

# The Power Behind Your Power

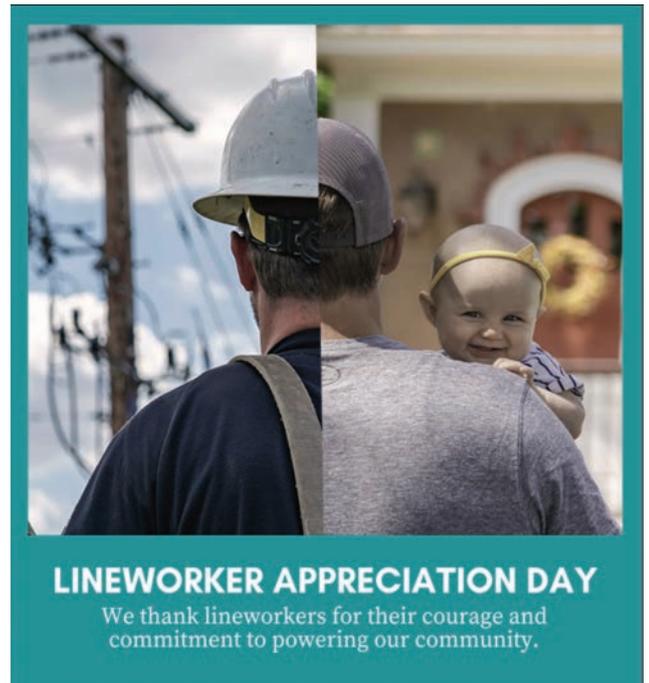
*Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11.*

**Y**ou've likely noticed Consumers Energy's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough—but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying six gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, lineworkers are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Lineworkers must be committed to their career—because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineworker is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours, outdoors in difficult conditions. While the job does not require a college



## LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

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# WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

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## THIS MONTH'S CONTEST:

*April is National Safe Digging Month which serves as a reminder to all people who excavate or dig to call 811 (One Call) at least 72 hours before digging to have the approximate location of utility lines marked. This process helps prevent death, injuries, property damage, and unnecessary utility outages. Send in the location of the Iowa One Call logo in this issue of The Connection.*

◆ ◆ ◆

**Winners for the month of February:**  
Marta & Karol Smigowska, Marshalltown  
Joe & Jody Melcher, Nevada

**Here's how to enter:**

1. Answer the question or challenge posed each month.
2. Send answers to Consumers Energy with:
  - Name
  - Service Address
  - Account Number
  - Phone Number
  - Email Address
 Submit via email or mail:  
 Email to: [kglenney@consumersenergy.coop](mailto:kglenney@consumersenergy.coop)  
 Subject line: Contest  
  
 Mail to: Consumers Energy  
 Attn: Contest  
 2074 242nd Street  
 Marshalltown, IA 50158
3. Winners' names will be drawn at random and published in upcoming issues of *The Connection*.

## April 2022

Dates To Remember:

**April**

- 1 Read Meters
- 3 Bills Due
- 4 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 9 Email / Mail Bills
- 11 Lineworker Appreciation Day
- 17 Easter
- 25 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 29 Read Meters

**May**

- 3 Bills Due
- 3 Automatic Payments Deducted

## The Power Behind Your Power *(continued)*

degree, it does require technical skills, years of training, and hands-on learning. Did you know that to become a journeyman lineworker can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience, and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Consumers Energy's lineworkers are committed to powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their homes and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here in central Iowa, Consumers Energy has 13 lineworkers that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain over 1,200 miles of power lines across 5 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's lineworkers are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, drones, and other technologies to map outages, survey damage, and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is absolutely essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on April 11.

*Bridget Itzen*

**Bridget Itzen,**  
CEO/General Manager

## Congratulations, Max!

Consumers Energy employee Max Upah received his Journeyman Lineman certification in March 2022. Journeyman Lineman status is achieved once an electric utility employee has completed his apprenticeship training and learned the trade for working on power lines. Consumers Energy employees helped Max celebrate with frozen custard during the employee safety meeting in March.



*Journeyman Lineman Max Upah with  
Operations Manager Kevin Peterson*

# ANNUAL NOTICE

Consumers Energy is committed to providing safe and reliable electric service to our members. Our employees are trained and qualified in screening and resolving complaints and will work to assist in answering your questions.

If your complaint is related to Consumers Energy's service rather than its rates, and Consumers Energy 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 Customer Service, 1375 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; or by email to [customer@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:customer@iub.iowa.gov).

# DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LINEWORKERS?

Every April, we celebrate lineworkers and the hard work they do to make sure we have electricity to power our lives.

**How much do you know about lineworkers?**

**Take the quiz below to find out!**

**(Use the answer key to check your work.)**



1. Lineworkers have to wear a lot of gear to do their jobs. A lineworker's gear can weigh up to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. 15 pounds                      b. 50 pounds                      c. 80 pounds
2. Lineworkers maintain and repair electrical lines, but they do not install them.  
a. True (no installation)      b. False (They maintain, repair *and* install lines.)
3. There are approximately \_\_\_\_\_ lineworkers in the United States.  
a. 50,000                          b. 90,000                          c. 120,000
4. Lineworkers must wear \_\_\_\_\_ clothing to protect them from a possible electric arc while working.  
a. fire resistant                      b. extra thick                      c. leather or rubber
5. Lineworkers must wear special conductive boots when climbing a steel structure.  
a. True                                  b. False



Answer Key: 1) b. 50 pounds 2) b. False 3) c. 120,000 4) a. fire resistant 5) a. True

# 2021 Reliability Report

By Kevin Peterson, Operations Manager

In 2021, the cooperative continued to grow at a steady rate. The following indices provide insight into specific areas of growth over the past years.

## SYSTEM GROWTH INDICES

	Annual Number of New Services	Total System Miles of Line	Total System Plant Value
2021	214	1277	\$54,972,033
2020	143	1269	\$52,394,955
2019	128	1261	\$51,930,505
2018	183	1258	\$49,293,970
2017	146	1255	\$43,260,061

Throughout the year the cooperative's outside crews worked extensively on maintenance and upkeep of the distribution system. **These activities directly enhance the reliability and efficiency of Consumers Energy's system.**

In 2021:

- **242 poles were replaced.**
- **78 oil circuit reclosers (breakers) were serviced.**

When it comes to reliability, the cooperative has implemented controls to reduce many of the outages caused by avoidable circumstances, such as trees or animals coming into contact with the powerlines. However, as a distribution cooperative, we are unable to control outages on the transmission system or those caused by major weather events. In 2021, **no major storms affected the cooperative's electric service area.** In total, co-op members were without power for 114.5 minutes in 2021.

## SERVICE RELIABILITY

	SAIDI Outages/Member	Outages/Member (Excluding Major Events)	Outages/Member (Excluding Transmission)	Service Reliability
2021	114.5 minutes	82.46 minutes	82.46 minutes	99.98%
2020	3545.3 minutes	47.88 minutes	47.88 minutes	99.33%
2019	162.21 minutes	87.57 minutes	76.64 minutes	99.97%
2018	145.8 minutes	145.8 minutes	99 minutes	99.97%
2017	69.6 minutes	69.6 minutes	54 minutes	99.98%

## ANSWERS TO THE MARCH NEWSLETTER CONTEST

The contest for the month of March was to answer the question of what common non-hyphenated word contains the following letter sequence?

Here are two potential answers:

**WORTHWHILE**

**BUSHWHACK**

# 2022 AG REBATES

# Cash in on energy saving rebates!



REBATES

## Why ENERGY STAR® or DesignLights™?

ENERGY STAR and the DesignLights Consortium™ have developed product lists to identify quality LED lighting products that meet certain performance criteria. ENERGY STAR and DesignLights qualified products have been tested to verify that they perform as advertised and that required safety certifications have been obtained. This means consumers can purchase these products with confidence and know they are likely to last longer and perform better than non-listed products.

## DAIRY OPERATIONS

Energy-efficient equipment and technologies can go a long way in helping to reduce energy expenses and improve productivity.

**Dairy Heat Reclaimers** **\$5 per milking cow**  
Heat reclaimers can reduce water-heating energy usage by 60% to 80% by recovering the heat discharged from dairy refrigeration equipment.

**Dairy Milk Pre-Coolers** **\$4 per milking cow**  
Reducing the temperature of milk with "pre-coolers" helps reduce refrigeration system energy costs by 20% to 30%.

**Variable Speed Dairy Vacuum Pumps** **\$40/horsepower**  
Variable speed drives (VSDs) used with dairy vacuum systems can reduce electricity use by as much as 60%.

**Dairy Scroll Compressor** **\$250 each**  
Refrigeration systems with scroll compressors are 15% to 20% more efficient than traditional reciprocating compressor systems.  
*(Must replace reciprocating compressor!)*

The maximum rebate is \$2,000 for each equipment type.



## VENTILATION AND CIRCULATION

Farm animals require ventilation and air movement for comfort and productivity year-round. Rebates are available for high efficiency systems that could help save energy costs of up to 30% a year.

**Ventilation and Circulation Fans**  
The operating costs of a ventilation system will depend on the efficiency of the equipment, configuration of the fans, proper installation and control over the amount of airflow.

Ventilation Fans (fan blade diameter) **\$3/inch**

Ventilation Thermostat Controller with Humidistat **\$25 each**

Circulation Fans (fan blade diameter) **\$1/inch**

**Ventilation Fan Efficiency Requirements:**  
*(Must be BESS Labs rated at 0.10 in. static pressure)*

- 14-23 Inch - min. 10.5 CFM/Watt
- 24-35 Inch - min. 13.0 CFM/Watt
- 36-47 Inch - min. 16.5 CFM/Watt
- 48-49 Inch - min. 18.5 CFM/Watt
- ≥ 60 Inch - min. 19.5 CFM/Watt

**Circulation Fan Efficiency Requirements:**  
*(Must be BESS Labs rated at thrust/kW requirements!)*

- 12-23 Inch - min. 11.0 lbs. thrust/kW
- 24-35 Inch - min. 15.0 lbs. thrust/kW
- 36-47 Inch - min. 18.5 lbs. thrust/kW
- ≥ 48 Inch - min. 23.0 lbs. thrust/kW

Rebates are limited to \$5,000 per account for all ventilation and circulation equipment.

## LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT

**Livestock Waterers**  
Rebates are available for efficient waterers with tanks constructed of plastic, a minimum of 2 inches of insulation and lid covers.

Electric Heated Livestock Waterers **\$50 each**  
(≤ 175W per trough opening)

**Farrowing Equipment**  
Efficient heating pads and controllers help reduce energy use and improve animal health.

• Single Crate Heating Pads **\$25/pad**  
(≤ 89W)

• Double Crate Heating Pads **\$50/pad**  
(≤ 170W)

• Heat Lamp or Pad Controller **\$50/controller**

## LIGHTING

Energy-efficient lighting technologies can reduce operating costs and provide lower fixed costs through fewer replacements. *Note: All lamp and fixtures must be ENERGY STAR or DesignLights Consortium qualified.*

**All Buildings**  
Occupancy Sensors **\$8 each**

**Outdoor Security Lighting**

20-34W	\$10/fixture
35-49W	\$20/fixture
50-74W	\$40/fixture
75-124W	\$50/fixture
≥ 125W	\$60/fixture

*Outdoor lighting must be on from dusk to dawn and controlled by an automatic photocell sensor.*

### Horticulture LED Lighting

8-14W	\$10/fixture
15-49W	\$15/fixture
50-99W	\$25/fixture
≥ 100W	\$40/fixture

Horticulture lighting must be classified as such in DesignLights Consortium to qualify.

Maximum incentive is 50% of installed costs. Custom rebates may be available, contact your cooperative for further details.



Contact Consumers Energy for the complete list of rebates and qualifications.

## VENTILATION AND CIRCULATION

**High Volume Low Speed Fans** **\$35/ft.**  
Must be a ceiling-mounted fan with a diameter of 10' or more. Rebate is based on fan blade diameter in feet.



Research has shown that a cool cow is a productive.

For more information, visit  
[www.consumersenergy.coop/content/rebates](http://www.consumersenergy.coop/content/rebates)  
or contact the Member Services Department at  
800-696-6552 or [info@consumersenergy.coop](mailto:info@consumersenergy.coop).



Visit [www.consumersenergy.coop](http://www.consumersenergy.coop).  
Click the Programs/Services  
dropdown, then Rebates.



# Employee SPOTLIGHT

## Jeff Lanning Energy Advisor



Annette & Jeff - Marco Island, FL



Josh, Megan, Annette, Jeff, & Nick - Marco Island

Jeff Lanning has worked at Consumers Energy for six years as the cooperative's Energy Advisor. His job entails helping members with usage issues, setting up new accounts, processing rebates, selling water heaters, and helping members with solar and distributed generation interconnections. Jeff most enjoys meeting with members to set up new services or service upgrades.

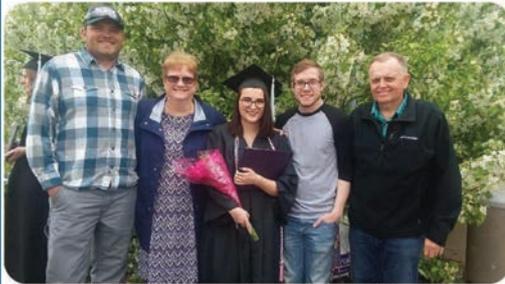


Megan & Josh

Jeff's family includes his wife, Annette; son, Nick; daughter, Megan; her husband, Josh; and Megan & Josh's dachshunds, Brynn & Lando.

When Jeff isn't at work, he would rather be at a Hawkeyes game or vacationing in Florida.

Thanks for all you do for the members, Jeff!



Megan's graduation from UNI



Nick with Lando & Brynn



Go Hawks!



Jeff & Annette



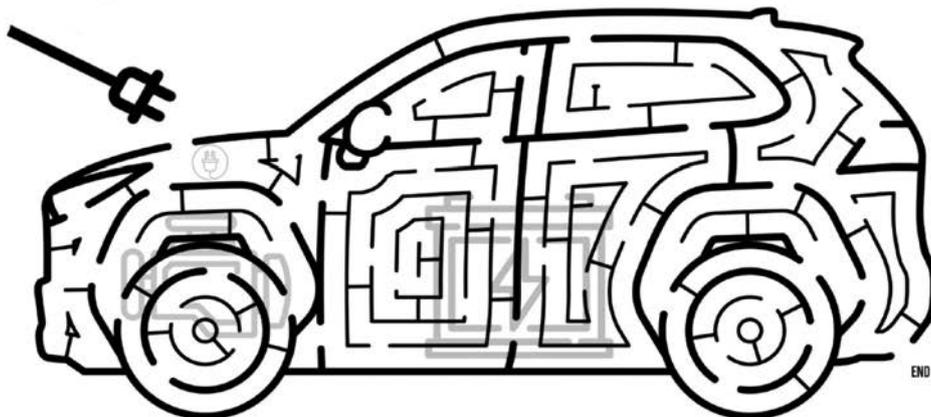
Nick hunting in Texas

### HOW ELECTRIC CARS WORK

with Safety Sadie



Just like game controllers and toys, electric cars run on electricity and batteries! When an electric car is plugged in, it stores electricity in rechargeable batteries that power an electric motor, which turns the wheels. Electric cars do not create exhaust and do not need gasoline!



CAN YOU GET THE ELECTRICITY FROM THE CHARGING PORT THROUGH THE WHOLE CAR?



# MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CONSUMERS ENERGY: CONSIDER RUNNING FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Are you interested in making a difference in your community?

The Second Cooperative Principle is **Democratic Member Control**, which means, you, the member, selects who represents you on the cooperative's Board of Directors and determines the direction of our locally run, not-for-profit business. A director's decisions will impact issues, such as rates, rights of way, and work plans.

Our board is a democratically-elected body nominated by the members of the cooperative and voted into position by any member who chooses to participate in the cooperative's election. Any co-op member is welcome to run for an open position on the Board of Directors, and each director's term is for three years. The election is completed each year in conjunction with the co-op's Annual Meeting. Consumers Energy members may vote by mail or in person at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 27, 2022.



## What are the responsibilities of a director?

- Act as trustee for the members
- Provide organizational and operational direction
- Govern the cooperative through policies that guide the activities of the board and the CEO/General Manager
- Oversee the continuing operating and capital requirements of the cooperative
- Establish and periodically review measures and controls as recommended by the CEO/General Manager

## What are the duties of a director?

- Gain knowledge about the basic understanding of electricity including production, distribution, transmission, and generation
- Read and become familiar with information, data, and reports pertaining to the cooperative
- Attend all regular monthly board meetings, special board meetings, committee meetings, and annual meetings
- Work cooperatively with the board and management for the good of all cooperative members

## Who is eligible to be a director?

- Any cooperative member is eligible to be a director.
- Directors must be able to enter into legally binding contracts.
- While a director, and during the 20 years immediately prior, candidates cannot have been convicted of or pled guilty to a felony.
- Directors cannot be employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling energy, supplies, or services to the cooperative.
- Directors cannot have been employed by the cooperative within the preceding 5 years or be a close relative of a cooperative employee.

## How can a member be nominated?

The Nominating Committee will meet in May to choose candidates for the ballot for the next Board of Directors election. If you - or a fellow member you know - would be a good member-candidate to serve on the Consumers Energy Board of Directors or on next year's Nominating Committee, please contact the cooperative:

### By phone:

**800-696-6552**

### By mail:

**Consumers Energy  
Attn: Nominating Committee  
2074 242nd Street  
Marshalltown, IA 50158**

### By email:

**admin@consumersenergy.coop**  
Subject line: Nominating Committee

## CONSUMERS ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1 - Marshall, Jasper, & Tama Counties:  
Denny Beckman

Vice President  
dbeckman@consumersenergy.coop

Bill Hobson  
President  
whobson@consumersenergy.coop

Pat VonAhnen  
Secretary-Treasurer  
pvonahnen@consumersenergy.coop

District 2 - Story County:  
Arden Greiner  
Director  
agreiner@consumersenergy.coop

Bob Meimann  
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
rmeimann@consumersenergy.coop

Steve Quick  
Director  
squick@consumersenergy.coop

District 3 - Polk County:  
Craig Griffieon  
Director  
cgriffieon@consumersenergy.coop

Tony Lem  
Director  
alem@consumersenergy.coop

Jennifer Sease  
Director  
jsease@consumersenergy.coop

Energy Efficiency Cost per kWh:  
\$0.000871

## To report an outage, call 800-696-6552.

For the most accurate  
outage updates, check  
SmartHub or  
[www.consumersenergy.coop](http://www.consumersenergy.coop)  
for messages, the statewide  
outage map, or call  
Consumers Energy.

## WAYS TO PAY YOUR CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL



Online or the app  
[www.consumersenergy.coop](http://www.consumersenergy.coop)

Automatic recurring  
monthly payments



In person

By phone 24/7  
844-201-7196



By mail

By dropbox



2074 242nd Street | Marshalltown, IA 50158



641-752-1593 | 800-696-6552



641-752-5738



[www.consumersenergy.coop](http://www.consumersenergy.coop)



[info@consumersenergy.coop](mailto:info@consumersenergy.coop)

**OFFICE HOURS**  
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM  
MONDAY - FRIDAY



### COMMUNITY ROOM

- FREE for members to use!
- Great for family gatherings, parties, meetings, and more!



for bill payment options

### FREE PAYMENT OPTIONS

- ALL of Consumers Energy's payment options are FREE for members!

**For information on ways to pay or programs and services  
offered, contact the Member Services Department.**