

SOUTHWEST LINES


SOUTHWEST IOWA
RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

OFFICE HOURS 7:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

- Don't forget to check out our **NEW WEB SITE!!** Find us at www.swiarec.coop. Tell us what you think about it!!
.....
- **BEFORE DIGGING...**
CALL 811 – Make sure underground lines are located BEFORE you start to DIG!!
.....
- In case of Down Power Lines **REMEMBER:** no matter what vehicle you're in (tractor, car, pickup, combine) – always remember to:
 - Stay in the vehicle
 - Call for help
 - If you **MUST** exit the vehicle (in case of fire) **JUMP CLEAR!**
 - Never touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time. It could be a deadly mistake!
 - Do not touch any wires!

Corning Office
 1801 Grove Avenue
 Corning, IA 50841
 (641) 322-3165
 888-591-1261
Stanton Office
 415 Broad Avenue
 Stanton, IA 51573
 (712) 829-2211
 888-591-1260
Mt. Ayr Office
 1502 W. South Street
 Mount Ayr, IA 50854
 (641) 464-2244
 888-220-4869

ECHCO Concrete, L.L.C. Honored with Iowa Venture Award

The Iowa Area Development Group (IADG), on behalf of Iowa's rural electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and independent telecommunication companies, honored nine distinguished Iowa companies with the Iowa Venture Award at a luncheon held in conjunction with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting at the Sheraton West Des Moines.

ECHCO Concrete, L.L.C. of Corning was started to add a quality component to Iowa's concrete industry and support the demands of construction projects in southwest Iowa. As such, ECHCO concrete built a new state-of-the-art facility with the ability to produce 150-200 cubic yards of concrete per hour. This facility also exceeds the state and local safety and environmental requirements. The facility currently employs nine workers. ECHCO Concrete was nominated for the Iowa Venture Award by Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative.

"The Iowa Venture Award provides an opportunity to uphold the courage, contribution, innovation, social responsibility and vision of Iowa entrepreneurs," said IADG President Rand Fisher. "IADG, on behalf of our sponsors, is proud to recognize these nine outstanding companies for their accomplishment and contribution to their community, region and state."

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey, assisted in presenting the Iowa Venture Awards and honoring the Iowa companies and their leaders.

For 26 years, IADG has presented Iowa Venture Awards to individuals and organizations, both large and small, in recognition of their significant contributions to Iowa's economy through entrepreneurial leadership, innovation and the creation of job opportunities. History has demonstrated that these are among the most accomplished and successful companies in the state. Together they are helping to



ECHCO Concrete, of Corning, Iowa, received the 2013 Venture Award recognizing the company for its expansion and contribution to Iowa's economy. Iowa Secretary of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Bill Northey presented the award on behalf of the Iowa Area Development Group L.C., (IADG). Pictured left to right: Dick Ballantyne, Mark Herzberg, Carroll Baker and Glen Roberts, Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative; Donna Hogan, Adams Community Economic Development Corporation; Chris Cole, General Manager, ECHCO Concrete; Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; Marilyn Werner, Stan Peterman, Phil Kinser, CEO, and Dale Walkup, Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative; and Rand Fisher, President, IADG

sustain and grow Iowa's economy. The Iowa Venture Award Hall of Fame can be found at www.IADG.com/iadg-awards.

IADG is the business and community development leader for over 200 of Iowa's rural electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and independent telecommunication companies. Since 1985, the Powerful Partnerships and economic development efforts of IADG and their sponsors have helped to generate over \$7.56 billion of capital investment and created or retained nearly 45,000 jobs for Iowa.

**Manager's
Comments**



Phil Kinser

**Southwest Iowa
REC Mission
Statement:**

Provide safe and reliable electric service, while also advancing community and economic development opportunities, in a manner consistent with sound cooperative business practices and values.

**CRIME
STOPPERS**
800-452-1111
STOP COPPER THEFT!

Thanks.....

Want to thank the REC men for fixing our yard light.

Elaine Marquardt

Date Set for Annual Meeting

The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Members of Southwest Iowa REC will be held on Tuesday, September 23rd at the Lenox Community Center. Additional details will be provided in future issues of this newsletter and on our website www.swiarec.coop. We hope you will be able to attend.

Electric Bills Higher in Winter

Extremely cold temperatures, like those in December and early January, result in increased electrical usage by our members. Approximately 30% of our members heat their homes with electricity.

Even members who do not have electric heat can see their bills increase in the winter – and they wonder why. It's often hard to pin down the exact reason because we all take electricity for granted and use it with little thought. If we try to back-track and think about our use – it's hard to get a clear picture. Here are a few items that might contribute to higher bills:

- Extra holiday cooking and baking.
- Using more lights because days are shorter.
- Most heating systems require electricity for blowers or fans – and they run almost continuously when it is extremely cold.
- Some members use electric space heaters in spare rooms and garages or workshops.
- Electric blankets and heating pads are often used to keep us cozy – and they add slightly to our entire electric bill.
- We use clothes dryers more in the winter.
- We watch more TV as outdoor recreation activities and daylight are limited.

Scammers Impersonating Utilities

Recently, a number of utility customers have been targeted by scammers claiming to be a collections agent. The caller will impersonate the utility company claiming their bill is overdue and needs to be paid immediately. If refused, they will threaten disconnection.

Southwest Iowa REC does not ask customers to purchase prepaid credit cards nor make immediate cash payments over the phone.

- If someone calls claiming they represent Southwest Iowa REC and they demand immediate payment or personal information, hang up and call us. Do not give in to a high-pressure caller seeking personal information.
- Beware that scammers can spoof caller-ID displays, which means they can mask the call's true origin and make it appear as if

the call is coming from a utility company.

- Do not provide your Social Security number, credit card numbers or bank account information to anyone who requests that information during an unsolicited phone call or an unannounced visit.
- Members should report attempted scams to local law enforcement and the Iowa Attorney General by visiting iowaattorneygeneral.org, or calling 1-888-777-4590.

Outage Reporting

Southwest Iowa REC uses both Adams and Ringgold County Sheriff dispatchers for after-hours outage reporting. The dispatchers alert our crews that are on-call so they can respond to the outage. During times of large call volume, such as when an entire substation or major feeder line are out, other personnel are alerted so they can take the calls from our offices and direct the crews.

If your power goes off, you can help in restoring service quickly and safely by taking the following steps:

- Check your fuses or circuit breakers in the house and at the meter pole.
- Check with your neighbors to see if they have power.
- Depending on your location – Call Southwest Iowa REC day or night at:

	LOCAL	TOLL-FREE
Corning	641-322-3165	888-591-1261
Mount Ayr	641-464-2244	888-220-4869
Stanton	712-829-2211	888-591-1260

- Turn off major appliances to protect them from any high or low voltage conditions and to decrease the load when lines are reconnected.
- Leave a light switch on so you'll know when service has been restored.

Do not call 911 to report your outage. The Sheriff Dispatcher will not take your outage call on the 911 line and this interferes with other emergency situation reporting needs.

Do not report your outage online through our website as this is not staffed 24/7 and will result in your outage information not getting to the appropriate personnel.

Fortunately, we do not have frequent outages affecting a large number of members. When extreme weather or other conditions do interrupt your power, please be patient and report your outage as described above.

SOUTHWEST LINES

Thank You Grassroots Advocates for Your Efforts on the EPA

As we start a new year, I want to take a moment and thank you for playing a big role in our effort to tell the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that we need a sensible, balanced approach to America's energy needs and environmental concerns - instead of forcing top-down regulations onto hard-working Americans.

Over 100,000 real people have joined this nationwide effort and I expect that number to increase in 2014 as more consumers recognize that EPA's plans will raise their power costs.

We need to keep the pressure on the EPA in 2014 and I plan to give you updates on a regular basis throughout the year.

Thank you so much for being a part of this effort at our cooperative.

Share your concerns about EPA with friends and family, or direct them to action.coop where they can learn more and send their own messages.

COOPERATIVE ACTION NETWORK
ACTION.COOP

Southwest Iowa REC earns kudos for dedication to safety

In recognition of its commitment to providing a safe workplace for employees, Southwest Iowa REC has earned Safety Achievement from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives administers the safety audit program in the state.

We're proud to have earned this designation. It shows that we have an organized plan to keep our workers and the public safe. The program also helps us make sure we are in compliance with the many rules and regulations required by OSHA and other regulatory bodies.

In fact, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives safety inspection team quizzed line workers on specific job procedures, as well as the condition and use of items such as flame-retardant clothing, hard hats and hearing protection. In all, more than 400 items related to the cooperative's safety program were reviewed during the audit.

There's a practical side to gaining achievement too. Besides joining an elite group of electric cooperatives from around the country, the cooperative also receives a premium reduction from its insurance carrier, which helps hold down our operating costs.

Energy Code Changes In 2014

The State of Iowa is expected to adopt the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) in 2014. The energy codes are the rules governing the types of construction processes related to reducing energy use in a home. The codes are updated every three years. The 2012 code is roughly 15% more efficient than the current 2009 code. The key changes to the energy code are listed below.

- Air Infiltration/ Blower Door Testing
- Duct Testing
- Window U-factor and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient
- Wall/Ceiling Insulation
- Efficient Lighting
- Whole House Mechanical Ventilation
- Piping Insulation
- Minor Changes

Some of the minor changes include Programmable Thermostats, Eave Baffles, Clarification of Steel Frame Wall Requirements, Sunroom Insulation, and Framing Cavities cannot be used as ducts or plenums, Certificates must include results of testing, and some requirements on pools and in ground permanently installed spas.

If you are planning on building in 2014, make sure to ask your builder if they will be in compliance with the new energy code.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Fighting winter chills? A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don't let it heat up your electric bill. To cool energy costs, keep the fireplace damper closed when not in use. Caulk around the fireplace hearth. Double up on wood-earned warmth by lowering the thermostat setting to between 50 degrees and 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Learn more at www.energysaver.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Your Privacy Is Important

At Southwest Iowa REC, we recognize that a key element of the member-cooperative relationship is the trust that you place with us to respect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information. We are committed to providing you with the highest quality of electric service. While personal information about you is fundamental to our ability to do this, your privacy is also very important to us.

Therefore, Southwest Iowa REC will not disclose to non-affiliated third parties any information, including personal financial or consumption histories, without the expressed consent of the member/consumer. The Cooperative does reserve the right to use information for purposes relevant to prudent engineering and design practices and power procurement practices, which are consistent with the industry requirements, and for the betterment of the Cooperative and its membership, as a whole.

We restrict access to non-public personal information for all member-consumers to only those employees or affiliates who need to know specific information to provide products and services to the member/consumer. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that, to the best of our abilities, provide prudent and sufficient protection for all non-public personal information.

Information shall not be released to any third party until such time as the member/consumer approves, in writing, such authorization. Forms for the release of information may be obtained from the Cooperative office.

Southwest Iowa REC may collect non-public personal information from the following:

- Information we receive from you on applications or forms.
- Information regarding payment histories, consumption history, demand history or capacity requirements.



Employee Spotlight



Name: Gary Goldsmith

Family: Married to Val.

Children are Ciara Jackson (husband Trent and granddaughter Kennedy) and Aurilla Goldsmith.

Date of Hire: February 6, 1974

Current Position: Line Foreman (Corning)

Favorite Recipe: Velda's Stew

The RECipe

VELDA'S STEW

1 pound hamburger browned and drained
1 small onion chopped
1 can stewed tomatoes (Italian style)
1½ cups frozen vegetables
4 cups water
¾ cup uncooked macaroni
salt and pepper to taste

Mix together and cook (I use an electric skillet) until the macaroni is done to your liking.

Last month's CREAM OF BROCCOLI DELUXE SOUP recipe should have also contained 2 unpeeled potatoes cubed and one medium onion chopped.

Wendy Wimer and Phil Kinser honored for 25 years of service to electric cooperatives



At the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives in West Des Moines, Wendy Wimer (Customer Service Representative) and Phil Kinser (CEO/General Manager) of Southwest Iowa REC were recognized for 25 years of service. During a special awards ceremony, Wimer and Kinser joined other 25-year honorees who received commemorative certificates from association president Marion Denger.

“Wendy Wimer and Phil Kinser exemplify the steady dedication Iowa’s electric cooperatives have to providing reliable, affordable and safe electricity to our members,” said Denger. “It is a commitment we made to our members long ago – during the 1930s, when the national Rural Electrification Administration was formed – and it is the same commitment we maintain with our members today.”