

# iNtouch



WITH MEMBERS OF PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Tim Coonan to be Annual Meeting speaker



Tim Coonan

Tim Coonan is the Director of Government Relations at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC). Prior to joining the

IAEC, Coonan served as a legislative research analyst with the Iowa House Republican Caucus staff, and spent three years in Washington, D.C., as a legislative analyst for a multi-client lobbying firm.

Coonan earned his Juris Doctorate from Drake University in 2002 and his Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Drake University in 1996.

Coonan spent 8 years in the US Army Reserves as an officer and was honorably discharged at the rank of Captain. Coonan served a 1 year tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a logistics officer.

## Attend your Annual Meeting, June 8

By Darrell Goff, executive vice president/general manager

This year's annual meeting of the members will feature Common Cents ways your cooperative is providing energy and services to its member-owners. We invite you to join us on Wed., June 8, 2011 at the Clarion- Goldfield High School, Clarion, Iowa. We will be serving your choice of roast beef or mozzarella chicken dinner from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. The Choralaires, directed by Karen Strempe will provide entertainment in the auditorium from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. The business meeting will start at 7:00 p.m.

As in the past we will have tasty samples off the grill. This year the children will be entertained by movies and the Clarion-Goldfield Cheerleaders will be doing face painting.

The 2010 Youth Tour winners, Molly Christensen and Ben Lau will share their experiences from last year's Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C.; Tim Coonan, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Director of Government Relations will present information on legislative issues that affect the membership; and you will hear reports from Board President Marion Denger and Executive Vice-President Darrell Goff.

At this year's Annual Meeting, an election will be conducted for the purpose of electing two (2) directors, one each from District 2 and District 5. Members in District 2 and District 5 will be receiving ballots in the mail. You will have the opportunity to vote by mail or you may vote in person at the annual meeting.

Member-owners will receive an appreciation gift following the business meeting.

You will be receiving your Annual Meeting booklet in the mail this month. Be sure to review the reports, financials and director profiles. Your registration card is on the back cover – please bring it with you to the meeting.

I encourage you to take the opportunity to meet your directors and employees and learn about the products offered by your cooperative.



## Basin Scholarship winner

Samuel Moore, son of Jim and Barb Moore, Clarion, Iowa was awarded the \$1000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship. Sam attends Clarion-Goldfield High School in Clarion, Iowa. He plans on attending Central College in Pella. He will be studying accounting and plans on becoming a CPA. Sam plans on staying in Iowa following his CPA certification.

Todd Foss, key accounts director for Prairie Energy, presented Samuel with a scholarship certificate.

Prairie Energy Cooperative would like to thank everyone who applied for the scholarship.

# Electrical Safety Calendar

Use this handy calendar to help keep your home safe. For more tips, visit [esfi.org](http://esfi.org).

## JANUARY

- Check and replace furnace filters

## FEBRUARY

- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## MARCH

- Replace smoke and carbon monoxide alarm batteries if not done in last 12 months

## APRIL

- Check and replace furnace filters

## MAY

- Clean air conditioners or schedule annual inspection
- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## JUNE

- Dust light fixtures/lamps
- Schedule annual inspection of gas-powered dryer

## JULY

- Check and replace air conditioning filters

## AUGUST

- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## SEPTEMBER

- Schedule annual furnace cleaning and inspection

## OCTOBER

- Check and replace furnace filters

## NOVEMBER

- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## DECEMBER

- Dust light fixtures/lamps

### ESFI recommends hiring a licensed, qualified home electrical inspector if:

Your home is more than 40 years old; your home had a major addition or renovation or major new appliance added in the last 10 years; and/or you are the new owner of a previously owned home.

Every month you should:

### 1. Inspect all electrical and appliance cords for damage

### 2. Test GFCIs & AFCIs

Whether you have a receptacle-type or circuit breaker-type ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), pushing the TEST button should turn off power to the circuit. To restore power, press the RESET button. To test arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) push the TEST button. The breaker handle should go to the middle or off position. To reset, move the breaker handle to the OFF position and then to the ON position.



### 3. Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

Push the TEST button or use other procedures recommended by the manufacturer. Smoke alarm batteries should be changed at least once a year. If an alarm "chirps" or "beeps" to indicate low batteries, change them right away. Replace all smoke alarms at least every 10 years.



## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Effective May 22, 1991, the Iowa Utilities Board passed a ruling requiring all non-rate regulated utilities to post the following notice to its memberships: If a member-consumer has a question or concern regarding his/her electric service, please write or call your local electric cooperative at the following address or phone number:

### Butler County REC

521 N. Main Street, PO Box 98  
Allison, IA 50602-0098  
(319) 267-2726  
[www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop)

### Grundy County REC

102 E. G Avenue  
Grundy Center, IA 50638-2095  
(319) 824-5251  
[www.grundycountyrecia.com](http://www.grundycountyrecia.com)

### Prairie Energy Cooperative

2099 Highway 3 West, PO Drawer 353  
Clarion, IA 50525-0353  
(515) 532-2805  
[www.prairieenergy.coop](http://www.prairieenergy.coop)

### Franklin REC

1560 Highway 65, PO Box 437  
Hampton, IA 50441-0437  
(641) 456-2557  
[www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

### Humboldt County REC

1210 Thirteenth Street North  
Humboldt, IA 50548-1199  
(515) 332-1616  
[www.humboldtrec.coop](http://www.humboldtrec.coop)

If your complaint is related to your cooperative's service rather than its rates, and your cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Utilities Division, Department of Commerce, 1375 East Court Ave., Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319, 1-800-532-1275.

**Co-op offices will be closed Memorial Day, Monday, May 30.**



While you are planting your flower or vegetable garden, think about greening up your home by getting rid of old, inefficient appliances.



Your local electric co-op will pay you \$25 each to get rid of old, working refrigerators, freezers and window air conditioners. Those old appliances use many times the electricity of new, ENERGY STAR-qualified models.

**Schedule a certified recycling company to pick up your qualifying old appliances by calling your electric co-op today.**



Country Maid's new building in West Bend, Iowa, was constructed with revolving loan funds from three electric cooperatives, including Humboldt County REC. Country Maid makes Butter Braid brand pastries and sweet rolls. Current employment is 69, with plans to add 15 more jobs this year.



Since 1992, American Tool & Engineering, Inc., located in the Greene Industrial Park in Butler County, has manufactured high performance molds for the blow molding, thermoforming and pressure forming industries. Current employment is 47.



Buresh Building Systems, Inc. specializes in constructing steel buildings, grain bins, and grain equipment. The Hampton-based company purchased a building in the Hampton Air Industrial Park in Franklin County. Current employment is 65 with plans to add 10 more full-time employees over the next few years.

## There's good news about jobs and economic development in rural Iowa

At a time when other businesses in Iowa were retrenching and reducing their payrolls, scores of businesses served by Iowa's electric cooperatives showed significant signs of growth in 2009, according to an Economic Impact Study released March 2011 by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

The association commissioned the study to measure the economic influence of the state's electric cooperatives on the lives and well being of rural Iowans. The study was produced by Strategic Economics Group, which is headed by Harvey Siegelman, former state economist of Iowa.

"The statistics and charts in the latest version of the Economic Impact Study show that electric cooperatives are generating some pretty big numbers for Iowa's economy," said Marion Denger, president of the association and board president of Prairie Energy Cooperative in Clarion.

### The study revealed these key findings:

- Iowa's electric cooperatives helped create and retain nearly 8,000 jobs during 2009, more than two-thirds of which were outside the utility industry.
- Since 1989, Iowa's electric cooperatives have invested a total of almost \$98 million in loans and grants, resulting in the completion of local projects – such as spec buildings, parks, factories, clinics and hospitals – worth \$928 million.
- Compared to the previous year, the number of privately owned renewable electric generation facilities – wind, solar and methane recovery – interconnected to electric cooperative lines more than doubled during 2009.

## Did you know?

Iowa's electric cooperatives have developed a five-year plan to invest \$71.5 million in energy-efficiency programs for homes, farms and businesses across the state.

These cost-effective programs are tailored specifically to the needs of every local cooperative and its members.

Contact your local cooperative to learn about the energy-efficiency programs it offers.

- Butler County REC
- Franklin REC
- Grundy County REC
- Humboldt County REC
- Prairie Energy Cooperative



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Cooperatives



Hawkeye Pride Egg Farm is located southeast of Corwith in Hancock County. When completed, the site will consist of 10 poultry buildings with egg production output of approximately 5 million eggs per day. The project has spurred local growth with the company's main office being located in downtown Corwith. Projected employment is more than 80 people.



The Mill Convenience Store is located north of Grundy Center along U.S. Highway 20. In addition to BP brand gas and diesel fuel, travelers will find a Godfather's Pizza, Arby's and T.J. Cinnamons. The Mill is open 24/7. Current employment is 39.

## Can I do my own wiring?



This is a question that seems to be on the minds of many homeowners. Per the Electrical Examining Board of the Iowa Department of Public Safety, you can do your own wiring provided you follow their requirements.

Chapter 103 of the Iowa Code allows for homeowners and farmers to do electrical work on their property without the requirement of an electrical

license. They merely apply for the Electrical Permit and schedule an Electrical Inspection as their wiring project proceeds. If they have any questions concerning their particular installation, we urge that they contact the Electrical Inspector Supervisor or Electrical Inspector for their area for assistance. The scope of work allowed for the homeowner or farmer are slightly different so please take note of the following:

**Homeowner:** The homeowner may do his or her own electrical work only on their existing principle residence that qualifies for the Homestead Exemption for property tax purposes. Their exemption includes any accessory buildings on the property that do not exceed

3,000 square feet but does not extend to investment property, business property, rental property, vacation homes, etc. A new home must be wired by an electrical contractor.

**Farmer:** The exemption for the farmer is basically the same as that for the homeowner except that it extends to all agricultural properties that he/she may own and is not limited to 3,000 sq. ft. Any new home or any existing residence other than the primary residence must be wired by an electrical contractor.

If you have any further questions, please email us at [elecinfo@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:elecinfo@dps.state.ia.us) or call us at 515-725-6147 or 1-866-923-1082. You can also visit: [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/electrician](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/electrician).

### Common Questions and Answers

**Q: When is an inspection or a permit required?**

**A:** Neither a state inspection or a state electrical permit shall be required for any electrical installation which meets the following criteria:

- Installation is to be legally performed by a State of Iowa licensed Class A or B journeyman or master electrician, or by a State of Iowa licensed apprenticed electrician, who performs the work under the direct supervision of a State of Iowa licensed Class A or B journeyman or master electrician.
- The installation to be performed does not in any way involve work within a new or existing switchboard or panel board.
- The installation to be performed does not involve any electrical line to ground circuit of more than 30 amps.
- The installation to be performed does not involve any electrical line to ground circuit of more than 277 volts single phase.

**Q: I am a homeowner. Will I have to be licensed to wire my own house?**

**A:** A license is not required for an owner of property performing work on the owner's principal residence, if such residence is an existing dwelling rather than new construction and is not larger than a single-family dwelling, or farm property or requires permit. New construction of a dwelling would require the electrical work to be performed by a licensed electrician. An inspection would be required for all new electrical installation regardless of whether a license is required.

### May is National Electrical Safety Month

Prairie Energy Cooperative is joining with the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to promote a healthy respect for electricity and increase awareness of electrical hazards.

Electrical safety awareness and education among consumers, families, employees, and communities will prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. Making a few easy changes to improve safety can also lead to increased energy efficiency and savings on utility bills.

Visit ESFI's Virtual Home at <http://virtualhome.esfi.org> to learn more about home electrical safety.