ILEC NEWS
IOWA LAKES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
NOVEMBER 2026

Your Cooperative offices will be closed November 26–27 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

INVESTING IN THE GRID WHILE PROTECTING EXISTING MEMBER-OWNERS

Across the country and increasingly here in the Midwest, there is growing discussion about large energy users such as data centers, advanced manufacturing facilities and other projects that require significant amounts of electricity.

Those conversations often raise understandable questions: Will these projects increase electric costs for existing member-owners? Will additional infrastructure be needed? Is there enough generation and transmission capacity to serve them? And what benefits, if any, could they bring to the cooperative and the communities we serve?

These are important questions, and Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative believes they deserve clear answers.

Our first responsibility remains the same: providing safe and reliable electric service to the homes, farms, businesses and communities that already depend on us every day.

Growth is welcome when it strengthens the cooperative and communities, but existing member-owners should not be asked to subsidize the infrastructure or financial risk created by a new large energy user.

PROTECTING EXISTING MEMBER-OWNERS

Serving a large, prospective member-owner is much different than serving a typical home, farm or business. A project such as a data center may require new substations, transmission improvements, distribution facilities or additional generation resources.

As an electric cooperative serving an assigned territory, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative has an obligation to provide electric service to qualifying prospective member-owners within that territory. If serving a new large prospective member-owner requires additional generation, transmission, distribution facilities or other infrastructure, the costs associated with those needs should be borne by the incoming consumer rather than existing member-owners.

Our responsibility is to serve growth within a framework that protects our member-owners. Before a large project moves forward, we must determine what capacity is available, identify the facilities necessary to provide reliable service and establish appropriate financial protections.

Depending on the project, those protections may include upfront contributions, contractual commitments, minimum billing requirements, exit provisions or other safeguards designed to protect existing member-owners if a project is delayed, reduced or discontinued.

GROWTH CAN BENEFIT MEMBER-OWNERS

While much of the public discussion surrounding data centers and other large electric loads has focused on potential risks, responsible load growth can also provide meaningful benefits.

Electric cooperatives maintain significant infrastructure, including substations, power lines, generation and transmission capacity, to serve member-owners reliably. In some areas, portions of that system may have available capacity that is not being fully utilized.

Adding a large, stable electric load in an area where capacity already exists can make more efficient use of infrastructure the cooperative is already supporting. That additional usage can help spread certain fixed system costs across more kilowatt-hours rather than having those costs supported by existing member-owners alone.

In simple terms, if the cooperative can serve additional load using existing or efficiently expanded capacity, and the new prospective member-owner pays the costs directly associated with serving its operation, that growth can strengthen the cooperative's overall financial position.

The benefits can extend beyond the electric system as well. Large projects may bring significant private investment, construction activity, permanent jobs, increased local tax base and additional economic activity to the communities and counties we serve.

CAPACITY MATTERS

One of the most important considerations is whether the electric system has the capacity to serve a proposed project.

If generation, transmission and distribution capacity are already available in a particular area, adding load can make more efficient use of investments that have already been made. If significant new facilities are required, those needs and who is responsible for paying for them must be addressed as part of the service arrangement.

Careful planning with our generation and transmission partners is essential. Reliability for existing member-owners cannot be compromised to accommodate new development.

At the same time, unused electric capacity has value. When the cooperative can responsibly add load without negatively affecting reliability or shifting costs to existing member-owners, that additional usage can be beneficial to the cooperative as a whole.

BALANCING OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Communities throughout the region are evaluating how best to address large projects such as data centers. Some local governments have taken additional time to review zoning, infrastructure, water, tax and other considerations before allowing projects to move forward. That reflects the scale of these developments and the importance of thoughtful planning.

Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative supports economic development that strengthens the communities we serve. Large energy users can create challenges if growth is not carefully planned or if costs are shifted to others. But they can also create significant benefits when they make productive use of available electric capacity, contribute toward system costs, strengthen electric sales and bring jobs and investment to our communities.

Our approach is simple: welcome responsible growth, make full use of available system capacity where it makes sense, fulfill our obligation to serve, and ensure the prospective member-owner creating the need for new infrastructure is responsible for those costs rather than our existing member-owners.

That balance between meeting our obligation to serve, protecting today's member-owners and responsibly preparing for tomorrow's growth is fundamental to the cooperative way of doing business.

As conversations about data centers and other large energy users continue throughout our region, our member-owners can be confident that Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative will evaluate opportunities carefully, plan responsibly and keep the long-term interests of our member-owners at the forefront of every decision.

LEAD THE WAY YOUR GUIDE TO BECOMING A BOARD DIRECTOR

WHY SERVING ON THE BOARD MATTERS

Board Directors are the member-owners voice. They guide policy, approve budgets and make strategic decisions that impact the Cooperative's service, rates and community programs. Their perspective as a member-owner is vital in keeping your Cooperative strong, transparent and member-focused.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 14-member Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative's mission is fulfilled and provides oversight of the President and CEO who leads the employee team. The board also:

- Develops and oversees the strategic direction and objectives of your Cooperative.
- Represents the best interests of all member-owners with a focus on the Cooperative's long-term health and sustainability.
- Ensures appropriate risk oversight including sound internal controls and compliance.
- Stays informed through ongoing training and education to keep up with evolving energy industry trends and challenges.

QUALIFICATIONS

Members must meet specific eligibility requirements as outlined in Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative's Bylaws. They are:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be a resident of the geographic district from which they are to be elected.
- Being an active member in good standing for not less than two years.
- Not an employee or spouse of an employee within the past 10 years.
- Must not be a close relative of an incumbent director or an employee of the Cooperative or its subsidiaries.
- Not employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any individual or entity that is either: 1. Another electric utility or 2. Selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative.
- Not been convicted of a felony

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT TO SERVE

- Directors are elected to a 4-year term.
- Board meetings are held monthly, generally on the fourth Thursday of the month, lasting five hours on average.
- Preparation for board meetings can take up to three hours to review the agenda and materials.
- Directors are expected to attend the Cooperative's annual meeting held in April and the special board reorganization meeting that immediately follows the Cooperative's annual membership meeting.
- Attend special board or committee meetings as they arise.
- Attend periodic strategic planning events.
- Directors are expected to take advantage of educational opportunities that will enhance their understanding of the Cooperative's operations and principles.
- Some travel out of state may be required.

HOW TO RUN FOR ELECTION

Start by filling out your application today!

- Complete the Director Nominee Application on this page and return it to our office by January 1, 2027, to be considered for the 2027 ballot.
- On January 20, 2027, the Nominating Committee will meet to review applications and nominate eligible member-owners to be placed on the ballot.
- Director nominees are asked to attend the Cooperative's Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 10, 2027, where election results will be announced at the end of the business meeting.

Your voice matters—represent your fellow member-owners and help shape the future of your Cooperative. Contact Amy Howard at 800-225-4532 to learn more about serving as a director.

DIRECTOR NOMINEE APPLICATION DEADLINE: JAN. 1, 2027

I, the undersigned, am a member of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative from District I or II and request my name be submitted to be placed on the ballot for the 2027 election for directorship from said district to be held at the 2027 annual membership meeting (April 10, 2027) in Spencer, Iowa.

I understand the nominating committee will strive to select other candidates in my district.

I certify I am receiving electric service from Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative in District I or II **(circle the appropriate district)** and am a member in good standing at Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative.

If elected as a director, I agree to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Policies of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative. This information is located on our website at **www.ilec.coop**.

Signature: _____

Account Number: _____

Date: _____

VETERANS DAY

HONORING OUR HEROES

This Veterans Day, we proudly recognize our employees who have served our country. We are grateful for their dedication and sacrifice, and we extend our sincere appreciation to all veterans throughout our cooperative communities who have answered the call to serve.



Ryan Craig
President/CEO



Al Zeitz
Mgr of Renewable Energy Services



Allen Jensen
Lineworker



Brandon Ross
IT Tech

Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The Power of Many, Working as One!

OFFICE HOURS . . . . . 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Mon- Fri).
Contact Iowa Lakes 24 hours/day, 7 days/week:
24 Hour Customer Service: . . . . . 800-225-4532 (Primary and Emergency)
General Fax: 712-362-2819
Website: www.ilec.coop | E-Mail: ilec@ilec.coop | Editor: Jen Sievert
Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

IOWA 811 ONE CALL℠
800-292-8989