



**Harrison County  
Rural Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



## Please read your yellow bill insert for outage restoration steps!



### Winter Arrives with a Fury

*By Joe Farley, Manager/EVP*

As many of you experienced, our first snowstorm of the 2010-2011 winter was a dandy! Wow! Over nine inches of very wet snow caused quite a bit of damage and created a multitude of extensive power outages. Mother nature pounded us again, and our system, already weakened from the devastation of the ice storms last winter, did not hold up well.

Folks, I must advise you, you are going to have to be patient. Your electric distribution system includes some areas of line where conductor and poles are 40-50 years old. In recent newsletter articles I've tried to explain the activities we have underway to strengthen our system. When accomplished, this process will allow our distribution system to more readily withstand the effects of these natural calamities and it will reduce our overall maintenance needs which should result in lower operating costs for the cooperative. It is a win – win situation!

Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) has been approved for participatory funding to repair approximately 330 miles of distribution line deemed by inspection to be seriously damaged due to the ice storms we had in 2009 and 2010. This funding, nearly \$20 million, will come from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Iowa Homeland Security, and the cooperative. The process to repair these lines is underway, but it will take time. It involves planning, staking, archaeological and environmental surveys, and the hiring of electric construction contractors to do the work. This

endeavor is not something your cooperative employees can do on their own in the 3-4 year time period allotted with the funding award.

As stated, your system has been weakened, and more storms are going to occur. The system cannot withstand these harsh conditions to the degree it could two years ago. Many of you could likely experience some extended outages when extreme weather conditions occur. That is just a fact. If we are lucky and are not stricken by harsh winter conditions it is likely we won't have as many outages. I will remind you again that we are in the process of getting these weakened areas strengthened and reconductored. The plans, funding, and resources are being assembled to soon get bids, engage contractors, and fix things! Until that time, I am going to urge you to be patient if you experience an outage. We will get there and we do care!

Another point I would like to make is that our personnel work very hard under very stressful conditions to get power restored as quickly as possible. It may seem like you are being neglected, but you are not. Every member has the opportunity to call in an outage. During these times of severe and widespread storms and power disruption, we begin to see that not just one home is out, but perhaps an entire line section or circuit is off.

#### **TIME TESTED PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED**

Harrison County REC has a time tested and proven procedure for restoring power in times of widespread disruption. We will

not deviate from this procedure unless it is an absolute life-threatening situation. It is imperative that you as a member respect our procedures and remain patient. Anytime you persist in challenging our procedures for your own immediate relief, you are just slowing the process. We cannot tolerate such disruption when we are at work. This also includes barging into the office, pounding on the doors, or contacting the linemen in the field.

Additionally, there are always some members who choose to use forceful or profane language to express their disdain of the situation. That is very unnecessary and rude. I have directed my staff to terminate the conversation with anyone who exhibits such behavior.

I can assure you with the utmost certainty, your operations, line, and office personnel are of excellent caliber, well experienced, and fully capable of the tasks at hand. You won't find much better or well prepared crews for these situations.

Bear with us, it will get better. If we fixed everything immediately, it would still take considerable time and resources, and the cost would be exorbitant. To afford such would require electric rates to rise much too high to keep your power affordable.

Thank you for your membership and I do appreciate your concerns and frustrations as a member and power consumer. We are here for you!



# Report from the Operations Department

By David Stevens, Director of Operations

It will soon be one year since your cooperative sustained major damage to facilities due to heavy ice accumulating on power lines. Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) has 1110 miles of distribution power lines in parts of five counties. 280 miles are underground and 830 miles are overhead. Harrison County REC linemen completed storm damage assessment of our entire 830 miles of overhead to find 330 miles of line meet all criteria set forth by Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) to be rebuilt from a grade C to grade B (heavy ice loading) construction. FEMA has set a time limit for construction to be completed within 35 months. Staking has begun as crews working for our consulting engineer are being dispatched

from Colorado and Utah to help complete this task. Approximately 110 miles of new line will be built each year over the next three years. FEMA has allocated approximately \$20 million dollars to assist Harrison County REC pay for this project. Since your cooperative is a not-for-profit organization, it qualifies for FEMA assistance. Harrison County REC line crews will assist with staking, tree clearing for new construction, and installing underground inserts to meet clearance codes where needed. This extra activity will work hand in hand with daily operations. The FEMA project will be a challenge for us and we ask now for your patience and support. There will be some scheduled outages during this construction. We are also anticipating a major road grade to take place with four miles of line to be rebuilt North of

Woodbine in the spring of 2011.

Unfortunately we had our first winter storm, experiencing heavy wet snow along with rain and near-freezing temperatures creating the right conditions for the precipitation to accumulate on power lines. Conditions created force on the conductor to the point of breaking poles, conductors snapping, and pole tops bending. Wide-spread outages began late evening of November 12th. At one point, approximately 750 members were without power. Crews assisted from neighboring cooperatives, Nishnabotna Valley REC in Harlan, Southwest REC in Corning/Stanton, and Farmers Electric Co-op of Greenfield. Power was restored to all members by Monday evening, November 15th. Crews will be spending the next month making needed repairs.

## Make Smart Connections

### Extension Cord Safety

Just because an extension cord reaches an outlet across the room doesn't mean it's the right one for the task at hand. If a tool, appliance, or holiday display draws more current than an extension cord can carry, it may cause the cord and whatever is connected to it to overheat and start a fire.

Cords come in many lengths and are marked with a size or gauge. For example, a 12-gauge wire would be larger and power larger wattage appliances than a 14-gauge wire. A cord, based on its gauge, can power appliances of certain wattages only at specific distances. Longer cords have less current-carrying capacity.

Using the right cord for the job is only the first step in using extension cords safely. Follow these tips to ensure safe use and make smart connection decisions:

- Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) symbol. The UL mark means that samples of the cord have been tested for safety hazards.
- Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors, as it could result in electric shock or trigger a fire. Extension cords that can be used outdoors will be clearly marked "Suitable for Use with outdoor Appliances."
- Extension cords should not be placed underneath rugs or other heavy furniture; tacked in place to a wall or taped down; or used while coiled or bent. Match the length of the cord to your needs.
- Store all cords indoors when not in use. Outdoor conditions can deteriorate a cord over time.
- Unplug extension cords when not in use. The cord will continue conducting electricity until unplugged.
- On cords with more than one outlet, use the covers provided for unused openings. Children and pets face serious injury if they chew on unused outlets or stick sharp metal objects into the openings.
- Do not use extension cords that are cut or damaged. Touching even a single exposed strand of wire can result in an electric shock or burn.
- Never file or cut the plug blades or grounding pin of an extension cord or appliance to plug it into an old outlet.
- As a safety feature, extension cords and most appliances boast polarized plugs (one blade wider than the other). These special plugs are designed to prevent electric shock by properly aligning circuit conductors. If a plug does not fit, have a qualified electrician install a new outlet.



## Holiday Closing Schedule

*The directors and employees of Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative would like to wish our cooperative members and their families a very blessed holiday season.*

*Our office and warehouse will be closed to observe the holidays as follows:*

**Thursday, December 23rd at 11:30 a.m.**

**Friday, December 24th, Christmas Day**

**Friday, December 31st, New Years Day**

*Please call 647-2727 or 800-822-5591 in case of an emergency or power outage.*

# Scholarship Available in 2011

Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) will be sponsoring a \$1,000 scholarship to be awarded to the son/daughter of a Harrison County REC member.

Applications for this scholarship can be picked up at our office or send in the registration coupon below or email Linda Williams at [lwilliams@hrec.coop](mailto:lwilliams@hrec.coop), and she will send you the necessary information and application forms. You may also apply on line by visiting our website @ [www.hrec.coop](http://www.hrec.coop). The applications must reach our office no later than Friday, February 4, 2011 to be considered for the scholarship.



## Report from the Front Office

By Lori Barry, Director of Finance/Administration

### What is the "PCA?"

PCA is the abbreviation for power cost adjustment. In November 2008, a base cost of power was established as our standard cost of power. As power cost rises and falls, the PCA varies accordingly. We further minimize PCA fluctuations by using a 3-month rolling average. This billing mechanism allows the other electric billing rates to remain constant (since November 2008), while the PCA varies for changes in cost of power. The total PCA on your bill each month is controllable by minimizing your power usage. Look for energy efficiency tips on [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com).

### What Benefits are provided by "FEMA?"

As you are aware we've gone thru some of the worst snow and ice storms in recent history during December 2009, January 2010, and now in November 2010. These storms do a tremendous amount of damage to our system at a high cost. This extraordinary high cost would be born totally by members, if it weren't for the assistance provided by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Your cooperative has received to date some \$214,000 thru these FEMA programs that reimburse the cooperative for costs sustained in these storms. By receiving this assistance, we are able to restore the system, and minimize the amount needed to recover this cost thru billing members and long term borrowing. Your cooperative continues to work hard qualifying for FEMA coverage, whenever possible, minimizing the amount of cash funds needed to offset the effect of these devastating storms.

### 2011 Basin Scholarship Program

Yes, I am interested in applying for the scholarship. Please send me an application form.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Member Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative  
Linda Williams  
P.O. Box 2  
Woodbine, IA 51579-0002

## Home Heating and Cooling guide to saving money available at your Cooperative Free!

Home Heating & Cooling is just one of four books provided by the Iowa Energy Center. It offers tips to make the most of your heating and air conditioning systems, landscaping your yard to offer year-round comfort, and offers other sources for additional information on energy-saving topics.

Come to Harrison County REC and ask for a free copy or call the Iowa Energy Center, 515-294-8819, and a copy will be mailed to you. You may also download a PDF copy at the Iowa Energy Center web site, [www.energy.iastate.edu/](http://www.energy.iastate.edu/).

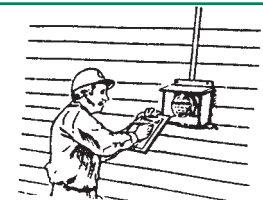


### Divinity Candy

1 c. sugar  
2 c. sugar  
2 egg whites

½ c. water  
1 c. white corn syrup  
Nuts (optional)

Boil 1 cup sugar and water together without stirring until it spins a thread. Boil 2 cups sugar and syrup until brittle when dropped in cold water. Beat the egg whites until stiff; have these ready. Pour sugar/water mixture into the beaten egg whites and beat well. Add the sugar/syrup mixture and beat until stiff. Pour into greased platter. An excellent Christmas candy platter item.



## Meter Reader Dates

Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative's meter reading dates for December will be December 28th - 30th

# Uncashed Patronage Checks

This list represents members who have not cashed checks from the cooperative. Unclaimed list as of 10/22/10. Please contact our office, if you can help us locate any member listed below:

Alexander, Diane	Flemin, Emma	King, Robert	Ohnesorge, Mike	Snider, Kevin
Alexander, Mike	Fleming, Gary	Kirk, Gerald	Pace, John	Snyder, Lyle
AMOCO Oil Company	Fleming, Terry	Knutson, Courtney	Pedersen, Paul	Steckelberg, Tim
Archer, Richard	Fritz, Elizabeth	Kovar, Paul	Peters, George	Steffers, Larry
Archer, Steven	Gamm, John	Kramer, Leonard	Peters, Pete	Stowell, Charles
Armstrong, Doug	Gast, Eugene	Kuhfahl, William	Peterson, Harry	Stueve, Linda
Aronson, John	Gaul, Ron	Kuster Estate, Garyld	Peterson, Raymond	Tague Estate, Harold
Babbitt, Jim	Gay, Anna	Larson, Allen	Piercy, L.	Teitsort, Charles
Bahm Estate, Charles	Geiman, David	Laubscher, Lois	Pitt-Nesmeyer, Marlene	Thacker, Audie
Bartz, Leon	Gibbons, Thomas	Leighton, Roberta	Points, Ramona	Thomas, Emily
Beerman, Robert	Gilbert, Jack	Longnecker, Mary	Purdy, Jeff	Thomas, Henry
Bissen, Kenny	Goben, Larry	Malone, Earl	Putman, Garland	Thomas, Max
Brainard Pig, Inc.	Gorman, Frank	Maly, Edmond	R & M Cattle Co.	Thoms, Charles
Brown, James	Graf, Edwin	Masker, Brad	Reisz Estate, Eleanor	Tierney, William
Bryceson, Mark	Gravert, Linda	Mason, Jesse	Rettig, Mark	Topf, Roger
Burbridge, Bob	Greiner, Betty	Mc Call, Reuben	Riley, Steven	Tremel Estate, Edward
Burcham, Robert	Guill, Lyle	Mc Cue, Gary	Rippey Estate, D.	Tucker, Donald
Cass, Douglas	Hanks, Louis	Mc Henry, Arthur	Robbins, Joe	Tucker, Eddie
Christensen, Barry	Hansen, Dale	Mc Mains, Dennis	Roberts, Kathe	Vincent, Jeannie
Clampitt, Karen	Harper, Carol	Melby Agency, Ward	Ruffcorn, Ronald	Walter Trust, William
Clark, Mike	Hartwig Estate, Darrell	Meyer, Ron	Sargent, John	Watson, Don
Cleaver, Wilber	Herron, Charles	Michelson, Rick	Schovanec, Jon	Webb, Jody
Colvin, Thomas	Hicks, Theodore	Miller, Jay	Schumacher, Dave	Wehrli, Clark
Cramer, Warren	Hinkel, Daryld	Miller, Keith	Schwery, Doug	West, Mark
Davis, Debbie	Holton Estate, Larry	Miller, Patrick	Schwieso Estate, Mary	Western Iowa Apple
Davis, Nora	Huck, Ivan	Minish, Brian	Seaman, Dennis	Co-op
Deal, Leslie	Jensen, Robert	Moffatt, Marvin	Searle, Harry	Whited Estate, Shirley
Deer Lake Farms, Inc.	Johnson, Alan	Neilsen, Reggie	Shelton, Murray	Williams, Carl
Deitering, Gary	Jones, Dan	Nielsen, Jack	Shepherd, Sandra	Wisniewski, Stan
Demey, Kenny	Jordan, Richard	Nuzum, Sandra	Simmons, C.	Woodside, Merle
Dept. of Human Services	Karstens, Dennis	O'Dell, Terry	Smith, Elaine	Zang, Dennis
Douglas Cable Comm.	Katzer, Dorothy	Offerman, Louis	Smith, Roy	
Dozark, David	Kaufman, Charles			
Drake, Randall	KBWH Broadcasting			
Dye, Kathleen	Kersten, Lois			
Eilers, Lorin	Kester, Donna			
Finley, Grant	King, Izola			

## Enjoy an EverGREEN Holiday Season

### Get the most out of energy during the holidays

Holidays are a festive time of year, with gifts, fun decorations, family visits, and lots of laughter, but they can also bring extra energy use for heating, decorative lights, and more. Following are some steps to avoid surprises on your next electric bill:

- ❖ Switch to light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights. They're long-lasting and energy efficient. They run cool and colors don't fade over time. LED lights use about one-tenth of the energy for the same amount of light as incandescent. LEDs use between one and three kWh of energy, compared to between 12 to 105 kWh for traditional. Whether or not you fork out extra bucks to switch to LEDs, it's a good idea to turn off your holiday lights before you go to bed.
- ❖ Consider installing timers to reduce the amount of time your holiday lights burn. Just ten incandescent strands lit for 13 hours a day can easily add more than \$50 to an electric bill. Limit light displays to no more than six hours nightly.
- ❖ Family guests also add to your costs over the holidays. Everyone wants to stay toasty during colder holiday months, heating usually accounts for the lion's share of cold-weather energy costs. Extra guests translate into extra water to heat for showers.
- ❖ Make sure to set your thermostat as low as comfort permits. Each degree above 68 adds 2-3 percent to the amount of energy needed to heat your home. You will save by lowering your thermostat.

## News Flashes

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