



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

LIVE LINES

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

February 2026

Electric Cooperatives Discuss Priorities as Iowa's 2026 Legislative Session Begins

More than 150 senior staff and directors from Iowa electric cooperatives, including Woodbury County REC, were in downtown Des Moines on January 13 to attend a legislative “welcome back” reception at the start of the 91st Iowa General Assembly. At the event, co-op advocates discussed priorities face to face with their state legislators.



WCREC Director Kurt Nash, State Senator Jacob Bossman, WCREC Director Bruce Sadler, and WCREC Director Kim Brouwer.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) hosted the reception in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Communications Alliance, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives and FUEL Iowa.

“Hosting this annual reception at the start of the legislative session is a way for Iowa electric cooperatives to form long-term relationships based on trust and open communication,” remarked Leslie Kaufman, IAEC executive vice president. “With many new legislators and new faces in leadership this session, we value every opportunity to talk about the cooperative business model and the needs of our member-consumers.”

Representatives from Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives covered several important issues that could impact the affordability and reliability of electricity for the members and communities we serve.

Electric cooperatives will again focus on protecting Iowa's defined electric service territories, an important law that helps ensure every corner of the state receives consistent, cost-effective electric service. Another legislative challenge that could resurface involves third-party or “community solar” proposals that would attempt to allow non-utility solar developers to provide retail electric service inside an established utility's service area, in direct conflict with service territory law.

Iowa's electric co-ops are also seeking to further protect utility workers, who encounter threats, harassment and assaults while on the job. Strengthening penalties for violence against utility workers reaffirms our commitment to the safety of cooperative employees and our communities.

In the coming months, Iowa's 91st General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including energy-related matters that are central to Iowa's rural economy. Iowa electric cooperatives will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues as we work to power lives and empower communities. Learn more about our advocacy efforts at www.IAruralpower.org.

The Power to Save a Life

It's American Heart Month. February is dedicated to heart health, and one of its most profound impacts is empowering communities to respond when every second counts.

By learning CPR, mastering first aid and ensuring access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs), ordinary people can become extraordinary lifelines.

Why CPR matters and why you matter, too

- One of the main benefits of CPR is the ability to help in the event of a heart attack or cardiac arrest. This emergency training can also prepare you to assist in a natural disaster, like a hurricane, tornado or earthquake.
- More than 436,000 Americans die each year from cardiac arrest. Immediate CPR can double or triple survival chances after a cardiac arrest by keeping blood and oxygen flowing.
- Brain damage can begin within 4 minutes of a cardiac issue, and without intervention, death may follow within 4-6 more minutes.
- Many jobs require CPR and first aid training. Even if it's not required, earning CPR certification can show an employer that you are willing to step up and help in a crisis or emergency.

The difference an electric AED can make

- An AED is a portable medical device that delivers an electric shock to restart the heart or restore a healthy heartbeat during sudden cardiac arrest.
- AEDs are designed to be simple to use, with voice and visual prompts to guide users even those without training. An AED even determines whether to defibrillate. It will not give an electric shock unless it is necessary, so you cannot harm someone by using an AED on them in an emergency.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Administration strongly encourages the placement of AEDs in workplaces, as 10,000 sudden cardiac arrests occur in workplaces each year.
- The American Heart Association (AHA) reports that AED usage, when combined with CPR, can double or triple survival rates. Nine in 10 cardiac arrest victims who receive a shock in the first minute live, and defibrillation within the first 3 minutes boosts survival to nearly 95%.
- According to the AHA, everyday bystanders when trained are a critical part of the "chain of survival" that starts with a call, CPR and defibrillation.

What you can do this American Heart Month

1. Get trained. Take a CPR, AED and First Aid class through Red Cross or AHA. Even a few hours of training can give you the confidence and skills to respond effectively in an emergency.
2. Spread awareness. Share CPR resources and encourage others to learn lifesaving techniques. Sharing hands-only CPR videos or local training opportunities helps spread knowledge and creates a network of potential responders.
3. Promote AED access. Advocate for and ensure workplaces, schools, gyms and community spaces have visible AEDs. It can mean the difference between life and death.
4. Support preparedness. Urge employers and organizations to provide training and develop emergency plans.
5. Foster the mindset to act. Encourage others to be ready to call 911, start CPR and use an AED when available. When more people are willing and able to take these steps, we benefit from stronger, safer communities.

Be prepared, be the difference

The tools to save a life are simple, powerful and within reach but only if we train, normalize response and place AEDs where they are accessible. During American Heart Month, let's turn awareness into action: a trained community is a community armed with the power to save lives.

The Recipe Corner

Tex-Mex Chicken Fajita

1 ½ lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
1 pkg. (14 oz.) Kraft Recipe Makers Tex-Mex fajita skillet
1 green pepper, cut into strips
1 red onion, slivered
1 ½ C. instant white rice, uncooked
1 C. water
1 C. salsa
1 C. Kraft Mexican style finely shredded four cheese

Cook and stir chicken in half the Simmer Sauce in large skillet until done. Add vegetables and remaining Simmer Sauce; cook and stir for 2 to 4 minutes or until vegetables are crisp tender. Stir in rice and water; bring to a boil. Stir in salsa; sprinkle with chesse. Remove from heat; cover. Let stand for 5 minutes.

Wired for Growth: Balancing Data Center Demand and Reliability

By Kent Amundson

Data centers may feel like a big-city phenomenon, but more and more of them are showing up in rural communities like ours and there's good reason for that. Rural areas offer what data centers need most: affordable land, room to grow and access to transmission lines that can move large amounts of power.

What makes data centers different from other large businesses is their appetite for electricity. These facilities run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Servers must stay online constantly, which means power has to be reliable every minute of every day.

For electric cooperatives like Woodbury County REC, powering data centers creates both opportunities and challenges.

On the plus side, data centers have the potential to bring steady, long-term load growth that helps support investments in the local grid. With proper planning and policy support, those upgrades including new substations, stronger lines and smarter technology could benefit all Woodbury County REC members and help keep electricity rates steady.

But providing power to data centers presents challenges, too. These large facilities can be constructed and operating in as little as one year, but ensuring the necessary infrastructure, equipment and electricity requires longer lead times and significant financial investment. Strategic planning and partnerships, as well as long-term power supply strategies are essential to the process.

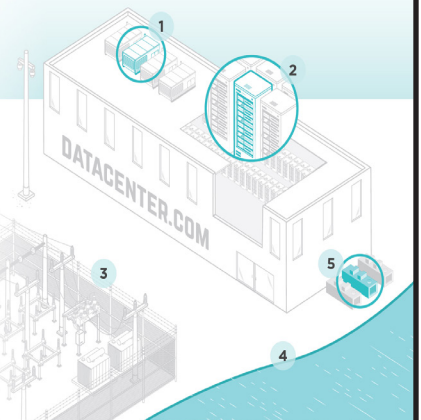
As a member-owned cooperative, our responsibility is twofold: to listen to the communities we serve and to provide reliable, affordable electric service to all Woodbury County REC members. Balancing those responsibilities is not always simple, especially as new types of large-scale energy users, like data centers, become part of the local landscape. No matter what the future holds, our priority will be supporting growth with fairness that means ensuring large-scale energy users pay their fair share so residential bills don't spike and the project with local support.

The energy landscape is changing, and with it comes both opportunities and challenges. My commitment, and the commitment of Woodbury County REC board and employees, is to continue listening, communicating and working with our members and community partners to ensure all decisions reflect the best interests of our members and our community.

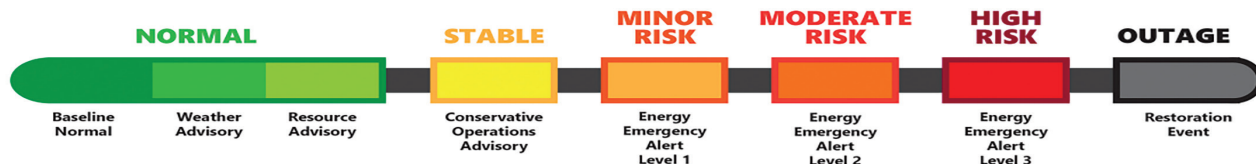
Big Data, Bigger Demands

Many companies are choosing rural areas for their data centers because of cheaper land, available power and potential tax breaks. Data centers require huge amounts of electricity to operate, which presents new opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- 1 **HVAC:** Constant cooling is needed to ensure the servers function properly.
- 2 **Servers:** Servers run applications and process data 24/7. One server rack can consume enough electricity to power a small home. A large data center can house thousands of server racks.
- 3 **Infrastructure:** Data centers often require new electrical infrastructure to meet their power needs.
- 4 **Water Source:** Many large data centers are deploying evaporative cooling, which is more efficient than compressor-based systems.
- 5 **Backup Power:** On-site generators keep data centers running during power outages and can also be used to help lower demand when electricity use spikes.



SOUTHWEST POWER POOL GRID CONDITIONS



Southwest Power Pool (SPP) continuously monitors the electric grid conditions to determine supply and demand balance, transmission congestion, generator availability, and adherence to reliability standards. The conditions are then communicated through the advisories shown above. Woodbury County REC will convey these advisories to our membership as needed.

Take Control! Sign Up For Smart Hub

SmartHub can be used for more than just managing your Woodbury County REC account or paying your bill. You can also report a power outage, receive important notices, and monitor usage daily by using SmartHub.

This can be done through both the SmartHub website at www.woodburyrec.com or by using the SmartHub Mobile App.

Bill & Pay: Under the bill & Pay option members can make payments, set up automatic payments, check out billing history (with copies of your bill), and payment history.

Usage: Under the usage option members can compare their usage from two separate months. There is also the usage explorer option which you can view your monthly, daily, and hourly usage.

Contact Us: The member can report a power outage, or any issue they are having.

Settings: Member's can change their contact information and the methods on which they would like to be contacted. Manage notifications you receive via e-mail or text messages. You can set up billing notifications such as when the bill is available, delinquent notices, or payment confirmations. Set up energy emergency alerts, which notify you when there is a major strain on our electric grid.



TAKE CONTROL

SMART MANAGEMENT. SMART LIFE. SMARTHUB.

SmartHub is a web and mobile app that allows you to do business with us like never before

- Report service issues
- Receive important notices
- Manage your account
- View and pay your bill
- Monitor use 24/7

...all in the palm of your hand.

www.smarthubapp.com

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.

Energy Trail Tour 2026

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of three Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to experience, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are then returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Enjoy interactive walking tours through a hydroelectric and coal-fired energy generation facility and other stops along the way. Meet other cooperative member-owners while traveling together across the Dakotas on-board a motor-coach bound for the North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative. Four lucky couples from Woodbury County REC will be selected at random from those who sign up.

☒ YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

June 24-26	1st	2nd	3rd	(please circle)
July 8-10	1st	2nd	3rd	
July 15-17	1st	2nd	3rd	

I/we ☐ have ☐ have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person _____

Second Person _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by April 24, 2026.