



LIVE LINES

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative
December 2025

Prepare Your Home For Old Man Winter

Ice and heavy snows can produce prolonged power outages.

Heavy accumulations of ice and snow coupled with fluctuating winter temperatures can bring down utility poles, trees and limbs with the ability to disrupt power for days on end. With this comes a threat to property and also to life itself.

Utilities are devoted to restoring power to customers, but severe damage can take days or weeks to repair. Stay safe and comfortable during winter power outages.

Preparation for power outages begins before cold temperatures set in. Your home should be properly insulated, with caulking and weather-stripping around doors, windows, and other cracks. If you have trees with limbs that could fall on power lines, the limbs should be trimmed by a professional.

You should also have an emergency kit ready to go. The kit should have flashlights, a radio, batteries, nonperishable food, water, medicines, and extra blankets.

If you have done all this preparation, a winter power outage will be less stressful for you. When a storm hits and you are without power, keep the following in mind:

Avoid going outside. Power lines and other energized equipment could be hidden by snow, ice and debris.

Treat all downed lines as energized, and dangerous. Downed power lines do not have to be sparking, arcing or moving to be dangerous.



Attention

High School Seniors and College Students

In 2026, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative will again be offering educational scholarships. Watch the January issue of this newsletter for details on how to apply. A total of \$4,000 in scholarship money will be available.



The Board of Directors and Staff of Woodbury REC wish you a Happy Holiday Season. The REC office will be closed on December 25th, and January 1st. Even when the office is closed, our phones are answered 24 hours a day. If you should have an electrical outage, report it using our SmartHub app or call (800)469-3125 or (712)873-3125.

The Recipe Corner

Turtles

1 lb. brown sugar
 ½ lb. butter or oleo
 1 can eagle brand milk
 1c. white karo syrup
 1 t. cream of tartar

Bring this to a full rolling boil and boil for 12 minutes stirring constantly. Cool a little. Put ¾ lb. pecan pieces in a buttered cookie sheet, to cover bottom. Pour caramel on top, let cool. Cut in squares and immerse in dipping chocolate.

Simple Steps to Boost Home Heating Efficiency

- Adjust your thermostat based on your needs. While you are away at school or work, turn the thermostat down. You can also turn the thermostat down at night when you can cover up with blankets.
- Replace your furnace filter monthly to save energy and improve heat circulation.
- Use sunlight's natural heat to your advantage by opening curtains and blinds on sunny days to warm your home.
- Close your fireplace damper when you are not using the fireplace. This prevents heat from escaping and cold from entering through your chimney.
- If you have older or leaky windows, consider temporary fixes, such as plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.
- Weather stripping is relatively easy and available at your local home improvement store. Stop drafts from coming in and heat from leaking out of your home through drafty doors and windows.
- Use caulk to seal gaps in the walls of your home or apartment. Wherever different building materials meet, or wiring comes out of a wall, there are gaps that may contribute to the loss of heat in your home.



Annual Notice of Complaint Procedure

"If your complaint is related to the Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative's service rather than its rates, and Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling (515) 281-3839, or toll-free 1-877-565-4450, or by writing to: 1375 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, or by E-mail to: iubcustomer@iub.state.ia.us."

RECare Consumer Contribution Plan

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. Now, 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 of this Cooperative. You may make a one time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even one dollar a month pledge will help others.

Consumer Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members and contribute to **RECare**.

_____ I will make a one-time contribution to **RECare**. My check is enclosed.

_____ I will contribute \$_____ per month to **RECare**. I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

_____ My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Please Mail To: **RECare**

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 566

Moville, Iowa 51039

Powering a Safe and Bright Holiday Season

By Kent Amundson

As we enter the final weeks of the year, I want to express our appreciation for the trust you place in Woodbury County REC. The holiday season brings a sense of connection for many families, and all of us here take pride in providing the power that keeps your homes, farms and businesses running each day. As you prepare for the holidays and winter weather, it is a good time to focus on safety and efficiency.

Practicing holiday safety and efficiency

Decorating is beginning to be in full swing at homes and businesses, and it is always exciting to bring out the lights, ornaments and favorite traditions. Even if you have already turned your home into your own version of the North Pole, it is still a good idea to take a moment to look over cords and light strands for cracked wiring or loose connections. Replacing anything that shows wear is a simple step that goes a long way in keeping your home safe. If you use space heaters to take the chill out of a room, be sure they stay on a flat surface and away from curtains, bedding or decorations. Plug them directly into the wall instead of a power strip.

Energy use can climb during this time of year, but a few small changes can help. LED holiday lights last longer, stay cooler and use far less electricity, which makes them a good investment for many families. Timers for indoor and outdoor displays also help keep usage in check. These are easy habits that protect your home and help manage your winter bills. If your lights are already up, look for after Christmas sales to switch to LED lights next year.

As we move through the final stretch of the year, the involvement of our members continues to be an important part of what keeps Woodbury County REC strong and focused on serving our communities. Being a member-owned cooperative means your engagement helps guide our work and reinforces our commitment to delivering safe and reliable service. I also want to recognize our employees who show up each day with a commitment to service and safety. Their steady work behind the scenes keeps our system strong and ready for whatever the winter months bring.

Preparing for Iowa's winter weather

Winter in Iowa has a way of showing us that Mother Nature is in charge, and the snow, ice and strong winds she delivers can feel like an unwelcome holiday gift we never asked for. That is why we spend time preparing long before winter arrives.

Throughout the year, our crews complete regular system inspections to identify equipment that needs attention. The vegetation management team trims and clears areas that could cause trouble during storms. These steady, practical efforts help reduce outages and shorten restoration times. When severe weather does move through, our teams are ready to respond safely and efficiently, even in the toughest conditions.

You can help by keeping our outage reporting tools handy. Whether you use SmartHub, call by phone or visit our website, quick reporting helps us pinpoint trouble spots faster. If you rely on a generator, please follow safety guidelines by keeping it outdoors and ensuring it is connected properly. This protects your home and the lineworkers working to restore power.

Sharing our commitment to transparency

In November, we shared information about the wholesale power rate increase approved by the NIPCO board of directors due to rising costs from WAPA and Basin Electric. That change takes effect Jan. 1, 2026, and we continue to study how it may affect Woodbury County REC and our members. Once we have a clear understanding, we will communicate those findings with you. Your cooperative remains committed to transparency and to making decisions that support reliability and affordability.

I hope your holidays are filled with warmth, safety and time with those who matter most. We are proud to power your lives, and we look forward to serving you in the year ahead.

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

Should I Use a Space Heater or Turn Up The Heat?

Drafty room? Before reaching for your space heater, consider whether it's better to plug it in or simply turn up the thermostat. Space heaters are designed to warm small, targeted spaces not your entire home. If you find yourself relying on one often, it may be time to address your home's energy efficiency.

Fix efficiency first, then supplement with a space heater

Improving your home's efficiency helps it retain heat, reduces drafts and reduces your energy use. Many solutions are affordable and DIY-friendly, such as:

- Seal air leaks. Use caulk and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors to prevent drafts.
- Add insulation where it matters. Attic insulation has the biggest return on investment, and loose-fill insulation is an affordable option.
- Check your heating system. Schedule regular service for your furnace or heat pump. If it's outdated or struggling, it could be time for an upgrade. Check with your utility for potential rebates and incentives.
- Use programmable thermostats. These can help reduce energy waste by heating only when and where needed.

Once your home is sealed and insulated, a space heater can be used to increase comfort and warm specific rooms, like a home office or bedroom, without turning up the heat for the whole house.

A space heater is like a ceiling fan; it can improve comfort in a small area, but it's not a whole-house solution.

Use space heaters efficiently:

- Heat only the room you're currently in.
- Close doors to keep heat contained.
- Choose the right size too small and it won't warm you; too big and it wastes energy. Check manufacturer sizing guides.
- Use a heater with a thermostat and timer to avoid overheating the room or wasting electricity.

Stay safe while staying warm:

- Place the heater on a solid, flat, nonflammable surface never on carpets or rugs.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use extension cords or power strips.
- Keep children, pets and anything flammable, such as curtains or bedding, at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- Choose a heater with built-in safety features including:
 - o Overheat sensor.
 - o Tip-over shutoff switch.
 - o UL, ETL or CSA International certification label.
- Never leave a space heater unattended, especially around children or pets.
- Turn off the heater when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Unplug it when not in use to prevent electrical hazards.

