



LIVE LINES

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  November 2024

\$350,000 Being Returned To Members

Electric cooperatives, such as Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative, are unique in the electric utility industry in that they are not-for-profit. Any money that the REC receives, throughout the year that is not needed for operations, is allocated back to the membership at the end of each year. These allocated “profits” are called capital credits. In time, your capital credit allocation will be refunded to you.

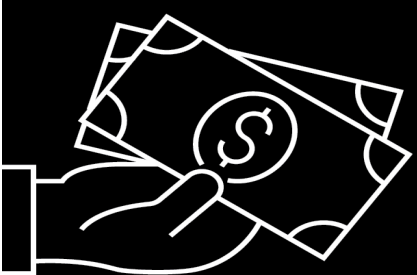
Bill Credits and Checks Mailed In November

Woodbury County REC will be refunding capital credits in the total amount of \$350,000 this month. If you were a past member of the REC receiving electric service in 2009 your check will be mailed in November. If you were a member in 2009 and are currently a member, the cooperative will pay the retired amount by crediting refunds of less than \$100 to your next bill or mailing checks for refunds larger than \$100. The exact amount of your check or bill credit will be determined by the amount of electricity you used in that time frame. This payment represents 61.2% of the 2009 allocation.




\$9.35 Million Paid Back

With this latest capital credit refund, the REC has paid back to the membership a total of \$9,355,000 over the years.

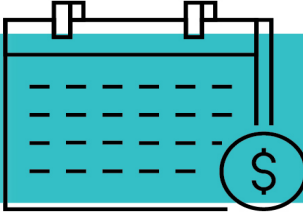


HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK


Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.




- Members pay their electric bills, and we track their business with us each month.



- The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover operating revenue as capital credits.



- When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) capital credits to the members.



- We send members their share of capital credits as a bill credit or check.

The Recipe Corner

Sweet Potato Casserole

2 ½ pounds sweet potatoes peeled and cut into 1 inch cubes

¾ cup packed brown sugar

¼ cup butter softened

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cinnamon

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup finely chopped pecans divided

2 cup miniature marshmallows

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a 1 quart or 9x 13 inch baking dish with non-stick spray and set aside.
- Place peeled and diced sweet potatoes in a dutch oven or large pot. Cover with cold water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 15 minutes or until very tender.
- Drain water off potatoes and place in a large bowl. Add brown sugar, butter, salt, cinnamon and vanilla to potatoes.
- Mash the sweet potatoes with a potato masher or electric mixer. Fold in ¼ cup of chopped pecans.
- Place potato mixture in prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining chopped pecans and then top with marshmallows.
- Bake in preheated oven at 375 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until warmed through and marshmallows are golden brown. Remove from oven and serve immediately.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you're heading out of town during the holiday season, remember to set your home to vacation mode. You can save energy while you're away by lowering your thermostat a few degrees or creating an "away" schedule with a smart or programmable thermostat. Newer water heaters include a vacation mode setting to help you save on water heating costs, or you can simply lower the temperature manually.

Small actions can also stack up to energy savings. Unplug devices that consume energy when they're not in use, including phone chargers, toothbrush chargers, TVs and gaming consoles.

Help prevent copper theft

Thieves sometimes think of it as a crime that won't hurt anybody. The truth is that tampering with electrical equipment or attempting to steal copper can harm many people. Those who steal copper (or power) are not only risking their own lives but also the safety and well-being of others.

Common targets for copper theft include farm equipment, air conditioners, vacant buildings, construction sites and electric utility properties, including substations and power poles.

How homeowners can help

- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire and so on, contact your electric utility immediately.
- For empty homes, install lighting systems that operate using a timer to make the property a less likely target. For all homes, install motion-sensor lights on the outside of the house to deter possible thieves.
- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while away.

How businesses can help

- Report suspicious activity.
- Eliminate or secure all external access to buildings and roofs.
- Remove items that allow for easy access to buildings, such as ladders, scaffolds, trees, dumpsters and accumulated materials, such as pallet piles.
- Install security cameras and alarm systems. The location and the type of object will determine what kind of surveillance is needed. For example, for heating and cooling units, there are alarms that are triggered if the unit stops working.
- In areas that contain valuable objects such as air conditioners, install fences and lighting fixtures around them. The amount of copper in most commercial air conditioners is never worth a great amount, but the real cost is paid by the owner of the unit.
- Most copper theft takes place during nights or weekends. Hiring staff or security personnel to monitor your facility during these periods can greatly reduce the chances of a serious loss.

Copper theft can affect more than the person stealing; in fact, it can cost a life. Detecting and reporting illegal activity could help save a life.



Woodbury County REC office will be closed Monday November 11th to observe Veterans Day and Thursday - Friday, November 28th and 29th in observance of Thanksgiving.

If you experience an outage you can report it using our SmartHub App or call us at (800)469-3125 or 712-873-3125. Remember our phone is always on 24/7/365 a year.

How Reliable and Affordable Power Reaches You

By Kent Amundson

At Woodbury County REC, we are proud to be part of a cooperative family that ensures you receive the power you and your family need to live, work and thrive. Your electric cooperative is one of many interconnected organizations working together to provide safe, reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity.

The bulk of our electricity originates from Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric) with a lower percentage coming from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and flows through Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO), which manages the transmission system, and Woodbury County REC handles distribution. With this structure, and because we operate under the cooperative business model, our focus is on serving you, our members, not generating profits for shareholders.

The roles we play

Each provider plays a distinct and essential role in this process. Basin Electric and WAPA ensure the generation of electricity, managing a mix of traditional and renewable energy sources to keep power reliable and sustainable. NIPCO transports that electricity over high-voltage lines across the region, while Woodbury County REC delivers it directly to homes and businesses within our service territory. This structure ensures that every member of our cooperative system benefits from electricity that is safe, reliable and as affordable as possible.

The impact of wholesale power costs

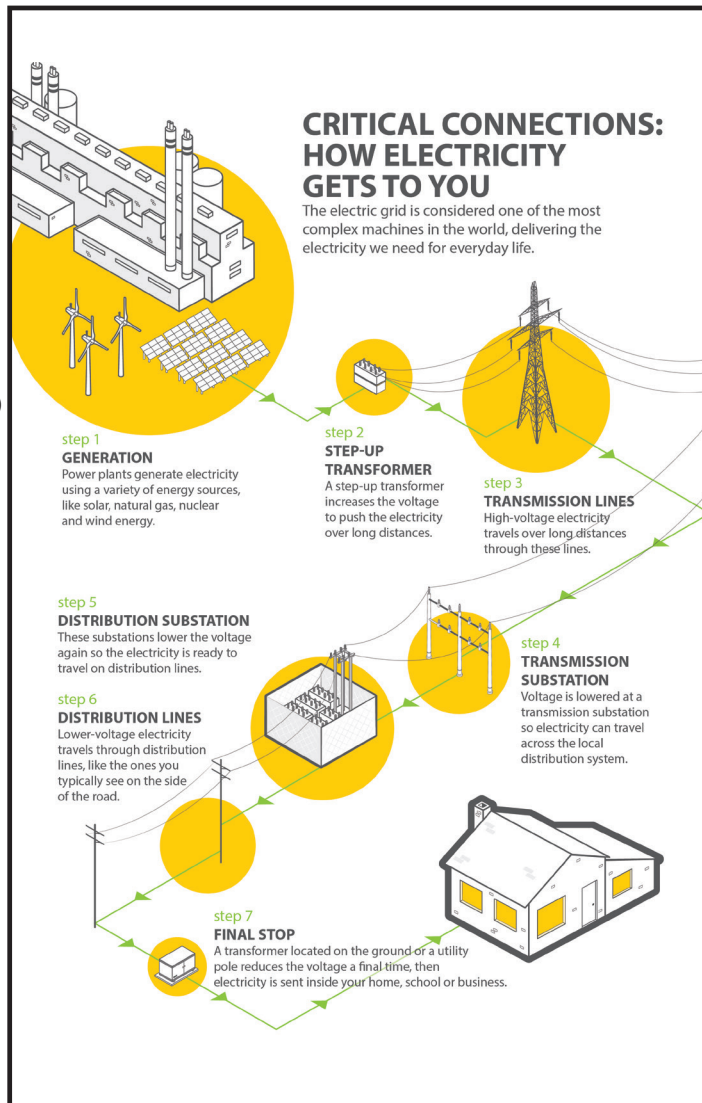
It's important to understand that wholesale power costs account for about 60% of your electricity bill. The rates we pay reflect the costs of generating and transporting electricity, as well as maintaining the infrastructure required to keep it reliable.

Wholesale power rates are designed to reflect actual costs – ensuring fairness across the system. As the cost to generate and deliver electricity rises, these increases are reflected in wholesale rates. Like everything else in today's economy, electric utilities across the state, region and nation are navigating inflationary pressures and supply chain challenges. Higher prices for fuel, transportation and materials – along with federal energy policies from Washington, D.C. contribute to the overall costs to generate, transport and deliver electricity.

The exceptional value of electricity

Even with these challenges, electricity remains an exceptional value. It powers so much of our modern lives from heating and cooling our homes to charging electric vehicles, powering businesses, and running the technologies that keep us connected. Despite recent price pressures, our electricity rates remain competitive regionally and nationally.

In Iowa, a household served by an electric cooperative spends about \$5.25 per day on electricity. To put that into perspective, that's less than the cost of a sandwich or a specialty coffee drink. When you consider the essential services that electricity provides – heating, cooling, lighting, and powering your appliances – electricity remains a bargain.



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As I discussed at our Annual Meeting of Members, a rate change likely will be necessary in 2025. However, because we are part of cooperative network – operating as a not-for-profit business – it means that any increase can be mitigated and only implemented when absolutely necessary.

As a cooperative, it's in our DNA to prioritize your needs and protect the affordability and reliability of your power. At Woodbury County REC, we are committed to doing everything we can to keep rates as low as possible while ensuring the system remains strong. This is our privilege and our promise to you – because we are not just a utility; we are your local cooperative, serving our members with pride and purpose.

Kent Amundson is the general manager/CEO of Woodbury County REC.

Prepare for winter

As the colder months hit, many of us are not prepared for Old Man Winter's potential wrath.

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) advises everyone to ready their home and cars, prepare for possible power outages, and to check on older adults. Specifically, the CDC recommends taking the following steps so that you will be more likely to stay safe and healthy when temperatures start to fall:

Prepare your home

Winterize your home:

- Install weather stripping, insulation, and storm windows.
- Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
- Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks.

Check your heating systems:

- Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly, and ventilated to the outside.
- Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
- Install a smoke detector. Test batteries monthly and replace them twice a year.
- Have a safe alternate heating source and alternate fuels available.

Prevent carbon monoxide (CO) emergencies:

- Install a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas. Check batteries when you change your clocks in the fall and spring.
- Learn symptoms of CO poisoning that include headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.

Prepare your car

Get your car ready for cold weather. Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level; check tire tread or, if necessary, replace tires with all-weather or snow tires. Also:

- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a winter - time formula in your windshield washer.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded.

