



HIGHLINES

NEWS FOR THE MEMBERS OF PELLA COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

Call 811 Before You Dig!

With the start of the spring season brings spring projects! Keep safety at the forefront of your projects and call 811 before you dig! Here's a refresher on some of our frequently asked questions!



What is 811?

811 is the national call-before-you-dig phone number. Anyone who plans to dig should call 811 or go to call811.com before digging to request that the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you don't unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.

When do I call 811?

You should call 811 or use Iowa's 811 center website a few business days before you begin any digging, including common projects like planting trees and shrubs or installing fences and mailboxes. The specific amount of advance notice that you are required to provide varies by type of project.

What info do I need before calling 811?

You will need to know the address of where you plan to dig, including the county and nearest cross street, as well as the type of project you're completing and the exact area on the property where you're planning to dig. Whether you call 811 or make your request online, you'll need the same info.

After I call 811, what do I do?

You need to wait a few days to allow utilities to respond to your request and ensure that all utilities have indeed responded to your request before breaking ground. Once all utilities have marked their buried lines, you should dig carefully around any utility marks and consider relocating projects that are close to buried utilities.

Where does PCEA locate?

When you call 811, only the utilities that are owned by the Cooperative will be located. PCEA will locate any underground services up until the meter. Anything beyond the meter, PCEA cannot locate. The member is responsible for maintaining and locating any wire past the meter. Local electricians are able to locate wire that is not owned by PCEA.

Pella Cooperative Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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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.

Thank You for Attending the 2024 Annual Meeting

PCEA was excited to serve dinner to over 300 members and guests at our 2024 Annual Meeting held at Pella Christian High School on April 2, 2024.

The dinner started at 5:30 with the business meeting following at 7:00. Members heard from PCEA President Duane Ver Ploeg on the latest events at PCEA as well as CEO Doug Stewart. 2023 Youth Tour participant Thomas Tangen also spoke on his experience on the trip to Washington, D.C.

Members present were able to put their name in to receive awesome giveaway prizes! All members went home with a new campfire mug for attending the meeting.

Nearly 500 ballots were cast for the 2024 PCEA Director Election. Two positions on the Board were elected: incumbent Darrell Boot serving District 2 and incumbent Carroll Hoksbergen serving At-Large. Board officer positions had no change.

Thank you again for attending and we look forward to seeing you at the 2024 Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, September 14th!

2024 Board of Directors Election Results



Darrell Boot
District 2



Carroll Hoksbergen
At-Large

Congratulations to directors who were reelected to a three-year term. Thank you to our members who made their voice heard in the 2024 election.

Pella Cooperative Electric

WATCH

A watch means there is a **great chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado.**

"Watch" and wait for more **information** while taking precautionary measures.



WARNING

A warning means that a **severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen** on radar.

The moment you get a warning, **take shelter in the safest part of your home.**



Safe
Electricity.org®

Ellie Schmitz Wins National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Pella Community High School junior Ellie Schmitz has been selected to represent Pella Cooperative Electric on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Schmitz will join nearly 40 other Iowa students from June 15-21 in Washington, D.C. On the weeklong tour, students learn about electric cooperatives, American history, and U.S. government and walk away with a greater understanding of their role as an American citizen. They will participate in National Youth Day, visit with their elected legislators, and explore the sights around the nation's capital.

"I'm excited and honored to be selected as Pella Cooperative Electric's Youth Tour representative," said Schmitz. "I want to make the world a better place and believe this trip offers a unique opportunity to learn about myself and others and bring the knowledge and skills I learn back to my community."

A junior at Pella High School, Schmitz is active in varsity volleyball, track, soccer, softball, concert, and marching band as well as student council. As an honor roll student, she also serves as a liaison for the Dollars for Scholars program. She's a very active volunteer in her community adding over 100 hours of community service through the Pella High School's Silver Cord program where she has traveled to Honduras on a medical mission trip, served as an alter server at church, as well as her church's fish fry. Schmitz is the daughter of Gene and Janece Schmitz of Pella.



Ellie Schmitz

"We believe Ellie embodies the character and leadership skills to represent our Cooperative in Washington, D.C.," said Doug Stewart, CEO of Pella Cooperative Electric. "We're excited to provide her with this opportunity to not only serve as the Cooperative's delegate but enhance her leadership skills and learn about our nation's capital."

Pella Cooperative Electric sponsors one sophomore or junior each year who resides within the Pella Cooperative Electric service territory and is a Cooperative member. This includes parts of Jasper, Mahaska, Marion, Poweshiek, and Warren counties.

Every June since the 1950s, as many as 1,800 rural high school students from across the country spend a week in the nation's capital. The students are sponsored by electric cooperatives, like Pella Cooperative Electric, that are committed to educating America's rural youth about America and the role electric cooperatives play in developing strong rural communities.

Board Briefs

- The Board of Directors accepted the 2024 Annual Meeting minutes as prepared by the Cooperative's attorney, Fred Dorr. The minutes will be presented for approval by the membership at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The date for the 2025 Annual Meeting was set for Tuesday, April 8, 2025.
- Line Superintendent, Rob Burton, updated the Board of Directors on the recently completed transmission line rebuild along Hwy 163 which should improve the Cooperative's overall reliability. Now that the project is completed, both the Otley and West Pella substations are back online.
- The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives provided a summary report on the 2024 session of the 90th Iowa General Assembly. Cooperative directors and staff worked closely with elected officials to advocate for policies to ensure continued safe, reliable, and affordable power.
- The Board of Directors approved the Cooperative's Form 990 tax return for 2023.

May is Military Appreciation Month and PCEA is Proud of Three Employee Veterans

Service. Mission. Country. You likely identified immediately (and correctly) that these three words describe our nation's veterans. They also succinctly describe a core co-op ethos.

While veterans are innately motivated to serve, in a similar vein, electric co-ops are guided by foundational principles that put their community first. After all, electric co-ops were founded to bring electricity to rural areas where there was none. In doing so, they powered local economies and helped them to thrive. We believe this close connection to an essential mission is why there are so many veterans in the utility industry and why they are such a great fit for electric co-ops.

Today's veterans are highly skilled because everyone who joins the military is either trained in a tech career field or exposed to advanced technology during their years of service. Many veterans have skills in advanced disciplines such as engineering, electronics or mechanics, which are all beneficial for the utility industry.

PCEA is proud to employ three veterans, and we're especially grateful for their contributions to the co-op and to our community.

Brandon Stone, PCEA Plant Accountant, served in the U.S. Army from 2006-2014. Matt Ainsworth, Journeyman Lineman, served in the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserves from 2001-2007. Lance Freml, Journeyman Lineman served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2003-2007.

Mission-oriented Outlook

Working for an electric co-op is more than a job. There is a clear mission in the work-- to help our consumer-members and the community. When you work so closely with the community, you can't help but feel a sense of commitment and responsibility to our members. It's similar to the sense of duty and responsibility that veterans experience in the military. They feel deep, personal responsibility and commitment to their co-op team members and to the members we serve. Veterans are trustworthy, goal oriented, wanting to do right for their co-op and their community.

At the national level, electric co-ops support the "Vets Power Us" program, which is aimed at employing and honoring veterans and their families. This effort involves partnering with other electric co-ops across the country along with the Department of Labor, the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration and others to hire veterans in the energy industry.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and we hope you'll join us in recognizing the sacrifices veterans have made to our great country--and the many contributions they continue to make to our wonderful community. Brandon, Matt, and Lance, we salute you!



*Brandon Stone
Plant Accountant*



*Matt Ainsworth
Journeyman Lineman*



*Lance Freml
Journeyman Lineman*

Honoring Memorial Day

Our office will be closed May 27 in Observance of Memorial Day