



**Waverly**  
Utilities

# the Connection

Powering the color of life

2022 | Q2



## At a Glance

- WU Receives National Awards
- Feathered Friend or Foe?
- Possibility of Rolling Blackouts
- Auto Pay Award Winners
- Board Member Spotlight
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## Feathered Friend or Foe?

"Everybody thinks I'm crazy. Yesiree, that's me, that's me! That's what I'm cracked up to be. I chop a hole in every tree." Spoken by the infamous feathered bird, Woody Woodpecker.



Waverly Utilities (WU) recently had a run-in with our own pileated woodpecker and instead of letting his pecking annoy us,

our team was proactive in solving the dilemma.

This spring, WU crews noticed extensive damage being caused to our laminated wood powerline poles near WU's north plant as well as poles located near Nestle. The damage totaled almost \$7,000. It was determined a piliated woodpecker was the culprit.

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## National Awards

Waverly Utilities has received national recognition for achieving exceptional electric reliability and safety in 2021. The recognition comes from the American Public Power Association (APPA), a trade group that represents more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community-owned electric utilities.

The American Public Power Association honored WU with a Certificate of Excellence for reliable performance, as shown by comparing WU's outage records against nationwide data gathered by the Energy Information Administration. WU is in the top 25% of utilities for System Average Interruption Duration Index, one of only five in Iowa to earn this certificate.

"We are honored to receive this recognition and to continue the solid record of reliability our customers have come to expect from Waverly Utilities," said



Foremen Levi Gulick and Jim Baumgartner with the 2021 Certificate of Excellence for reliable performance

Darrel Wenzel, CEO. "It is a testament to the hard work of all our employees to ensure that we keep Waverly powered."

Waverly Utilities also earned the APPA's Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices in 2021. The utility earned first place in the category for utilities with 30,000-59,000 worker-hours of annual worker exposure.



2021 WU Safety Committee Chair, Chris Schaedig

"Waverly Utilities values our employee's and customer's safety," stated Curt Atkins, Director of Operations. "WU employees maintain a top-notch utility safety program that takes a lot of hard work and commitment and this award is a testament to our dedication."

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# ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

## Awards - Continued -

The third award comes from The Arbor Day Foundation naming Waverly Utilities a 2022 Tree Line USA® city in honor of its commitment to proper tree pruning, planting and care in the provider's service area.

Tree Line USA, a partnership between the Foundation and the



National Association of State Foresters, recognizes public and private utilities for pursuing practices that protect and enhance America's urban trees. Tree Line USA promotes the dual goals of delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining

healthy community forests.

Waverly Utilities achieved the Tree Line USA recognition by meeting five program standards. Utilities must follow industry standards for quality tree care; provide annual worker training in best tree care practices; sponsor a tree planting and public education program; maintain a tree-based energy conservation program; and participate in an Arbor Day celebration.

## Friend or Foe - Continued -

After thorough research, WU's line crew filled the large holes caused by persistent pecking with an expanding epoxy foam. They also wrapped the damaged poles with protective coverings to help prevent this from happening again.

Research suggested owl decoys be placed atop powerline poles, as the bird sees them as a predator. Also suggested was building a birdhouse to keep them away from the poles but providing them a safe location to live in our area.

Dave Cordes, inventory and maintenance clerk for WU, took time to research specs for pileated woodpecker birdhouses and built several for our north plant property. The birdhouses were installed before nesting season, this April and May.

Since woodpeckers are a protected species in Iowa, they cannot be harmed. With these new measures, our staff hopes the woodpecker will move along to the nearby tree canopy adjacent to the Cedar River after the deterrents are installed. Staff has consulted with a local bird specialist as well as the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for advice and directive to safely relocate the woodpecker.

Knock on wood (insert Woody Woodpecker laugh), these measurements will deter our feathered friends from our poles while keeping them safe with protected housing!

## Auto Pay Rewards



Congrats to **Clint & Cydney Ferguson**, who won a \$25 bill credit for signing up for our Electronic Billing program! Congrats also to **Austin Svoboda**, who won a \$50 bill credit for signing up for both Electronic Billing AND Auto Pay!

**Want to win too? It's easy!** Give us a call and we can help you get signed up. No stress, no deadlines – just set it and forget it. And each quarter in 2022, we'll be drawing lucky winners for \$25 or \$50 bill credits!

## We're Here to Assist!

**Did you know?** Customers with health issues requiring electrically-powered medical equipment should contact Waverly Utilities. We will give life support customers special consideration when planned outages occur in your neighborhood and alert our employees to your needs.

If customers have critical medical or communications equipment, it is important to be prepared with a battery backup or an alternative location to power it up.

In addition, if you need something special to use your telephone or our voice services, we are here to assist your needs. **Please call 559-2000 to let us know how we can assist you.**



## Board Member Spotlight

**Career experience:** Jes has been in the real estate industry for more than 20 years; as

a licensed real estate agent as well as owning and managing closing and escrow companies. Jes is also a multi-business owner in Waverly and takes care to make sure her clients and friends are well informed and involved in the community.

**Community involvement:** Jes serves on multiple boards besides Waverly Utilities, including Waverly-Shell Rock School Board, Waverly Child Care and Preschool, Northeast Iowa Board of Realtors as Treasurer, and looks for as many volunteer opportunities as time allows in the community.

**Family and hobbies:** Her husband is Erik, who is an Information Security Officer at UnityPoint; and daughter Aya is an 8th grader at W-SR. Hobbies include finding the next best book, drinking lots of coffee, and enjoying time with her family.

**Goals as a Waverly Utilities trustee:** Continue WU's long-standing goal of fantastic customer service, while striving for renewable resources and transparency in what WU does.

# Hot Summer Could Lead to Rolling Blackouts

While unlikely, rotating power outages for Waverly Utilities' (WU) customers and other utilities across the Midwest is a possibility this summer.

Rolling blackouts, a controlled, temporary power outage that helps bring balance to the supply and demand of electricity in the market, has been the topic of focus and discussion with electric utilities recently.

Rolling blackouts happen when extreme heat and increased power demand coincide with insufficient power. The controlled outages usually last for about an hour at a time before rolling to the next customers.

"Waverly Utilities can self-generate during a rolling blackout with our multiple diesel generators. This is as long as we have a consistent diesel fuel source," stated Curt Atkins, WU Director of Operations. "However, Energy Information Administration (EIA) has data pointing to potential shortfalls in diesel supplies in the near future. That is where our concern lies."



"Waverly Utilities is positioned well if a rolling blackout happens this summer as temperatures spike," WU's CEO Darrel Wenzel said. "Customers are used to the threat of ice storms and other weather-related issues. This is new to Waverly and as long as fuel continues to be available, we are prepared."

Should Waverly Utilities experience a rolling blackout, there are several ways customers can conserve energy. One

way is to turn the air conditioner to 78 degrees or higher.

Another way to conserve is avoid using large appliances like a washer, dryer and dishwasher during peak usage hours. For Waverly, those peak hours are typically 11:00am-7:00pm.

Customers with health issues requiring electrically-powered medical equipment should contact Waverly Utilities, if they have not done so already. If customers have critical medical or communications equipment, it is important to be prepared with a battery backup or an alternative location to power it up.

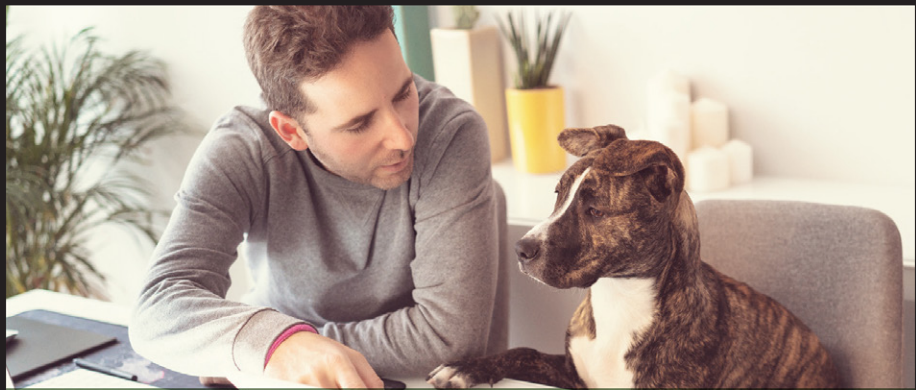
"We feel a blackout is highly unlikely for Waverly, but we have prepared for the worse and wanted to make our customers aware of the possible situation," stated Wenzel.

# WU Received Highest Audit Opinion Possible

Waverly Utilities received the highest opinion possible on the annual audit report for the year ended December 31, 2021.

Waverly Utilities 2021 electric operating revenues were \$18,672,608. Electric operating expenses were \$17,285,775 (includes \$2,337,535 in depreciation expenses), and transfers to the City of Waverly of \$836,644.

A copy of the audit report is available for review at Waverly Utilities' as well as [www.WaverlyUtilities.com](http://www.WaverlyUtilities.com). It will also be available at the Office of Auditor of State and on the Auditor of State's website at <https://auditor.iowa.gov/audit-reports>.



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## Behind the Scenes

Kelly Meier, Director, Finance & Customer Service

**What does your position entail?** My position includes supervision of the finance and customer services departments. It also entails preparation of the annual operating and capital budgets. I will be involved in development of long-term financial goals as well as analyzing and monitoring financial and performance data.

**When did you start at Waverly Utilities?**

I started April 4, 2022.

**Tell us a little about yourself.** My husband, Steve, and I were high school sweethearts. We both grew up in Spencer and most of our family



continues to live there. Steve works at John Deere. We have two children – Juston, who is an infectious disease nurse practitioner in Des Moines and Katie, who is a SOX internal control auditor at Target headquarters in Minneapolis. Most of my free time is spent with family. We like to take vacations together and spend most holidays together as well.

**What is one unexpected fact about you?** I had the opportunity to start this new position on April 1st which brought back memories of my first paid position. That job also started on April 1st; however, I was told by my dad that morning that the place had burned down and there was no need to go to work. With it being April Fool's Day and considering my dad's propensity to tease, I decided to go to work in my suit and skirt anyway. Sure enough, my dad was telling the truth. Although the place had not burned down, it had sustained significant water damage from a fire on the floor above. This position was at a CPA firm so we moved everything to an old bakery store and spent the next few weeks filing extensions and drying out work papers. Call me superstitious if you want; I chose to start on April 4th.

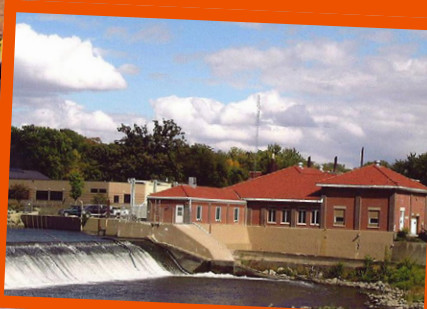
1002 Adams Parkway  
Waverly, Iowa 50677



## On The Lines



On May 21, approximately 100-125 visitors came to tour the 100-year-old hydro generators before they were decommissioned.



## Board of Trustees

Chairman, Bob Buckingham

Vice Chair, Jes Kettleson

Trustee, John Baber

Trustee, Bob Brunkhorst

Trustee, Emily Neuendorf

Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at Waverly Utilities, but may be subject to change. Please call ahead to verify schedules. They are open to the public and all are welcome.

