



# WATTS CURRENT

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative



February 2011



Garry L. "Garr" Hintz

## Hintz Accepts New Position

Garry L. "Garr" Hintz has been named to succeed Dennis Kruse as general manager of Kingsbury Electric Cooperative, De Smet, South Dakota. Hintz was the director of administrative services for Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, and past general manager of Sac County REC. Garr begins his employment with Kingsbury Electric on March 1, 2011.

Kingsbury Electric Cooperative serves approximately 935 consumers in Kingsbury County in east central South Dakota. A member of East River Electric Cooperative, Madison, South Dakota, Kingsbury Electric is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. 1-4-S-25-B  
We wish Garr all the best!

## Energy Efficiency Rebate

POET Biorefining, Coon Rapids, made several energy efficiency improvements at the company's facility that will save both electricity and money. John Johnston (middle) presented Owen

Shunkwiler (left) and Brian Potthoff (right) a rebate check for the improvements they made. RVEC supports energy efficiency by offering several programs for both homes and businesses. See how you can save. Give us a call today.



## RVEC Winner

Jerry Reiling won a crock

pot for filling out the online member survey. Go to [www.rvec.coop](http://www.rvec.coop) and fill out the member survey. Once you do, your name will be entered into the drawing. Congratulations Jerry!!!



John Johnston (middle) presented Owen Shunkwiler (left) and Brian Potthoff (right) a rebate check.

## REMEMBER TO SPRING AHEAD



**DAYLIGHT SAVING  
TIME BEGINS  
SUNDAY, MARCH 13.**

## Automatically Pay Your Bill

With your permission, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) is able to have your electric payment automatically withdrawn from your bank account. Our bank will accept preauthorized payments from any bank.

Payments would be withdrawn from your bank account around the 20th of each month. At this time there is no charge for this service; however, if our bank would

begin charging us, we would then begin charging you a fee. If there are insufficient funds in your bank to cover your preauthorized payment, an insufficient funds processing charge of \$30.00 will be applied. 22.25.02

Please contact RVEC for a preauthorized payment agreement form if you would like your payments automatically withdrawn from your bank account.

## Alternate Energy Purchase Program

Iowa state law requires electric utilities to offer an alternate energy purchase program to the people they serve. Effective January 1, 2004, all members of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) may contribute money toward a fund that will assist in the purchase of alternate or "green" energy in Iowa.

RVEC receives all of its wholesale electricity from Corn Belt Power Cooperative, which arranges to purchase alternate energy from new and existing generation sources. One of these sources is a wind energy center in Hancock County, Iowa. This 98-megawatt wind energy center began operation in December 2002 and includes 148 wind turbines.

The cost to acquire the wind energy from the Hancock County Wind Energy Center

exceeds the cost to generate power from Corn Belt Power's other generation resources. This difference in purchase price is known as the incremental cost. RVEC has designed its Alternate Energy Program to allow its members to make voluntary contributions that will be sent to Corn Belt Power to apply toward purchase of renewable energy.

Should the contributions exceed the incremental cost of the Hancock County Wind Energy Center, Corn Belt Power on behalf of RVEC will make additional investments in renewable energy in Iowa, including additional purchase of wind energy, investments or purchases from solar or waste management sources, or grants for other contributions to alternate energy development in Iowa.

Members may participate in the Alternate Energy Program by writing in the amount of their contribution on the empty line of their electric bill marked "renewable energy contribution." Members may contribute in increments of one dollar (\$1.00) and may enter or leave the contribution program at any time. 19.01.01

Members who contribute are not guaranteed that electricity generated with renewable resources will be delivered to their individual meters. Their contributions are given to assist in the development of alternate energy in Iowa and will be spent to deliver renewable energy into the Corn Belt Power system from which the members' electric cooperatives receive power.

## RECare

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) has established RECare, a program of members helping members. RECare provides funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers.

You may make a one-time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be added to your monthly electric bill. You may also make a contribution part of a matching fund, if there is a matching fund available. Please inform RVEC as to who will be matching your donation so that the appropriate records may be maintained. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others! 4-S-11-H

Yes, I want to be part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount will be added to my monthly electric bill.

My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is to be matched by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

## Why Does the Power Blink?

Those blinks are annoying but inevitable. Here's why.

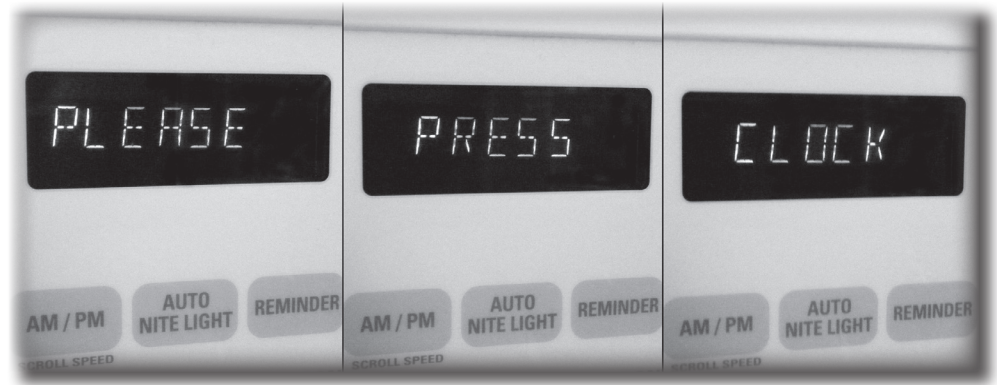
At one time or another, we've all returned home or woken up late for work to see a blinking 12:00 on our digital clock. You then have to reset every digital clock in your household that doesn't have a battery backup, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, this state of "eternal midnight" is caused by a "blink" in the electrical system.

While blinks can be annoying, they show that an electrical system is working exactly as designed. And while Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) has taken steps to reduce the number of blinks across its power system, there are measures you can take as well. 13.21.03

Let's look at blinks. These momentary power interruptions can occur anywhere along a power system--from the time electrons are generated at a power plant to being shipped across transmission line to substations, or during distribution from a substation to your home.

### Why blinks?

Blinks are created when a breaker, or switch, opens along any portion of the power system. The breaker usually opens because of a large, quick rise of electrical current. This large rise, called a fault condition, can occur when a tree branch touches a



line, lightning strikes, or a wire breaks.

When this happens, a relay senses the fault and tells the breaker to open, preventing the flow of power to the problem site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes. The brief delay, which allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds.

If the fault clears, every home or business that receives electricity off that power line has just experienced a blink. This could include thousands of accounts if the breakers protect a transmission line or a substation.

### Reducing the blink's effects

RVEC employs methods to reduce blink frequency. Tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way and one area where you can help. Make sure RVEC knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line.

Meanwhile, you can reduce the frustration of blinks by purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration

outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink while you are operating a computer, your computer may crash and you will have to reboot, hoping all the while that there will be few corrupted files.

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on your computer can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides you some time to save whatever you were working on and exit your computer properly.

### The future of blinks

RVEC operates an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency with which they occur.

Source: National Rural Electrical Cooperative Association

# WATTS CURRENT

Published monthly by  
Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative

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## Co-op Reps Visit State Capitol

Representatives from Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, Calhoun County REC, Prairie Energy Cooperative and Corn Belt Power Cooperative met with their state legislators Feb. 9 to give electric co-ops' perspective on pending bills.

Co-ops are asking legislators to support a bill that streamlines the procedures for archeological studies required by the State Historical Preservation Office.

When it comes to renewable energy sources, electric co-ops have always supported an incentive-based approach to adding wind energy. Senate File SSB 1078 would mandate utilities have a certain percentage of renewable energy and, therefore, co-ops oppose the bill.

Co-op representatives pointed out to legislators that Iowa already ranks second nationally in wind generation output with 3,670 megawatts installed and leads the nation in wind generation as a percentage of total power output at 17 to 20 percent.



L to R: Jeff Cranston, Rep. Gary Worthan (R-Storm Lake), LaVerne Greving and Jim Bagley discussing electric co-ops' perspective on pending bills.

## Winter Moratorium Ends

The winter moratorium ends April 1, 2011. If your account(s) are past due, you need to come in or call the office to make arrangements by March 31, 2011, to avoid disconnection of your electrical service. 6-S-18-D

After April 1, 2011, we do not have to post your premise with a 24 hour disconnection notice. Disconnection may occur immediately. Take the necessary steps now to avoid this situation.

## Spot Your Number

Read Watts Current and watch for your location number. If you spot it, call RVEC by the 20th of the month and you will receive an electrical bill credit for \$10.00.