

HIGHLINES

NEWS FOR THE MEMBERS OF PELLA COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

MAY 2026

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, we 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 the Cooperative.

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 2026 Annual Meeting

The Cooperative was thrilled to host nearly 300 members and guests at our 2026 Annual Meeting, held at Pella Christian High School on April 7, 2026.

The evening began with a delicious dinner at 5:30 PM, followed by the business meeting at 7:00 PM. Attendees heard updates from PCEA President Duane Ver Ploeg on the latest PCEA developments, as well as insights from CEO Doug Stewart.

Members were given the opportunity to enter for exciting giveaway prizes, and every attendee received a complimentary gift as a thank you for joining us.

The 2026 Director Election saw more than 300 ballots cast. Three Board positions were filled: incumbent Jon Van Woerkom was re-elected for District 1, Duane Ver Ploeg was re-elected for District 4, and Bryce Arkema was re-elected At-Large.

Thank you again to everyone who attended. We look forward to seeing you at the 2026 Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, September 19th!



Board Briefs

- **Form 990 Reviewed and Approved**

The board reviewed and approved the cooperative's 2025 Form 990 tax return ahead of the May 15 filing

deadline. This annual filing provides a summary of the cooperative's financial activity and supports transparency and compliance with federal requirements.

- **Annual Meeting Follow-Up and Board Reorganization**

The board accepted the minutes from the 2026 Annual Meeting and held its annual reorganization meeting. Officer positions remain unchanged: Duane Ver Ploeg, President; Steve Inskip, Vice President; Bryce Arkema, Secretary; Carroll Hoksbergen, Treasurer; and Darrell Boot, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer.

- **Summer Work Schedule Improves Efficiency**

The board reviewed the summer work schedule for the line crew, which utilizes four 10-hour workdays. This schedule allows for longer, uninterrupted construction time, improving efficiency and reducing repeated setup and travel between job sites. It also provides greater flexibility for crews to respond to outages and weather-related work.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)

Spring Into Energy Savings!

Spring is a season of renewal—and a great time to refresh your energy habits, too! As temperatures begin to warm and daily routines shift, a few small changes around your home can add up to meaningful energy savings.

Pella Cooperative Electric is committed to helping our members use energy wisely while keeping homes comfortable year-round.

Spring is the perfect time to schedule maintenance for your heating and cooling system. Spring and fall check-ups conducted by a licensed professional can help ensure your system is running efficiently, safely and reliably before the peak seasons begin. A well-maintained unit uses less energy, lasts longer and helps prevent costly breakdowns when you need it most.

If you're looking for a simple place to start saving, look no further than ceiling fans. Fans don't actually cool or heat the air, but they help you feel more comfortable by moving it. During warmer months, make sure your ceiling fan blades are set to rotate counterclockwise. This creates a downward breeze that makes you feel cooler, allowing you to raise your thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort. In cooler months, reverse the direction of fan blades clockwise to help push warm air down from the ceiling, improving efficiency when your heating system is running.

Speaking of thermostats, adjusting the temperature just a few degrees can make a noticeable difference on your energy bill. As spring arrives, try setting your thermostat slightly higher when cooling or slightly lower when heating. Even a two- or three-degree adjustment can reduce energy use while still keeping your home comfortable—especially when combined with ceiling fans or open windows on mild, pleasant days.

Hot water use is another area where simple habits matter. Taking shorter showers can help reduce the amount of energy used to heat water, which makes up a significant portion of most energy bills. Cutting just a few minutes off each shower not only saves energy but also conserves water.

Pella Cooperative Electric is here to help every season, every step of the way. We offer energy-saving solutions and resources designed to help you lower energy use for your home or business and manage costs. If you have questions or want to learn more about energy efficiency offerings and programs, visit pella-cea.org/energy.



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, Lead 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 25 in Observance of Memorial Day