

Southwest **lines**

Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

April 2015

Phone System Change Coming June 1

IN ORDER TO MORE EFFECTIVELY AND efficiently serve members, Southwest Iowa REC will be updating its phone system and combining its phone numbers into one.



Currently, each Southwest Iowa REC office location – Corning, Mount Ayr and Stanton – has

its own individual local phone number as well as an individual toll-free 888 number. Beginning June 1, this will change to just one centralized number for all three locations.

The new phone system changes and more information will be provided in the May issue of *Southwest Lines*, as well as a bill insert magnet and on the Southwest Iowa REC Web site, www.swiarec.coop.



John Allen, center, and Tim Pfeiffer (not pictured) attended this year's Momentum is Building (MIB) conference in West Des Moines. Sponsored by Iowa's Touchstone Energy® cooperatives and the Iowa Energy Center, MIB is for contractors and builders who are looking for energy efficiency alternatives.

#THANKALINEMAN

Lineman Appreciation Day April 13



THEY FACE SOME OF THE MOST challenging conditions just to keep our lights on at all hours of the day or night, during all types of weather. They put their lives on the line every day so that we can be comfortable. They are our linemen.

On April 13, linemen across the country are being honored during National Lineman Appreciation Day for their hard work and dedication to building, maintaining and repairing our electric infrastructure. They are the first within the electric cooperative family to respond to outages and are committed to getting the power back on and making sure things are safe after storms and accidents.

“Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve,” said Phil Kinser, Southwest Iowa REC CEO. “They work in hazardous conditions away from their families and go above and beyond to restore power to their neighbors. Our linemen, as well as

linemen from across the country, deserve this special day of recognition.”

Southwest Iowa REC invites members to take a moment to thank a lineman for the work they do. Use #ThankALineman on social media to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

Pictured, L-R: Ken Van Wyhe, Justin Murphy, Bill Scharfenkamp, Scott Geer, Shayne Larson, Paul Vanderholm, Sam Elsberry, Nathan Weeda, Danny Stamps, Mike Stargell, Tysen Sederburg, Gary Goldsmith, and Tanner Rinehart. Not pictured: Les Helvie, David Head, Ben Knapp, Zach Schafer

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

- Keep cool this summer!
- ENERGY STAR® certified
- refrigerators are about 9-10% more efficient
- than models that meet the federal minimum
- energy efficiency standard.

CEO's COMMENTS:

Cooperative Posts Strong Financials in 2014



Phil Kinser

OUR ANNUAL, INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL audit was recently completed and the books for 2014 have been closed. The financial performance of your Cooperative throughout last year was excellent and we were able to exceed all of the requirements placed upon us by our lenders.

The bitterly cold temperatures in early 2014 resulted in higher than anticipated kilowatt-hour sales establishing a new annual record for Southwest Iowa REC. Kilowatt-hour sales for 2014 were 4.92 percent above budget and Operating Margins were 29.37 percent above the budgeted amount. The following table shows where the money we collected from you was spent in 2014:

Purchased Power	56.56%
Operations & Maintenance	13.98%
Consumer Accounting & Info.	4.25%
Admin. & General Expense	6.08%
Depreciation	8.30%
Interest on long-term debt	5.77%

Other Expense & Taxes .25%
Operating Margins 4.81%

The Operating Budget for 2015 does not include any increase in the base price you pay for your electricity. The cost of wholesale power we purchase from Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) is also projected to be stable with less than a 1 percent increase projected so the impact on the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) portion of your monthly electric bill should be minimal.

Since Jan. 1, our line crews have been concentrating on vegetation management (tree trimming and removal), retiring old unused services, line inspection and maintenance, mapping updates, and preparing material orders for construction projects.

The 2015 Operating Budget includes \$2,136,162 in system upgrades and improvements as follows:

- \$354,234 for new services construction

- \$1,306,645 for new tie lines, line upgrades, conductor replacement and line relocations

- \$300,400 for pole replacements

- \$154,983 for new meters, transformers and other special equipment

- \$12,400 for new security lighting

- \$7,500 for sectionalizing equipment

These upgrades and improvements are part of our 2013-2016 Construction Work Plan. In addition to this, we have budgeted \$1,832,894 for ongoing operations and maintenance programs including vegetation management, pole inspection, meter testing, transformer and breaker maintenance, general line maintenance and security light maintenance. All of our programs are designed to continue to provide you with safe and reliable electric service.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: We're Changing How We Handle After-Hours Outage Calls

SOUTHWEST IOWA REC ENCOURAGES ITS members to call and report outages whenever they occur, no matter what time. Please note that if you call after office hours – weekdays after 4 p.m. and weekends – there will be a change coming in how your call is handled.

First, a thank you to both Adams and Ringgold County Sheriff's Office dispatch teams for answering the cooperative calls that come in

when our office is closed, which they have done for the last several years. Now, we have contracted with the Cooperative Response Center (CRC) for this service.

CRC is a nationwide, cooperatively owned and operated, 24/7 contact center that provides services to more than 300 electric utility members and associate members in 41 states. With offices in Austin, Minn.; Dunlap,

Tenn.; and Abilene, Texas, CRC represents more than 4.7 million consumers.

By using CRC, your cooperative will have a greater capacity to handle after-hours outage calls and provide an enhanced level of service to our member-consumers. More information will be provided as the exact changeover date becomes available.

We're here to help!

Complaints Resolution Process

SOUTHWEST IOWA REC MAKES EVERY EFFORT TO RESOLVE ALL COMPLAINTS BROUGHT TO ITS attention. You can contact us at 1801 Grove Avenue in Corning; 1502 W South Street in Mount Ayr or 415 Broad Street, Stanton. Or you can call (641) 322-3165 or (888) 591-1261 in Corning; (641) 464-2244 or (888) 220-4869 in Mount Ayr; or (712) 829-2211 or (888) 591-1260 in Stanton.

If your complaint is related to the Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative's service rather than its rates, and Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling (515) 725-7321, or toll free (877) 565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; or by sending an email to customer@iub.iowa.gov.

Southwest Iowa REC and CIPCO Support Electrical Technology Scholarship

SOUTHWEST IOWA REC AND ITS POWER PROVIDER, CENTRAL Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO), have joined together to help sponsor the Electrical Technology Scholarship offered by Southwestern Community College (SWCC) in Creston.

The recipient of this year's scholarship is Curt Reynard. Following his retirement from the Navy, serving in every war since Kosovo (1998-1999), and surviving a brain cancer diagnosis, Reynard returned to college and enrolled in the Electrical Technology program at SWCC. He plans to receive his Associate of Applied Science Degree in Electrical Technology.

The first Electrical Technology Scholarship was awarded in the 2013-2014 academic year. Eligible candidates must be full time students enrolled in the Electrical Technology program, which trains them for entry-level positions in residential or commercial construction or industrial maintenance, familiarizes them with the electrical operations of alternative energy systems and can be used as a springboard into apprenticeship training. The scholarship, worth between \$250 and \$500, is awarded to a second year student during his or her final semester.

"Supporting this scholarship program is a vital investment that demonstrates the cooperative's strong commitment to the communities we serve," said Phil Kinser, CEO of Southwest Iowa REC. "Both Southwest Iowa REC and CIPCO are proud to promote our cooperative values through programs like this."



Pictured, from left: Beth Kulow, Dean of Students, SWCC; Phil Kinser, CEO, Southwest Iowa REC; Curt Reynard; Tom Freml, CIPCO Area Supervisor-Creston; and Lindsey Stoaks, Asst. VP of Instruction, SWCC.

Maintain Proper Clearance Around Grain Bins

IF YOU'RE CONSIDERING A NEW GRAIN bin this spring, remember that it's important to first contact Southwest Iowa REC.

Your cooperative will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. The State of Iowa requires specific clearances for electric lines around grain bins, with different standards for those filled by portable and permanent augers, conveyors and elevators.

According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter

199 -- 25.2(3) b.: *An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)C2-2012 "National Electrical Safety Code," Rule 234F. This paragraph "b" shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24,*

1997. (As adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board)

Southwest Iowa REC is required by the Iowa Utilities Board to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants, and city and county zoning officials. If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please call Southwest Iowa REC.



For a printable image of the grain bin clearance graphic visit our Web site at www.swiarec.coop or request one at your local REC office.



Carl Wycoff

Bravo!

"The last thing that we wanted to do on two cold January nights was call the REC, but

when our heating system failed us, we had to. And, just as promised, out they came and got us back up and going. Many, many thanks to David, Zach, and Bill." — *A very grateful REC household for 30+ years! Dennis & Joy Brown*

"We would like to thank you for your donation for the Electrical Scholarship. Thank you again for investing in excellence at Southwestern." — *Beth Kulow, Southwestern Community College*

"We sincerely thank you for your recent

donation to the annual 4th of July celebration. It is people like you that make events like this possible." — *Adams County Conservation Board & Foundation*

"Please permit me to express my personal appreciation for your donation to support the Southwest Valley High School Athletic Department." — *Matt Beu, Athletic Director, Southwest Valley Schools*

"We are pleased to acknowledge receipt of your charitable contribution to the East Union Early Childhood Center Scholarship Fund. It is people like you, helping others, who make Union County such a special place." — *Hope Hall, Director, East Union Early Childhood Center*

"The Ringgold County Sheriff's Office and the Ringgold County Sheriff's Reserve Officers thank you for donating to our organization. Your donation is very much appreciated." — *Mike Sobotka, Ringgold County Sheriff*

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Name: John Allen
Family: Married to Cindy. Two children: Wes (Abby) Allen and Kelsey Allen. Four grandchildren: Mattaya, Kendall, Hunter, and John.

Date of hire: March 1, 1995

Current position: Director of Member Services

Favorite recipe: Cheesy Potato Soup



Cheesy Potato Soup

- 4-5 potatoes peeled & cubed
- 3 oz. cream cheese
- 2-3 carrots peeled & cubed
- 1 ½ cups shredded Velveeta cheese
- 1 T. butter
- 1 ½ cups diced ham
- ½ onion chopped Salt and pepper to taste
- 3-4 cups chicken broth

Boil potatoes until tender. Drain. Sauté carrots and onions in 1 Tbsp. butter. Combine potatoes, carrots, and onion with 3-4 cups chicken stock (broth). Over low heat add cream cheese, shredded Velveeta cheese, and diced ham. Heat until cheese is melted.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

SOUTHWEST IOWA RURAL ELECTRIC Cooperative, Corning, Iowa, is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of

program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to the USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice users), by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA and Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative are equal opportunity providers and employers.



Corning
1801 Grove Ave., Corning, IA 50841
(641) 322-3165 / (888) 591-1261

Mount Ayr
1502 W. South St., Mount Ayr, IA 50854
(641) 464-2244 / (888) 220-4869

Stanton
415 Broad Ave., Stanton, IA 51573
(712) 829-2211 / (888) 591-1260

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