

# living with energy

IN IOWA



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

DECEMBER 2017

Season's Greetings from everyone at Access Energy Cooperative!

## Best Wishes

for a happy, safe and energy-smart holiday!

Visit our website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com)

Find out how **power** is restored after a major storm

How long will your **water heater** last?

Access Energy Cooperative **youth** programs launched

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec. 25-26 **Office closed for Christmas**
- Jan. 1 **Office closed for New Year's Day**
- Jan. 9 **Welcome back to legislators at the state Capitol**
- Jan. 10-11 **Power Quality Workshop for key accounts at the cooperative's office**

## OFFICE CLOSING

Even though our office is closed, you can call us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 866-242-4232 for answers to billing and account questions, paying your bill and reporting service interruptions.

*Have a safe and happy holiday season!*



Access Energy Cooperative is dedicated to exceeding members' expectations for safe, reliable and efficient service, while being a good citizen in our communities.

**Office:** Access Energy Cooperative  
1800 W. Washington St., P.O. Box 440  
Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641

**Phone:** 319-385-1577 or 866-242-4232

**Fax:** 319-385-6873

**Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):** 800-292-8989

**Website:** www.accessenergycoop.com

**Facebook:** facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop

**Twitter:** twitter.com/AccessEnergyC

**E-mail:** contactus@accessenergycoop.com

**Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Friday, 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays

Payments can be placed in dropbox under flag pole.  
Visa and MasterCard accepted.

**General Manager/CEO:** Kevin Wheeler  
**Editor:** Kimberly Davis  
**Assistant Editor:** Cherity Wibben

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

# Cook up some holiday energy savings!

BY KEVIN WHEELER

For many of us, the best holidays involve home-cooked meals and the wonderful aromas of turkey, stuffing and baked goods wafting throughout the house. It means a busy kitchen and a bustling house full of family and friends. If this rings true for you – despite the increased kitchen activity – you still have an opportunity to save energy during the holidays.

In addition to being the “heart of your home,” your kitchen could pump savings back into your wallet. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, cooking accounts for 4.5 percent of total energy use in U.S. homes. This number, combined with the energy use associated with refrigeration, dishwashing and hot water heating, means that as much as 15 percent of the energy in the average American home is used in the kitchen. So, saving energy here can have a significant impact on your household budget.

For example, when preparing side dishes, baked goods, soups and such, consider using small appliances like a slow cooker, toaster oven, microwave or warming plate instead of your conventional oven or stovetop. These small appliances are a smart, energy-saving alternative, typically using about half the energy of a stove.

When using your oven, don't peek! Opening the oven door can lower the temperature by as much as 25 degrees and causes your oven to work harder (consuming more energy) to return to the desired cooking temperature. If your recipe calls for baking the dish more than an hour, it's not necessary to preheat the oven (except for most breads). If your oven is electric, you can likely

turn the oven off for the last 5 to 10 minutes of cooking and allow residual heat to complete the job. On the cooktop, clean burners and reflectors increase efficiency and offer better heating, so don't neglect this small but important task.

Just as keeping the oven door closed seals in efficiency and enables the stove to operate more economically, the same rule applies to the refrigerator and freezer. Keep the doors closed as much as possible so cold air doesn't escape. However, leaving the door open for a longer period of time while you load groceries or remove items you need is more efficient than opening and closing it several times.

If you're entertaining a large group, you may be able to give your furnace a brief holiday. When your oven is working hard and you have a houseful of guests, the heat from the stove and the guests will keep your house comfortable, enabling you to turn down the thermostat.

When it's time to clean up, extend fellowship to the kitchen and wash and dry dirty dishes by hand. This uses less energy than a dishwasher. However, don't leave the water running continuously, or you'll waste energy. If you do use the dishwasher, run it with full loads only – and use the energy-saving cycle. Note that dishwashers that have overnight or air power dry settings can save up to 10 percent of your dishwashing energy costs.

By adapting these efficiency practices in your kitchen, energy savings will be one more thing to be thankful for this holiday season. ⚡



Kevin Wheeler is the general manager/CEO of Access Energy Cooperative.

# Safety education for kids is an important part of what we do

Commitment to our communities and to safety is an important principle under which Access Energy Cooperative operates. Teaching kids

how to stay safe around and to respect electricity is not only important to our cooperative, it's important to every one of our employees. ⚡



Each year, we offer area schools a safety education presentation geared toward 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, showing them things they should and shouldn't do around electricity. Dan Phillips (*standing, left*), Access Energy Cooperative's safety director, was accompanied by Diane Magnani, the co-op's executive assistant, to a session at Van Allen Elementary in Mt. Pleasant.



This year, the cooperative added a live line safety demonstration to our education offerings, contracted through Corn Belt Energy in Illinois and presented by Steve Hancock. This is a more intense, interactive safety education program geared toward middle school and high school students.

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

### Win a powerful cordless vacuum that cleans from floor to ceiling!

Black+Decker's new Powerseries Pro line of cordless vacuums can be used as uprights or detachable canisters with integrated extension wands for accessing hard-to-reach areas. With powerful suction and up to 60 minutes of runtime, the lineup includes a standard version, a second model designed to handle pet hair and a third version for allergy sufferers. Prices start at about \$150; visit [www.blackanddecker.com](http://www.blackanddecker.com) for details.

To enter this month's contest for a standard unit, go to the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website at [www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com) and complete the entry form no later than Dec. 31, 2017. ⚡



## Access Energy Cooperative scholarship details announced



### \$9,000 in scholarships is available to high school seniors

- Six \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded – two in each of the cooperative's three districts.
- All winners must be high school seniors receiving post-secondary (college or technical school) education.
- Parents or legal guardians must be members of the cooperative.

### Here's where to obtain an application

- Go to any area high school guidance counselor office.
- Contact the Access Energy Cooperative headquarters office in Mt. Pleasant at 866-242-4232.
- Visit the co-op's website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com), download the application and fax, mail or bring it to our office. You also may submit the form online.

Applications are due in our office March 15, 2018. Winners will be announced at their senior awards ceremonies.

### When are the scholarships given?

\$500 of the scholarship money will be awarded to recipients at the completion of their first semester of post-secondary school education, with proof of enrollment for the second semester. The remaining \$1,000 will be awarded after completion of the third semester, with proof of enrollment for the fourth semester. ⚡

LEND A HELPING HAND

# Help others by contributing to RECare this holiday season

RECare is a program where members help other members in need. You may make a one-time contribution to the RECare program, or you may enclose an amount each month with your monthly electric bill. Just one dollar a month will make a difference! Last year, our members contributed \$2,990 to help others.

The local Community Action Program administers this program, and recipients must meet their guidelines. ⚡



## Member Authorization Form

I would like to make a (check one):

One-time contribution of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly contribution of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(This will be added to my bill.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Account # (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

FINANCIAL MATTERS

# Idle service invoices will be mailed in January

Notices for idle services (services in place but not used for 12 months or longer) are being sent this month. If you receive a notice, please review it and determine whether or not you wish to retain the service. If you no longer wish to retain the service, please complete and return the notice to our office. For any idle service that we haven't received a form to remove,

we'll send an invoice for the annual idle service fee the following month.

The annual fee for an idle service is currently \$107, which covers the cost of the cooperative's investment in the facilities. This fee cannot be divided into monthly installments. If you receive an idle service letter and are no longer the owner of the property, please call our office at 866-242-4232. ⚡



YOUTH TOUR

# Access Energy Cooperative is looking for the next generation of leaders

What do 1,800 high school students, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives have in common? The answer is the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, of course! Youth Tour was established with one thought in mind: to inspire our next generation of leaders. Since 1964, more than 50,000 young Americans have taken advantage of this special opportunity offered by their electric cooperatives.

It all takes place June 8-14, 2018, when hundreds of electric co-ops across the country send students to Washington, D.C., for a chance to learn about the cooperative business model and enjoy a full week of sightseeing. While in D.C., participants will meet with their

elected officials and discuss issues that are important back home.

## Access Energy Cooperative sends two students each year.

If you're a high school sophomore or junior interested in traveling to Washington, D.C., on a once-in-a-lifetime trip, check our website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com) to download or submit an application – or call the co-op's office at 866-242-4232. You'll also find applications at your guidance counselor's office.

Applications are due in our office Feb. 26, 2018. Personal interviews to choose our two student representatives will be held at our office March 6, 2018. You must participate in an interview that date to be considered. ⚡



IN THE NEWS

## Photo Contest is underway!

Fifty dollars will be awarded to each photographer whose entry is selected as one of the 13 featured photos in our 2019 calendar.

Submit all entries by March 31, 2018 to:

### Photo Contest

c/o Access Energy Cooperative

P.O. Box 440

Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641

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

for rules and more information. ⚡

