



The Energy Insider

A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION OF MIDLAND POWER COOPERATIVE

WWW.MIDLANDPOWER.COOP | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021

Treat yourself to a trip to Deal's Orchard

The crunch of a sweet, juicy apple; the tang of a swig of cider; the vision of sunflowers swaying in the breeze; the sound of children squealing with joy; and much more can be experienced with a stop at Deal's Orchard west of Jefferson.

What started as a part-time hobby of the Deal family more than 100 years ago has grown into a frequent destination or annual event for many Iowans. Today, the family-run apple orchard features 45 acres of apple trees, more than 25 varieties of apples and the season of fun for the whole family has just begun at their Apple Acres facility, where you can enjoy the jumping pillow, giant slides, human hamster wheels, a corn pool, pedal tractors, feeding goats, an adventure through the corn maze and much more.

"Growing up on the farm, there was always work that needed to be done, and I've always enjoyed being outside and working with my hands," said Benji Deal, who has been helping his parents with the orchard

See DEAL'S ORCHARD, Page 2



Young Apple Acres attendees enjoy a few of the activities at Deal's Orchard.

Meet the newest community solar participants



At the end of a cul-de-sac, surrounded by wildlife and nestled under a beautiful canopy of trees you will see a glimpse of what appealed to Chad and Kelsi Macek when they considered relocating from Grimes to north Ames this spring.

"We hadn't really planned on moving to Ames, but we found the right home in a great neighborhood, and we made the

See COMMUNITY SOLAR, Page 3

Shining the light on contest finalists

Three volunteers receive \$1,500 for their local charities

Earlier this summer, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa sponsored a new contest to highlight our cooperative commitment to community. The Shine the Light contest launched during the month of June and member-consumers and employees of Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives were invited to nominate volunteers in their communities who are working to improve quality of life.

"This contest gave our members and employees a new opportunity to show their appreciation for family, friends and neighbors who are making a positive difference in the community," remarked Midland Power CEO Bill McKim.

39 nominations were submitted from across the state, highlighting the work of many incredible Iowans. Three finalists were selected:



Suzanne Askelsen

- Suzanne Askelsen of Cambridge is a member of Consumers Energy and was nominated by Carol Gilbert, a Midland Power Cooperative member. Suzanne was recognized for her work with the Ballard Education Foundation. She was part of the new foundation's steering committee and served as the first president for four years. A mother of six, she makes it a priority to serve in her community.



George North

- Deb McWhirter, a Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative member, nominated George North of Allison for his work with Wilder Park. Driven by his ethos to serve others, George is a retired dentist with a long record of community involvement, including several years as a scout leader. He was instrumental in developing Wilder Park as it has grown to provide affordable outdoor recreational services in Butler County.

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Get to know Board President Coleman

When Mike Coleman was approached in 2009 to run for the Humboldt County REC Board of Directors, he had no idea he'd be elected, let alone go on to become the Midland Power Cooperative Board President in June 2021.

Coleman grew up in the country. "I always knew I wanted to farm, from the time I was a little kid growing up in rural Humboldt," said Coleman. "Not only did I get to learn farming from a young age, but I got to learn farming with my dad and my grandpa. It was pretty much an honor to learn from close family members."

His family has always been very active in the community. When he was growing up, his parents were involved with 4-H and coaching sports he participated in.

Now, Coleman has been on various boards over the years, including being the former President of Humboldt County Farm Bureau, on the soil and water board and church board. He's also been a 4-H leader himself, and he's enjoyed teaching kids about agriculture through the Ag in the Classroom Program.

"Being active in the farming community has led me to meet many people over the

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Mike Coleman with his family on their farm near Humboldt, Iowa.

Survey planned

Midland Power Cooperative has partnered with a research company to conduct a survey to explore member views on co-op programs and services as well as overall membership satisfaction. Random co-op members will be selected to complete a survey questionnaire by e-mail or phone call.

The survey will begin taking place in October. The co-op is owned by you, the members, and your input is valuable. It will help the co-op provide the best possible service and plan for the future. If you are contacted, we hope that you take the time to answer the questions in an effort to provide the Midland Power team with a better understanding of how well we are meeting your expectations.



Seeking future leaders Scholarship and AirPods prizes!



Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Midland Power Cooperative has a long history of supporting students in the communities we serve through scholarships and leadership opportunities. We've also been sending deserving high school students to our nation's capital every summer for years as part of the national

See IOWA YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, Page 3

Brooker, Heldenbrand, McConnell join Midland Power team

Laura Brooker of Boone joined Midland Power as a Member Care Specialist in Boone in August. Originally from Ralston, Iowa, she has previous work experience with the Iowa High School Athletic Association for 18 years, as the Assistant to the Director of Officials.

When she's not at work, Brooker enjoys road trips, kayaking, canoeing, gardening, and spending time with her children and grandchildren. If she's relaxing on the weekend, that might include watching a football game, a golf tour on TV or a movie with her husband Jason.

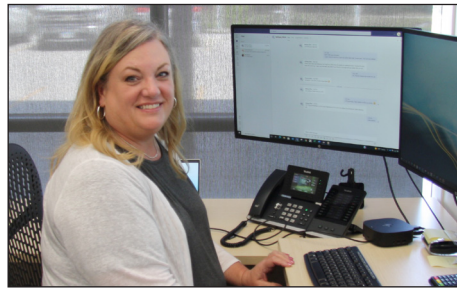
Brooker's daughter and her family reside in Sully, Iowa, and her son and his family are located in San Antonio, Texas. She has three grandsons, whom she adores.

Dana Heldenbrand of Madrid joined Midland Power as an Accountant in Boone in August. Originally from Van Meter, Iowa, she has worked in the utility construction industry the past 30 years. She owned the business Communication Technologies before selling it to Data Link and becoming their VP of Operations for 3 and a half years.

When she's not at work, Heldenbrand enjoys running a small animal rescue ranch with approximately 40 animals, which includes horses, donkeys, goats, poultry, a pot-bellied pig, dogs and cats. She also enjoys walking and reading.

She and her husband are high school sweethearts that recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary. Their daughter is attending Basic Combat Training at Fort Sill, Okla., and plans to continue to Advanced Individual Training for Combat Medic Training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, until Jan 2022, and then attend Iowa State University.

Dylan McConnell of Jefferson joined the Midland Power team as a First Class Journeyman Lineman at the Jefferson



Laura Brooker



Dana Heldenbrand



Dylan McConnell

Service Center in July.

A Jefferson native, McConnell has four years of prior work experience with Alliant Energy's Ames Travel Crew.

When he's not at work, McConnell enjoys spending time at the lake, snowmobiling in the mountains, and being with family, including his wife Tori and their 1-year-old golden doodle.

Welcome Laura, Dana and Dylan!

Congratulations to our winners



Herrstrom Farms of Boone won the cordless self-propelled electric lawn mower drawing that followed our Member Appreciation Events! The SmartHub promotional drawing was won by Dave and Rita Aves of Boone. They received a Dyson Cordless Electric Vacuum. Congratulation to Herrstrom Farms and the Aves!

Committed to community

A donation of \$18,500 will help ensure that "Growth Happens Here" at the Greene County Early Learning Center (GCELC), a nonprofit childcare center serving children and families from throughout Greene County.

GCELC will be moving from its current facility on Madison Street in Jefferson to an adjacent property at 306 South Vine Street. The \$2.1 million facility that is underway will increase the early learning center's capacity from 94 to 150 children in the new 9,484-square foot building.

Midland Power Cooperative, along with matching funds from its affiliate businesses (Central Iowa Power Cooperative, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, and CoBank) donated a total of \$18,500 to the Greene County Early Learning Center.

"Midland Power is committed to enhancing the communities we serve. We're proud to support growth and development in Greene County by contributing to the expansion project underway at the Greene County Early Learning Center," said



From left, Midland Power's Talent & Business Development Specialist Kara Boyle and Billing Coordinator Kristin Bednarik present a donation to Donna Sutton, GCELC fundraising co-chair and Cherie Cerveny, GCELC executive director.

Midland Power CEO Bill McKim. "As a local employer, we recognize that early learning and day care facilities are essential to our communities and employees."

"We are grateful for the continued support of businesses, individuals and families in the Greene County area who, with us, are excited to see this dream happening," said Donna Sutton, co-chair of the fundraising steering committee.

DEAL'S ORCHARD Continued from page 1

since 2010.

There were a few tough years – in 1982 the original Apple Barn burned down, and the derechos in 1989 and 2020 caused tree damage, as well as a frost in 2012 that destroyed most of the apple crop.

Today, the Apple Barn, which was reconstructed just a few months after being destroyed, offers fresh apples, seasonal produce items, an assortment of other food, gift, and kitchen items, as well as fresh or hard cider.

Deal's Orchard has diversified over the years. While the delicious cider and apples are reason enough to visit the orchard, the agri-entertainment of Apple Acres, the free weekend hayrack rides, the site of the sunflower field, and the opportunity to pick out the perfect pumpkin from the patch or Christmas tree from the tree farm make it a destination for a variety of reasons during multiple seasons.

"I really enjoy greeting repeat visitors. Some have visited for 20 years or more, and I enjoy watching people create family memories each year," said Benji Deal.

Benji's brother Chris Deal has also returned to helping on more of a full-time basis at the orchard. "We want to continue doing what we're doing and find ways to do it more efficiently, as there may be some press equipment upgrades made in the future to make the pressing of cider more efficient. We also want to continue to seek more opportunities to grow and expand the business that we're doing."

This is the second year for the sunflower field, which will usually peek for 10-14 days in September. Another recent addition was a bon fire site. There is also a vision to make some of the trails throughout the nearby 40 acres of timber a new attraction for visitors in next few years.

"We have fond memories of enjoying the timber as we were growing up and we like the idea of sharing that with people in the future," said Benji.

If you'd like to visit Deal's Orchard, they're open Monday – Saturday 8 am – 6 pm and Sundays 10 am – 6 pm through October, at 1102 244th St, Jefferson, Iowa. Pricing, along with a schedule of special events is listed on their website at www.dealorchard.com.

Can't make it to the Orchard for a visit?

The Deal's Orchard ciders can also be purchased from many central Iowa grocers including Fareway and Hy-Vee in Jefferson, Fareway North and Wheatsfield Grocery Co-op in Ames.

The hard cider can be enjoyed at central Iowa establishments such as the 30 Yard Line in Grand Junction, Whatcha Smokin in Luther, Fenders Brewing in Polk City, Boulder Tap House in Ames, and Fox Brewing in West Des Moines. See www.dealorchard.com to learn more.



SHINE THE LIGHT

Continued from page 1



Marlene Walthart

- Marlene Walthart of Estherville was nominated by Dawn Eveleth, a member of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, for her work with the Emmet County Animal Shelter. Motivated by their love for animals, Marlene and her husband Larry have volunteered at the animal shelter for years and continue to serve the facility in various ways. Marlene and Larry also set up a not-for-profit can redemption center next door to raise money for the shelter.

Each finalist was honored with a \$1,500 donation to their local charity.

The Shine the Light contest will return next summer. We will again accept volunteer nominations during the month of June at www.IowaShineTheLight.com.

COLEMAN

Continued from page 1

years and develop a working relationship with them. We have done many trials on our farm which has helped me learn what works best on our farm," said Coleman. "I've also enjoyed tiling and improving the crop land for future generations."

One of the biggest accomplishments that he's been a part of while on the REC Board was the merger process of Humboldt County REC and Midland Power Cooperative. "The merger was a very successful decision that worked really well," said Coleman.

These days, he and his wife Michelle are enjoying watching their three children growing up on the farm. He's happy his son Spencer is interested in learning the farm equipment and farming techniques.

When asked about his goals for the future, Coleman stated, "I want to continue my walk with faith. I hope our farming operation continues to grow, and I would love to see one of our children take it over in the future. As for Midland Power, I want to see us continue to keep the co-op sustainable and keep it a safe place to work. We need to stay prepared for changes in the industry and keep an open mind on future technologies and opportunities."

Affordable electricity powers quality of life



By Bill McKim
CEO,
Midland Power
Cooperative

Most of us use electricity, either directly or indirectly, at almost all times. Because electricity is so abundant and available with the simple flip of a switch, it's easy to take it for granted.

According to the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices. Considering everything that is powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally might wince at our monthly bill. But keep in mind, it's no longer just the "light bill."

Electricity powers quality of life

Electricity powers our quality of life. From the infrastructure of your home (appliances, water heater and HVAC system) to charging your smartphones, computers, TV and Wi-Fi router, your energy bill covers so much more than lighting.

Today, there is more demand for electricity than ever before. At home, in schools and business, and in commercial

sectors such as transportation, the need for electricity is increasing.

Typically, when demand goes up, so too does the price, as is the case with most goods or services, like cable or even your favorite specialty coffee. However, that's not true with electricity. Let's take a look at how the value of electricity compares to other common expenses.

Over the last five years, the cost of rent increased 3.4%; medical care increased 2.8%; and education increased 2.2%. But the cost of electricity only increased 1%. Considering all the ways we depend on electricity, it still remains a great value.

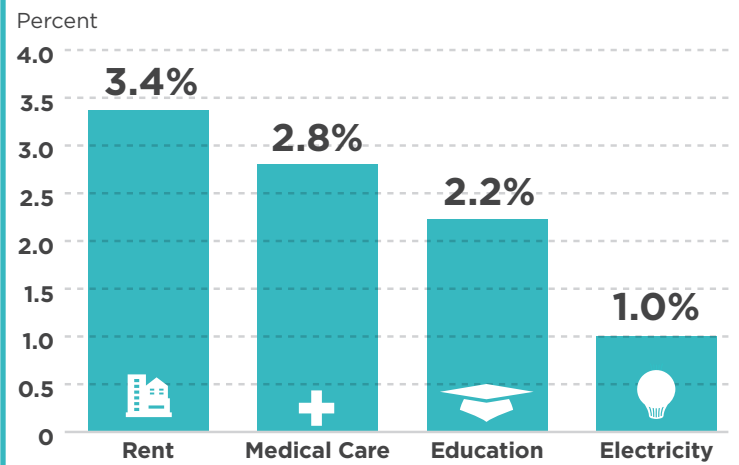
So, the next time you're enjoying your favorite podcast, TV series or movie, consider the value of electricity and how it enhances your quality of life.

We care about you, the members we serve, and understand that electricity is more than a commodity—it's a necessity. That's why Midland Power Cooperative will continue working hard to power your life, reliably and affordably.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2015-2020



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

IOWA YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY Continued from page 1

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are pleased to offer a new opportunity for rural students to learn more about advocacy, electric

cooperative career opportunities and the cooperative business model with a three-part webinar series in October. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any

high school student in our service area, and they are invited to register at www.IowaYouthTour.com.

"This new program is really designed for rural Iowa students who have a passion for public service, leadership or government," remarked Midland Power CEO Bill McKim. "We want to increase students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about cooperative career paths that are available in smaller communities."

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from their own computer or mobile device. Each Zoom session will last around 45-60 minutes and focus on a specific topic:

- Tuesday, Oct. 5, 7:00 p.m. – Cooperative Business Model
- Thursday, Oct. 14, 7:00 p.m. – Rural Iowa Advocacy

- Tuesday, Oct. 26, 7:00 p.m. – Civic Involvement and Leadership

At the end of each live session, one lucky attendee will be selected at random to win a pair of Apple AirPods. Students who attend all three sessions will be entered into a random drawing for a \$1,000 college scholarship.

During the Zoom sessions, students will be inspired by our line-up of speakers and presenters. Students will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and learn about leadership development from a motivational speaker. Attendees will also hear from former Iowa Youth Tour students who pursued their passion for government service and leadership after attending the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. The 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is slated for June 18-24 next summer.

Learn more at IowaYouthTour.com or contact us at 800-833-8876 for more info.

COMMUNITY SOLAR Continued from page 1

move," said Chad Macek.

Chad works in Ankeny and Kelsi, who is relocating her therapy practice from West Des Moines to Ames, noted that everyone in the Ames community and their neighborhood have been very welcoming and nice.

The new Midland Power members were interested in renewable energy technologies and had been researching solar options when they reviewed the co-op's website. They called the co-op and had a representative stop out and talk about their options to meet their energy goals.

"It was obvious that they had many trees at their new home and an on-site solar facility might not be the best option for them, unless they wanted to thin out some of the trees," said Midland Power Member Services Manager and Iowa Choice Renewable Representative Roger Hammen. "We discussed on site solar as well as other

renewable energy options and technologies and the Maceks selected the Community Solar Program as the right fit for them."

"We loved the low maintenance option of the Community Solar Program," said Kelsi.

"It was so easy to see the data from the Community Solar Array on the website and the Community Solar Program was such a simple and easy option for us, and Midland Power was easy to work with and responsive when we had questions," said Chad.

Midland Power's Community Solar Program runs through February 2037. Subscribing members will see monthly bill credits based on the real output of the array for the corresponding month. Current pricing per subscription is \$655. If members buy 10 subscriptions, they receive an 11 subscription for free. Anyone can monitor the solar array energy production at www.MidlandPower.Coop/communitysolar

Extend a Helping Hand with RECare

Midland Power has always extended a helping hand to people in need. That's why we have established RECare, a program of members helping members.

You can help those in need to weatherize

their homes and pay winter heating bills. If you are interested, please complete and return this form to our office.

Any amount you give will be greatly appreciated!

RE CARE CONSUMER AUTHORIZATION FORM

- Yes, I want to 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 this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Please mail to: Midland Power Co-op, PO Box 420, Jefferson, IA 50129-0420

WANTED:
Rural Iowa
high school
students
who have a
passion for
leadership



Attend our webinar series in October for a chance to win Apple AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship! Learn more at IowaYouthTour.com



2021-2022 IOWA HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ATTENTION: RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS NEED HELP WITH YOUR HEATING BILL?

The 2021-2022 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season.

The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing.

If you are not sure where to apply, Dial 2-1-1, or visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply> to contact your local community action agency, or write to:

LIHEAP
Iowa Department of Human Rights
Capitol Complex
Des Moines, IA 50319

WHEN TO APPLY:

- **Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled:** October 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021
- **All other households:** November 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021

WHAT TO TAKE:

- **Proof of Income** (for all household members age 19 and over) Depending upon your household income type, income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or last calendar year, whichever is easier or more beneficial for you.
- **Proof of Social Security Numbers for all household members** (documentation required)
- **Most recent heat bill**
- **Most recent electric bill**

WAGE EARNERS:

Please bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIXED INCOME:

This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, and pensions. Please bring copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS:

Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIP RECIPIENTS:

Please bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information.

INCOME MAXIMUMS	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$25,760
2	\$34,840
3	\$43,920
4	\$53,000
5	\$62,080
6	\$71,160
7	\$80,240
8	\$89,320

For households with more than eight members, add \$9,080 for each additional member.

If you receive alimony or child support, it will also need to be verified. Additional income not listed here may be required.

Winter heating rate returns in October

What better way to take advantage of energy-efficient heating and cooling systems than to participate in Midland Power's heat rate program? Members that take advantage of this program, by utilizing a second electric meter for their home's electric heating and cooling system, receive electricity for their heating and cooling at a discounted rate! Whole house geothermal heat pumps, air source heat pumps and resistance heating systems typically qualify.

October electric consumption, which is billed in November, marks the return of the winter rate – less than 6 cents per kilowatt-hour and runs through the end of April. The summer rate runs from May through September and is around ten cents per kilowatt-hour.

Learn more about heat pumps below and check out www.MidlandPower.Coop/heatpumps for additional information. If you have questions about whether a heat pump is right for you, give the co-op a call at (800) 833-8876.

Resurgence of geothermal

By Roger Hammen



The Iowa Geothermal Association met with Rep. Randy Feenstra, Sen. Jeese Green and Sen. Dan Dawson in August to discuss energy solutions and tax policy for geothermal heat pumps.

A lot of emphasis and awareness is out there on renewable energy and the benefits of healthier, more energy efficient homes. Beneficial Electrification concepts embrace the idea of utilizing renewable energy to offset other, more carbon intense, forms of energy production. Utilization of electric heating, appliances, and water heating are very cost effective and beneficial in the large scope of modern energy consumption. These applications produce many long lasting, positive effects for consumers as well as utilities. While it is essential to maintain a diversified power generation portfolio to ensure energy production when the wind doesn't blow or the sun doesn't shine, many forms of renewable energy are available to help offset carbon footprints and play an intricate role in current and future energy production.

Combining power produced by renewables and utilization of energy needs by electric appliances produces a very positive outcome. For instance, a geothermal heating and cooling system that is operated some or much of the time with energy produced from a renewable resource can offer a very economical and ecological system. And, since geothermal is a renewable resource

in itself, you can essentially see multiple benefits such as low-cost operation that includes demand savings, healthier home environment from less or no gas contaminants, reduced costs and energy for water heating, and reductions in carbon emissions.

Geothermal technologies are resurfacing and becoming more popular than ever. Cost effective technologies combined with renewable, smart energy production are making geothermal more affordable and ecologically sound. This system will work for you 365 days per year and may offer a much better return on investment than a system that may simply offset limited amounts of energy usage. Members of electric cooperatives are fortunate to be able access readily available information and education from your cooperative representatives. We also work diligently with state and federal legislators to help lobby for potential incentives and tax credits that aid in keeping upfront installation costs down and ultimately result in an affordable system for you, our member. Please contact your Midland Power representative for more information on the benefits of geothermal technology for your home or business.

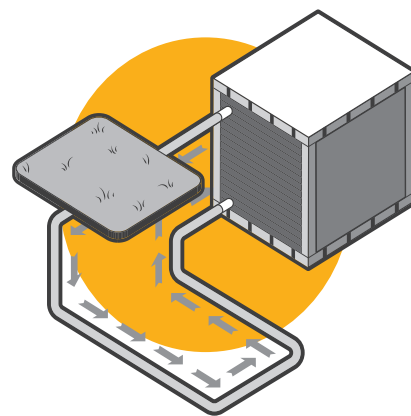
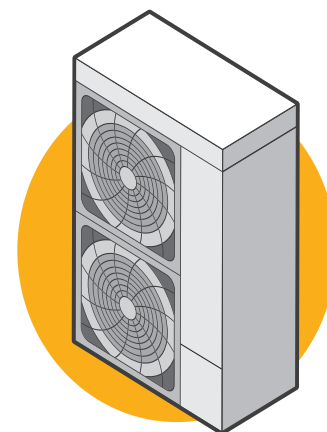
Types of Heat Pumps

There are three main types of heat pump systems. Use the information below to determine the system that's best suited for your climate and home.

Air-Source Heat Pumps

- Most commonly used heat pumps
- Moves heat rather than converting it from a fuel like combustion heating systems do
- Can reduce heating costs by about 50 percent when compared to baseboard heaters or electric furnaces
- Newer, more efficient systems now represent a legitimate space heating alternative in colder regions like the Northeast and Midwest.

Note: If temperatures in your area drop below 10 to 25 F, you will need an auxiliary heating system (depending on the size of the system).

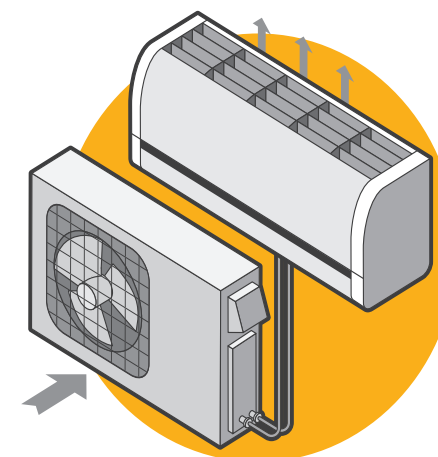


Geothermal Heat Pumps

- More expensive to install but provide more energy savings for heating and cooling
- Move heat through pipes buried underground
- When compared to a conventional heating system, can reduce energy use by 25 to 50 percent
- Effective in extreme climates
- Not ideal for smaller lots and certain soil conditions

Ductless Mini-Split Heat Pumps

- Easier to install, quiet, small in size
- Flexible for heating and cooling individual rooms and smaller spaces
- No energy loss through ductwork, which accounts for more than 30 percent of a home's energy use for space heating/cooling.
- Installation can be pricey, but federal incentives may be available



Heat pump systems should be installed by a licensed professional. Contact your local electric cooperative for more information about options and potential incentives.

Sources: Dept. of Energy and Consumer Reports

Midland Power Cooperative Offices
Open Weekdays: 7:30 am - 4:00 pm
2005 S. Story Street, Boone, Iowa
1210 13th Street North, Humboldt, Iowa
1001 E. Lincoln Way, Jefferson, Iowa

Calls Answered 24/7/365
Toll Free: (800) 833-8876

Automated Pay-By-Phone:
(888) 470-4623

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