

HIGHLINES

NEWS FOR THE MEMBERS OF PELLA COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

JUNE 2026

Nominate a Volunteer by June 30

Do you know someone in our community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference?

Nominate them for our Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win \$3,000 for their local charity or nonprofit.

“We’re really excited to participate in this statewide effort to shine a light on our unsung hero volunteers,” said Doug Stewart, PCEA CEO. “There are so many volunteers in our service area who demonstrate the cooperative spirit by serving their communities.”

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this contest celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced in September and each will receive a \$3,000 donation for their favorite charity or nonprofit. The winners will also be featured in the September issue of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine.

How to Nominate

If you receive electricity from Pella Cooperative Electric, you’re a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in your community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

Visit www.iowaShineTheLight.com by June 30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules.

Help us shine the light on our community volunteers by submitting a nomination by June 30!



Pella Cooperative Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

2615 Washington St.
PO Box 106
Pella, IA 50219

1-800-619-1040
www.pella-cea.org
service@pella-cea.org



Open weekdays: 7:30 am - 4:30 pm;
excluding holidays

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Pella Cooperative Electric is a not-for-profit, member-owned electric cooperative, governed by an elected Board of Directors. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. See pella-cea.org > Nondiscrimination Statement for more information.

Energy Scams Unmasked



For as long as people have been buying water, gas and electric service, there have been bad actors attempting to scam them by using their utilities against them. But in today's digital world, every simple swipe or click increases the risk of being scammed.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

Pella Cooperative Electric wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of your personal information. This month, we'd like to share updates on some of the latest utility scams, as well as tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.

Recent Utility Scams

Scammers typically disguise themselves – either physically or digitally – as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately.

Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source.

Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult for you to immediately verify the call. Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a secure utility payment webpage. What's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will receive a cash or banking refund. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is. It's likely a scam aimed to steal your personal information.

Spotting a Scam

There are several red flags you can watch for to identify an energy scam. Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. These types of demands usually point to a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a potential scam.

What PCEA Will (and Won't) Do

PCEA will never demand instant, immediate payment or threaten to disconnect your service without prior notice or warnings. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

PCEA will never ask for your Social Security number or banking details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options, including in-person, our website, and scheduled payments through your SmartHub account.

Avoiding Scams

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be a PCEA employee requesting banking or other personal information.

If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, just give us a quick call at 1-800-619-1040 so we can assist. PCEA wants to help protect you and our community against utility frauds, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

Congratulations to Our 2026 Scholarship Winners

As one of the seven Cooperative Principles, “Concern for Community” is demonstrated by Pella Cooperative Electric with its belief in empowering our youth. One of the ways the co-op adheres to this principle is by awarding an annual \$1,000 scholarship to a student in each school district within the co-op’s service territory. These school districts include Grinnell, Knoxville, Lynnville-Sully, Newton, North Mahaska, PCM, Pella Christian, Pella High, Pleasantville, Twin Cedars, and one homeschool student.



Kaden Kloster is a senior at Twin Cedars High School who plans to attend Iowa Lakes Community College to study agronomy.



Palmer Hemming is a senior at Pella Community High School who plans to attend Iowa State University to study psychology and political science.



Mia Starrett is a senior at Grinnell-Newburg High School who plans to attend Simpson College to study accounting and business administration.



Will Conover is a senior at Lynnville-Sully High School who plans to attend Iowa State University to study data science.



Sawyer Veldhuizen is a homeschooled student who plans to attend Iowa State University to study cybersecurity engineering.



Logan Ruff is a senior at Pleasantville High School who plans to attend DMACC to study agriculture business.



Garrett Wielard is a senior at Pella Christian High School who plans to attend Morningside University to play football and study sports communication.



Kaden Kloster
Twin Cedars
High School



Mia Starrett
Grinnell-Newburg
High School



Sawyer Veldhuizen
Homeschool Student



Palmer Hemming
Pella Community
High School



Will Conover
Lynnville-Sully
High School



Logan Ruff
Pleasantville
High School



Garrett Wielard
Pella Christian
High School

Save the Date for Member Appreciation Day!

Saturday, Sept. 19



11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Pella Cooperative Electric
2615 Washington St., Pella

Drive-Thru



Hamburgers and
hot dogs on us!

Giveaways!



Free giveaway
per car!

Board Briefs

- **Construction Work Plan Guides Future System Improvements**

The board received an update on planning and preliminary work associated with a two-phase line rebuild in the Killduff area. The project is one of several improvements identified in the cooperative's Construction Work Plan (CWP), which serves as a long-term roadmap for maintaining and strengthening the electric system.

- **Safety Remains a Cooperative Priority**

The board reviewed recent co-op safety activities as part of its ongoing commitment to maintaining a strong safety culture. While safety training and discussions occur regularly among employees, the board also plays an important role in supporting and reinforcing safety expectations across the organization.

PCEA Vice President Steve Inskeep Attends NRECA Annual Legislative Conference

Steve Inskeep, vice president of the PCEA Board and a board member of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), traveled to Washington, D.C., at the end of April to attend the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Annual Legislative Conference.

While there, Inskeep joined fellow IAEC board members to meet with members of Congress and their staff. They discussed key issues affecting electric cooperatives, including energy policy and the need for reliable, affordable power in rural communities.

The annual legislative event provides an opportunity to share local perspectives and highlight the important role cooperatives play in serving their member-owners with our Congressional delegation. Efforts like these help ensure the cooperative voice is heard in Washington and support decisions that will shape the future of rural electricity in Iowa.



Happy Independence Day!

Our office will be closed Friday, July 3.