividend allocations accumulate. When the Board allocates margins, your portion is stored in your account.

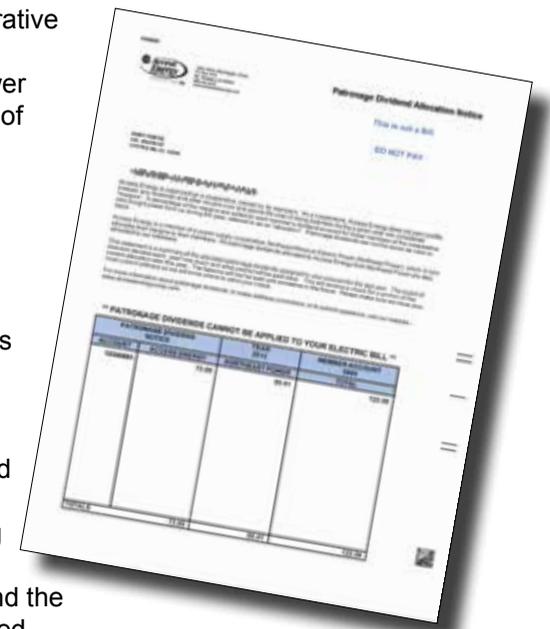
### HOW MUCH WAS ALLOCATED?

This year Access Energy Cooperative allocated \$946,943 and passed through allocations from NE Power of \$631,260 for a total allocation of \$1,578,203.

### WHEN DO I GET PAID THESE ALLOCATIONS?

The amount of total allocations is reviewed by the Board, in conjunction with the cooperative's financial position, to determine whether or not to generate a dividend payment each year. If a payment of dividends is approved by the Board, checks will be distributed at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, August 5th.

For members unable to attend the annual meeting, checks are mailed out soon after the meeting. They are sent to the most current address we have on file at the cooperative. Please keep your address current at



the cooperative even if you move off of our lines to ensure payment of your dividends.

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## Calling All Safety Stories



**D**o you have a story about something that happened to you involving electricity that you could share with the other members? Sometimes sharing your experiences can help save another life. We would like to start a feature in our newsletter and social media avenues to share stories between members on staying safe around electricity.

Please send your stories to [kbrumbaugh@accessenergycoop.com](mailto:kbrumbaugh@accessenergycoop.com) or to: SAFETY STORY, %Access Energy Cooperative, PO Box 440, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641. Thank you! #staysafe

## Manager's Corner



### General Manager/CEO Robert Swindell

I am happy to announce that we have finally received approval on all six of our applications for funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 404 Mitigation Program. This funding will allow us to upgrade 180 miles of line throughout the Cooperative.

The almost ten million dollar cost of the program will be shared between FEMA, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) and Access Energy Cooperative. FEMA will provide seventy five percent (75%),

HSEMD will provide ten percent (10%) and the Cooperative will provide fifteen percent (15%) of the cost of the projects.

Much of the line being replaced was constructed in the late 1950's and early 1960's. When these projects are completed, the vast majority of the old copper conductor we currently have will be replaced. With these improvements, along with our ongoing maintenance programs, the likelihood of significant damage due to ice storms will be greatly reduced.

With over 180 miles of line to build, you will more than likely see a number of contractors working throughout the cooperative's service area. Stanley Consultants, Inc. out of Muscatine, Iowa, was awarded the engineering and project management contract for our FEMA projects. Stanley will be starting their work in Lee County, but will be staking lines all over the system. Sherrill's Electric Utility Services, Inc. has employees working on obtaining easements for both the FEMA projects and our normal system improvements. We also have Legacy Power Line, Inc. currently rebuilding lines near Demark and Batavia. Once we start letting out the construction contracts for the FEMA projects we will have additional

contractors clearing the right of ways and building the lines.

We also have other contractors that assist us on our regular maintenance schedules. Maddy Tree Service and Midwest Spray Team & Sales, Inc. are working around the cooperative's service area on maintaining our right of ways. Ameripole Inspection Company is inspecting and treating our poles. All three of these companies play an important role in maintaining the cooperative's reliability to keep your power on. You may also see Great Plains Locating Services, Inc. which does the majority of our One Call underground line locates.

If you ever have any questions about anyone claiming to be working for the cooperative do not hesitate to give us a call at 866-242-4232 or 319-385-1580. We will verify that they are indeed working on behalf of our cooperative.

While every month is Electric Safety month here at our cooperative, The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) recognizes May as National Electric Safety Month. I would encourage you to visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org) for a bunch of great information on electric safety around your home and workplace.

## COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

**Access Energy Cooperative**  
1800 West Washington Street  
P.O. Box 440  
Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641

**Phone:** 319.385.1577  
**Toll free:** 866.242.4232  
**Fax:** 319.385.6873

**Website:**  
[www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com)  
**Email:**  
[contactus@accessenergycoop.com](mailto:contactus@accessenergycoop.com)

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
Monday-Friday  
(closed Saturdays, Sundays,  
& Holidays)  
Office: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Billing & account information can be accessed 24/7 by calling our office or by visiting our website.

Payments can be placed in the dropbox under the flag pole.

Visa and Mastercard accepted.

**After Hours Emergencies call:**  
319.385.1580  
or 800.452.7819

**General Manager/CEO:** Robert Swindell  
**Editor:** Kimberly Brumbaugh  
**Assistant Editor:** Cherty Wibben

### Officers and Directors:

Marvin Holtkamp	District 3	President
Ronald Campbell	District 2	Vice President
Joseph Heckethorn	District 1	Secretary
Larry White	District 2	Treasurer
Donald Atwood	District 1	Director
Fred Hickenbottom	District 1	Director
Jerry Barker	District 2	Director
Marvin Newton	District 3	Director
Victor Pierrot	District 3	Director

## Northeast Power Substation Work Begins for Iowa Fertilizer Plant



Construction of the Northeast Power substation that will provide power for the Iowa Fertilizer Plant near Wever, Iowa.



# What's in an Electric Cooperative?

When you hear the word “co-op,” what comes to mind? We hope you think of your friends here at Access Energy Cooperative, but maybe you think of a local farmers’ co-op or a credit union. You might be surprised to learn that co-ops, or cooperatives, can be found in many industries—and they offer a variety of services, each designed to serve their members in the best way possible.

A cooperative is a not-for-profit organization owned by its members. Across the globe, cooperatives remain steadfast, annually generating more than \$500 billion in revenue and providing more than 2 million jobs.

As a member of Access Energy Cooperative, you have a voice - in other words, you’re not just a customer, you own a part of the cooperative, and you have a vote in what goes on at the cooperative. Every August, you have the right to vote for the board of directors who make the policies under which we operate.

At Access Energy Cooperative, our mission is to provide you with safe, reliable, and efficient service, and environmental responsibility. For more information about the services we offer, visit [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com).

Source: Abby Berry

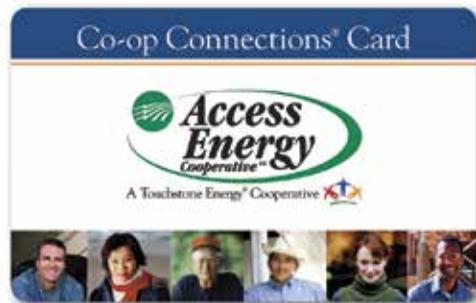
## Members Saving on Prescriptions

In March, twenty-seven members saved \$505 on their prescriptions.

To find out more on the discounts offered check out our website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com). We continue visiting with area businesses and adding to the list of local deals.

It's easy to save—you just have to show your card to participating merchants.

If you own a business and would like to offer a discount for the card, please contact Kim Brumbaugh at [kbrumbaugh@accessenergycoop.com](mailto:kbrumbaugh@accessenergycoop.com) or call our office.



### Energy Efficiency

*Tip of the Month*

A well-designed landscape provides both energy efficiency and curb appeal for your home. The type of vegetation you choose is as important as where they are planted. Sunlight streaming through windows and bearing down on the roof can drive up air conditioner use. Using shade trees and shrubs in your landscaping plan can help reduce cooling costs. In the winter, deciduous trees lose their leaves and let in warmth.

Source: Energy.gov

## Take Control & Save

A Cooperative Effort for Energy Efficiency

# Energy Efficiency Rebates & Programs

### ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

- Energy Star® Room Air Conditioner.....\$ 50
- Water heater (Electric only; At least 90% efficient).....\$100

### HEAT PUMPS

- Air to Air Source - at least 16.5 SEER (w/Elec. Resist.).. \$100 per ton
- Mini-Split Air Source - at least 16.5 SEER ..... \$250 per ton
- Dual Fuel Source - at least 16.5 SEER (gas back up) ..... \$250 per ton
- Ground Source - at least 19.1 EER
- \* replacing existing ground source unit..... \$400 per ton
- \* new & replacing other heat source type ..... \$750 per ton

### ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES .....\$250 per KW

- Capped at capacity. Access Energy Cooperative owns any carbon credits generated.

### HOME WEATHERIZATION INCENTIVES .....Up to \$500 maximum

- Incentives are available to those who choose to make energy saving improvements recommended by Access Energy Cooperative following a FREE energy audit conducted by us.
- Improvements must be completed in recommended order by AEC.

### BUSINESS LIGHTING REBATES

- Must have at least 10 eligible fixtures at a commercial, industrial or ag business member’s account of Access Energy Cooperative.
- \* Fluorescent T-5 and T-8 lighting systems with electronic ballasts
- \* LED (light emitting diode) and LED exit signs
- \* Occupancy Sensors
- Bulbs and fixtures must be evaluated by AEC to determine eligibility based on an audit of existing lighting prior to any installation of new equipment. A knowledgeable employee from the business needs to be present to guide AEC through the initial walk-through lighting audit. A final walk-through must be conducted after the project is completed.
- Total rebate amount is limited to \$30,000 per member per year and will not exceed 40% of the total equipment price.

### FREE ENERGY AUDITS & REBATE FOR IMPROVEMENTS

- Conducted by a qualified Access Energy Representative
- Blower door test to check for air leaks and gaps
- Inspect insulation, doors, windows, lighting, appliances, and much more

Weatherization improvements suggested at audit are eligible for incentive up to \$500

### LOW INTEREST LOANS

Access Energy Cooperative has ERC loans available at low interest rates for the cost of materials and labor for energy efficiency home improvements in new or existing structures. For more details see our website.

Specific requirements apply to individual rebates. For more information on rebates, low interest loans or to schedule a free energy audit call 385.1577 or 1.866.242.4232 or visit our website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com).

# Tree Trimming Helps Keep People Safe

To protect electric reliability and personal safety it is important that your Access Energy Cooperative crews periodically trim trees near power lines. Tree limbs and power lines are a bad combination, especially with storms involving high winds, lightning, or ice. Trees are one of the most common causes of an electric service outage.

Tree limbs and branches that extend into power lines also can pose a significant risk to public safety during any kind of weather. Anyone in close contact or trying to trim or climb such trees could be seriously injured.

Professionally trained crews trim trees around our primary transmission and distribution lines, rotating the areas they work in yearly. Franchise and easement agreements allow us to trim affected trees on private property. The goal is to trim no more than is necessary for public safety and electric service reliability. Fast-growing trees may need to be cut back more than slow-growing trees.

Always check for nearby power lines before planting or trimming your own trees. Try to plant trees away from power lines. If a power line is in the vicinity, determine how tall and wide a tree is likely to be when it is fully grown. Placing low-growing trees near power lines will help prevent service problems and limit the need for tree trimming in the future. Trimming a tree near a power line will require a

professional tree trimmer and you should contact your electric utility about this.

Also, remember to contact Iowa One Call (IOC), by dialing 811 or 1-800-331-5666, at least 48 hours in advance of any tree planting to have underground utilities marked. Please contact our office with any questions or concerns about tree trimming or planting. If questions or concerns persist, you may also contact the Iowa Utilities Board toll-free at 1-877-565-4450.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.  
It's the law!!**

## Stop in to Get Your F·R·E·E Weather Radio App Code for Your Smart Phone

*Install on your smart phone for free!!*



## 2014 Poster Contest Winners

### First Grade

*Left to Right:  
Olivia Martinez  
Cooper Buffington  
Camden Buffington  
Kailey Neil*



### Second Grade

### Third Grade



### Fourth Grade



*Left to Right:  
Saul Figueroa  
Isabel Kann  
Alician Todd  
Zephan Abel*

### Fifth Grade

*Left to Right:  
Logan Lee  
Jenna Buffington  
Kaya Lee  
Kendall Dascher*



### Sixth Grade



## Rates for Services

The Cooperative is responsible for servicing and maintaining all facilities up to the point of delivery, including the meter. All wiring and equipment on the load side of the meter belongs to the member-consumer and is the member-consumer's responsibility to maintain. If the member-consumer calls the cooperative's personnel to correct an interruption to service and the cause is found to be in the member-consumer's wiring or equipment, or for any other work that is done by the cooperative on the load side of the meter, the following is a schedule of rates for services:

### VEHICLE RATES

Pickup.....	\$1.35/mile
Trencher .....	\$50.00/hour
Digger Derrick.....	\$65.00/hour plus \$3.00/mile
Fork Lift.....	\$4.25/hour
Uni-Loader.....	\$25.00/hour
Basket Truck.....	\$25.00/hour plus \$2.50/mile
Skid Steer.....	\$40.00/hour
Maintenance Truck .....	\$20.00/hour plus \$2.00/mile
Chipper.....	\$50.00/hour
Excavator.....	\$50.00/hour
Dump Truck .....	\$2.00/mile

### LABOR RATES (MIN. LABOR CHARGE \$75.00)

Hourly rate.....	\$70.00/person/hour
Overtime Rate .....	\$105.00/person/hour
Double time Rate.....	\$140.00/person/hour

# Make Your Yard Save You Money

Location, location, location is the mantra in real estate, but it also applies to your yard this time of year when the search is on to lower energy bills and create curb appeal. Positioning the right combination of plants and trees can yield shade, beautify, and unearth energy savings. Such smart or energy-efficient landscaping, claims the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), can on average, provide enough energy savings to see a return on your initial investment in less than eight years.

Carefully positioned trees can reduce a household's energy consumption for heating and cooling by up to 25 percent. Using computer models, the DOE determined that proper placement of only three trees on your property can save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in yearly energy costs. Just a few simple landscaping considerations can make a big difference in your home's comfort and in the efficiency of your heating and cooling systems:

- Use trees and plants to shade a window air conditioner. Having shade can increase its efficiency by as much as 10 percent. For good airflow and access, position plants more than three feet from the air conditioner.
- Shrubs and trees can form windbreaks or protective walls that keep wind chill away from a home. That's important because wind speed lowers outside air temperatures, and ultimately saves on higher heating costs. Common turf grass and other low-growing plants are ideal barriers. So are evergreens, especially when combined with a wall or fence to deflect or even lift wind over a home. For best protection, plan on leaving between two to five times the mature height of the trees or shrubs between the windbreak and the protected home.

## MADE IN THE SHADE

- Indoors, you may be protected from the sun's rays, but your energy bill can rise as your air conditioner works harder to keep your house cool and comfortable. Planting shade trees can add to your comfort at home by dropping the surrounding air temperature by as much as nine degrees Fahrenheit. But

choosing just the right tree may require a compass and patience while they grow to work for you.

- When selecting shade trees, keep in mind the mature height of the tree and the shape of its shade canopy in relation to the height of your home. These factors are important because they should influence how far from the house you decide to plant a tree. **Always avoid planting near underground utility lines.**
- Shading takes time—a 6-foot to 8-foot deciduous tree planted near a house will begin shading windows in a year. Depending on the species and the home, the tree will shade the roof in five to 10 years.
- Make planting shade trees due west of west-facing windows your first priority.
- Select a tree that can be planted within 20 feet of the window and that will grow at least 10 feet taller than that window. If you have the space, use as many trees as needed to create a continuous row along all major west-and east-facing windows.
- Contrary to intuition, the least energy efficient place for a tree is to the south of a house.

Different trees can serve a variety of purposes. To block summer heat while letting sun filter through in the winter months, use deciduous trees or those that lose their leaves seasonally. Evergreens and shrubs, on the other hand, are ideal for providing continuous shade and blocking heavy winds. Also, keep in mind that not all shade plants are tall. Shrubs and sturdy groundcover plants also provide good shade by reducing heat radiation and cooling air before it reaches your home's walls and windows.

Start planting savings and let your yard do all the work—a well-placed tree, shrub, or vine can deliver effective shade, act as a windbreak, and reduce your energy bills.

Sources: B. Denise Hawkins; U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Energy.gov

## Know Where to Plant Trees for Safety

While carefully planting trees can save you money, you also have to keep in mind safety when planting them.

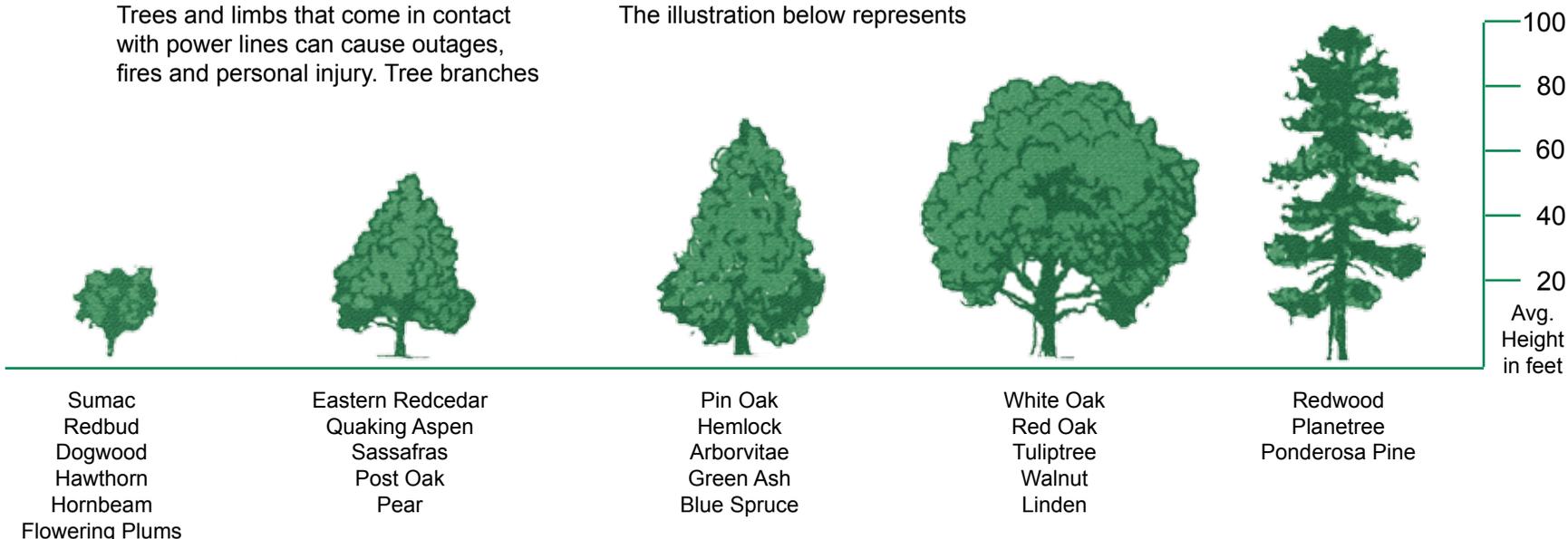
If you are preparing to plant trees be sure to place them in a location that will not interfere with power lines. Trees and limbs that come in contact with power lines can cause outages, fires and personal injury. Tree branches

rubbing on power lines are one of the top reasons for power outages.

So before you plant trees, consider what the mature height will likely be. For example, if you are planting a tree that will be 10 feet tall, plant it 10 feet away from the power lines.

The illustration below represents

typical mature heights—though they may be larger if in natural settings. Check out the [Arboday.org](http://Arboday.org) tree Guide for expected mature height and crown spread of trees you are considering. **Look up before you plant!!**



# Access Energy in Our Local Schools

Dear Mr. Swindell

I am writing you to thank you and your staff for their time and efforts in their presentation and representing your company on Tuesday, March 18th. Kim, Alan, and Gary all did a great job of adapting a lesson and making it meaningful to the students, giving some great insight to the topic of Energy as it relates to our 8th Grade Science Curriculum. These discussion points of Conservation, Efficiency, Thermal Energy, and Energy Transfer are all points of emphasis as we talk throughout the next few weeks and we were thrilled to have 3 people that could speak intelligently on the subject of how they use Science, Math, and Technology on a daily basis as it applies to your business. Furthermore, their quick and timely preparation for our guest speaking and putting this together in less than 2 weeks was appreciated.

This was also a great opportunity for our students to see the benefits that they receive from your programs and support of the community. The scholarship opportunities, recently the trips to Washington DC and many other things such as help in local communities and teams. On behalf of our school and community, thank you for all Access Energy does for us locally. It doesn't always go unseen and unnoticed.

Your staff should be commended for their hard work and effort to pass on this information in a way for our students to interact and apply science that is being done daily in this community.

Thank you,  
Linc Davis &  
Laura Fernandez



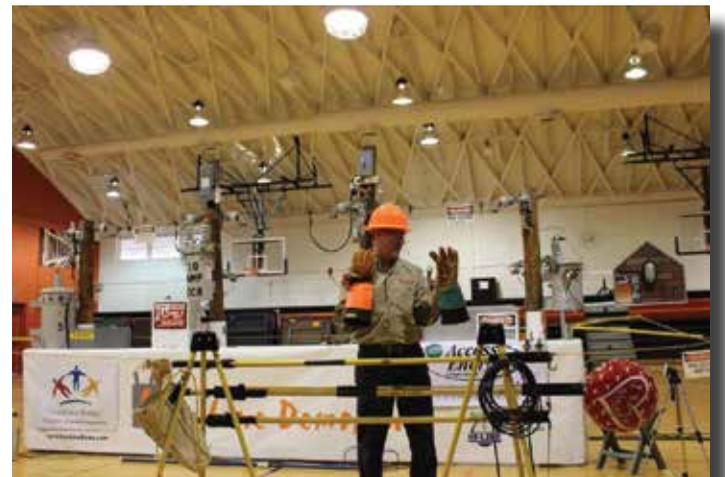
*Top: Alan Raymer describes a home energy audit with a blower door test to students at the Mount Pleasant Middle School.*



*Bottom: Gary Stevens showing how an infrared camera is used to find temperature variance and heat transfer.*



*Access Energy Cooperative co-sponsored safety education for Van Buren schools. Kyle Finley is shown giving his Live Line Safety Demonstration to students this past March.*



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# Plug-ins That Keep Kids Safe

They may look like standard outlets, but tamper resistant receptacles, or TRRs, are different. Their most distinguishable feature – a built-in shutter system that prevents foreign objects from being inserted – sets them apart. Only a plug that applies simultaneous, equal pressure to both slots will disengage the cover plates, allowing access to the contact points. Without this synchronized pressure, the cover plates remain closed.

While a child's curiosity knows no boundaries, it can sometimes put them in peril, especially when electricity is involved. Located in practically every room of the house, electrical outlets and receptacles are fixtures, but they also represent potential hazards for children.

In recent years, more homes have been equipping their electrical outlets with TRRs, but in many public facilities, like hospital pediatric wards, these safeguards have been required for more than 20 years. Their efficiency also prompted the National Electrical Code to make TRRs standard in all new home construction. Existing homes can be easily retrofitted with TRRs using the same installation guidelines that apply to standard receptacles. TRRs should only be installed by a licensed electrician and should carry a label from a nationally recognized, independent testing lab such as UL, ETL, or CSA.



#### TRRs by the Numbers

- Each year 2,400 children suffer severe shock and burns resulting from inserting objects into the slots of electrical receptacles. That's nearly seven children a day.
- It is estimated that 6-12 child fatalities result from children tampering electrical receptacles.
- Installing a TRR in a newly constructed home is only about 50¢ more than a traditional receptacle.
- Existing homes can be retrofitted with TRRs for as little as \$2.00 per outlet.

For more information on TRRS, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

# Good Time to Learn Electrical Safety

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and Access Energy Cooperative is joining with the Electrical Safety Foundation International to raise awareness about potential home electrical hazards and the importance of electrical safety. This year's campaign, "Back to the Basics," challenges consumers to make home electrical safety assessments a priority.

"Modern homes run on electricity, but if you don't properly maintain your electrical products they can create hazards," warns Don Roach, Director of Engineering and Operations. "The good news is that eliminating electrical hazards from your home doesn't have to be difficult or expensive."

Many homes and their electrical systems were built before most modern-day home electronics and appliances were even invented. Today's increased demand for energy can overburden an older home's electrical system.

Access Energy Cooperative offers the following tips to help identify and eliminate electrical hazards to protect yourself, your family, and your home:

- Make sure entertainment centers and computer equipment have plenty of space around them for ventilation.
- Use extension cords as a temporary solution, and never as a permanent power supply.
- Do not place extension cords in high traffic areas, under carpets, or across walkways, where they pose a potential tripping hazard.
- Use a surge protector to protect your computer and other electronic equipment from damage caused by voltage changes.
- Heavy reliance on power strips is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have additional outlets installed by a qualified, licensed electrician.
- Keep liquids, including drinks, away from electrical items such as televisions and computers.

Electrical safety awareness and education among consumers, families, employees, and communities will prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities.

**Coloring contest on page 8**

The featured recipe winner who submitted this recipe will receive a \$10 electric bill credit. Check out our recipe section at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com) for a new recipe or to submit your favorite recipe. Or mail us your recipe and we will post it for you.



## Blueberry Cheesecake Bars

From the Kitchen of Anonymus

1 pouch Betty Crocker oatmeal cookie mix  
 ½ cup butter or margarine, softened  
 4 eggs  
 3 - 8oz. packages cream cheese, softened

¾ cup sugar  
 ½ cup whipping cream  
 1 - 10 oz. jar blueberry spreadable fruit  
 1½ cups fresh or thawed blueberries

Heat oven to 350°F. Spray bottom and sides of 13"x9" pan with cooking spray. In large bowl, beat cookie mix, butter and 1 egg on low until soft dough forms. Press in bottom of pan. Bake 15 minutes; cool 10 minutes. In a large bowl beat cream cheese and sugar on medium until fluffy. Add whipping cream and 3 eggs; beat on low until well blended. Spread spreadable fruit over crust; sprinkle with 1½ cup blueberries. Pour cream cheese mixture evenly over blueberries, spreading gently to cover. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until center is set. Cool in pan on cooling rack 30 minutes. Refrigerate at least 2 hours. Garnish with fresh blueberries. Keep refrigerated.

[www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com)

Last month's crossword winner is Carl Renstrom of Wever.

# Welcome Eli & Gabby!!



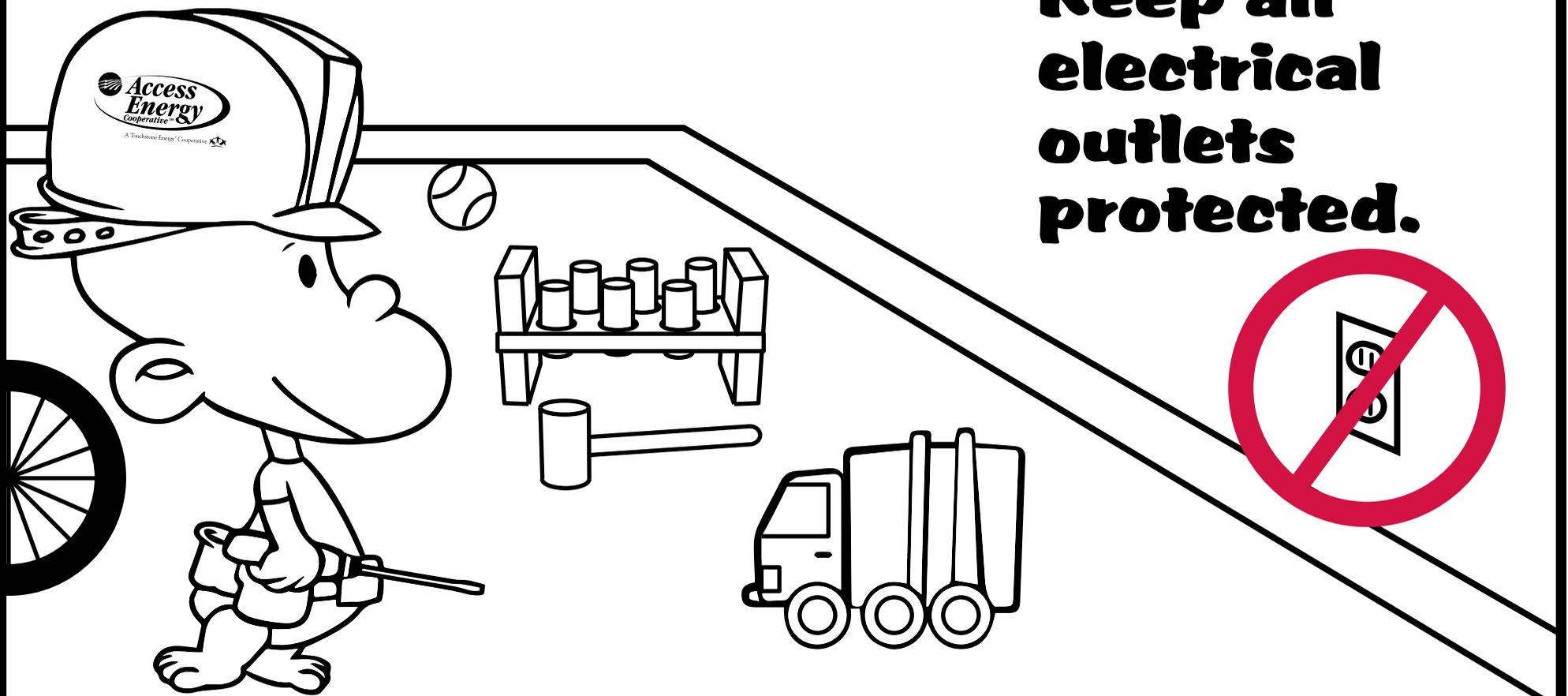
Access Energy Cooperative would like to welcome Gabrielle Stokes and Eli Harscher. Gabby is the newest addition to our Engineering department. She previously worked in Washington D.C. at the United States Department of Agriculture in the Rural Utilities Service department as an Electrical Engineer. Eli is joining our operations crew as an Apprentice Lineman. He is a graduate of Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon, Iowa, with a Powerline Certification. Eli previously worked at Echo Powerline in Louisiana and Shelton Construction in Missouri.

# Kids Win \$25 In Our Safety Coloring Contest

In honor of National Electric Safety Month for May, Access Energy Cooperative is holding a coloring contest for kids about safety. Please fill in the information at the bottom, decorate your page any way you want, and send it in by May 30th for a chance to win \$25.00 !

# May is Electrical Safety Month

**Keep all electrical outlets protected.**



Entry Deadline: May 30, 2014

Age Group:    3 & Under    4-5    6-8    9 & Above

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Must Be a Member of Access Energy Cooperative**

Parent(s) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Entries to: Coloring Contest, Access Energy Cooperative, PO Box 440, Mount Pleasant, IA 52641