



RESPONDING TO THE STORM: HOW IOWA UTILITIES REACTED TO THE DERECHO

*Terry Kouba, President of Alliant Energy and
Senior Vice President of Utility Operations
for Interstate Power and Light*



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A VIEW FROM THE TOP

Fiscal Year Off to Strong Start



Jack Hasken
ABI Chair
Jackson Mfg., Inc.
Maquoketa, Iowa

Autumn has only just begun, but it has already been a very busy period at ABI. In late August, our organization held one of its most popular annual events, the ABI Executive Open. Hundreds of members converged on Des Moines Golf and Country Club in West Des Moines for this always-fun event.

One of the most uplifting events each year is the Legends in Manufacturing Awards Dinner, hosted by ABI's Elevate initiative. This year was no exception, with hundreds of members coming together last month to celebrate Iowa manufacturing. That event was followed by the annual Advanced Manufacturing Conference, another terrific event.

Also, this fall, the ABI Foundation announced the members selected for inclusion in the 2021-2022 Leadership Iowa Class. Later this month, ABI leaders will participate in the ABI Washington DC Fly-In. Participants will meet with each member of the Iowa

Congressional delegation, along with other federal officials and with leaders from both BIPAC and the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

All of these events are of great value. But perhaps the event I enjoyed the most was our fiscal year's first meeting of the ABI Board of Directors. That event was held here in Maquoketa, where our company, Jackson Mfg., Inc. is located. The day ended with an afternoon tour of Jackson Mfg., Inc. and our team and I enjoyed welcoming our ABI colleagues to our company. Thank you to all that could attend.

By the way, one of the issues discussed at the board meeting was community preparedness and response. You can read about that and more in this month's Business Record Iowa and I hope you find it of interest. Finally, I would note that ABI is off to a very strong start for FY22. For that and your continuous strong support to ABI, ■

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Don't Limit Your Options — Start Your Succession Planning Now

The key attributes necessary for starting and growing a successful business often run contrary to developing an effective succession plan. That "never quit" attitude and drive to grow can make it difficult to pause and think about when it's time to transition, and considering the right people to take over your vision and team can be hard.

The key to action is harnessing what made your business something worthy of continuation in the first place. Beginning discussions now can be a strategic business advantage over companies that don't have a plan.

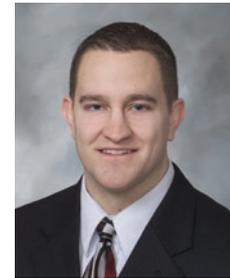
Consider possible advantages of starting early:

- The foresight that comes from understanding what a successful transition looks like for the business and you
- Time to understand available options (don't be limited by timing), match them to your overall goals, and enhance value (e.g., internal/external sale, ESOP, private equity)
- Clarity of the process for your leadership team, business partners, and community that count on your business

To begin, gather a team that has experience with the full succession process. They can help answer some vital questions:

- Are your financial statements in order?
- What is an estimate of your current company value?
- How could current tax liability and potential tax changes impact your plan?

Beginning planning your succession now. Implementing a practical plan with an experienced team of professionals can help bring financial peace of mind to you, your family, and your employees. ■



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\$40,000 Gift Launches ABI Foundation 40th Anniversary Campaign: The Dick & Judy Smith Family Foundation gifts \$40,000 to support ABI Foundation programming

Gifts to the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) Foundation are now being matched up to \$40,000 thanks to the generous support of the Dick & Judy Smith Family Foundation. The anniversary fundraiser celebrates 40 years of statewide programs and initiatives that promote personal and professional responsibility and leadership for Iowa.

Agri-Industrial Plastics Company, an industry leader in large-scale blow-molding and fuel tank systems in Fairfield, Iowa, is well-known for supporting and investing in the community, including a variety of educational initiatives. It's this same philanthropic spirit that led Founder Dick Smith and his wife Judy, along with their children Brian Smith, Lori Schaefer-Weaton and Lori's husband Nate Weaton, and their grandchildren to continue their family's longtime commitment to giving back through the Dick and Judy Smith Family Foundation.

Lori Schaefer-Weaton, President of Agri-Industrial Plastics Company, ABI Foundation vice chair and past ABI chair was recently recognized nationally by The Manufacturing Institute as one of their 2021 STEP Ahead Award Honorees and Emerging Leaders "for outstanding achievements in her company, community and industry."

"Students and professionals across the state form lifelong connections and an understanding of business and industry in Iowa through the ABI Foundation," Schaefer-Weaton said. "Our family is excited to make this investment for Iowa's employees and employers to see the statewide impact of their involvement at every level."

Visionary leaders created the ABI Foundation's flagship program, Leadership Iowa, in 1982 for professionals to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges in Iowa. Following the success of Leadership Iowa, the ABI Foundation expanded its programming to also engage high school students with Business Horizons and Elevate Iowa, as well as college students with Leadership Iowa University. The 501c3 nonprofit organization exists to connect and engage future and current leaders from all industries, backgrounds and corners of the state.

"We are grateful to The Dick & Judy Smith Family Foundation for recognizing the importance of providing statewide educational leadership programs," ABI President Mike Ralston said. "Support from Iowa's professionals, like this generous investment, is the main reason why the ABI Foundation's programs have been able to create an inter-generational network of leaders that advance Iowa."

Supporters have the opportunity to have their donation doubled now through Sept. 30, 2022. Contributions may be made to the ABI Foundation online at www.IowaABIFoundation.org, by mail or by phone at 515.280.8000. Learn more at www.IowaABIFoundation.org or by emailing foundation@iowaabi.org. ■

CAPITOL BUSINESS



2022 ABI Priorities and Policies Set

The ABI Board of Directors convened last month and established the priorities and policies for the state's largest business organization in the coming year. A months-long, member driven process led to the recent culmination of ABI's annual policy process as hundreds of members provided feedback on what ABI should stand for in 2022.

The Board approved several top line priorities for the public policy staff to accomplish in 2022. Those areas of focus are workforce, tax reform, infrastructure and regulatory reform.

Workforce is a key priority that ABI has focused on for a number of years now. One specific feature of the workforce priority highlights the need for policymakers to reform Iowa's unemployment insurance system. The pandemic put an unprecedented strain on the state unemployment insurance trust fund as hundreds of millions of dollars were dispersed to claimants. Had Governor Kim Reynolds not taken the extraordinarily pro-growth action of infusing federal monies into the trust fund, employers of all sizes would have seen substantial payroll tax increases in 2021 and 2022. Businesses are ready and willing to hire those seeking employment and there are currently more jobs available than people unemployed in Iowa. ABI believes reforms of the UI system are necessary to ensure the long-term integrity of the trust fund, make Iowa more competitive with our neighboring states and encourage individuals to return to the workforce.

Tax Reform is a new priority for ABI in 2022. The Legislature took significant steps to make Iowa more competitive this past legislative session by re-

moving the 2018 tax triggers and eliminating the property tax levy for mental health services, but more can be done. The Tax Foundation ranks Iowa 40th in their annual state business tax climate index. In fact, Iowa is 46th for our corporate tax rank. In order for Iowa businesses to compete in a global economy, we must have a tax climate that promotes growth. ABI strongly supports additional efforts to enhance our overall tax structure in 2022.

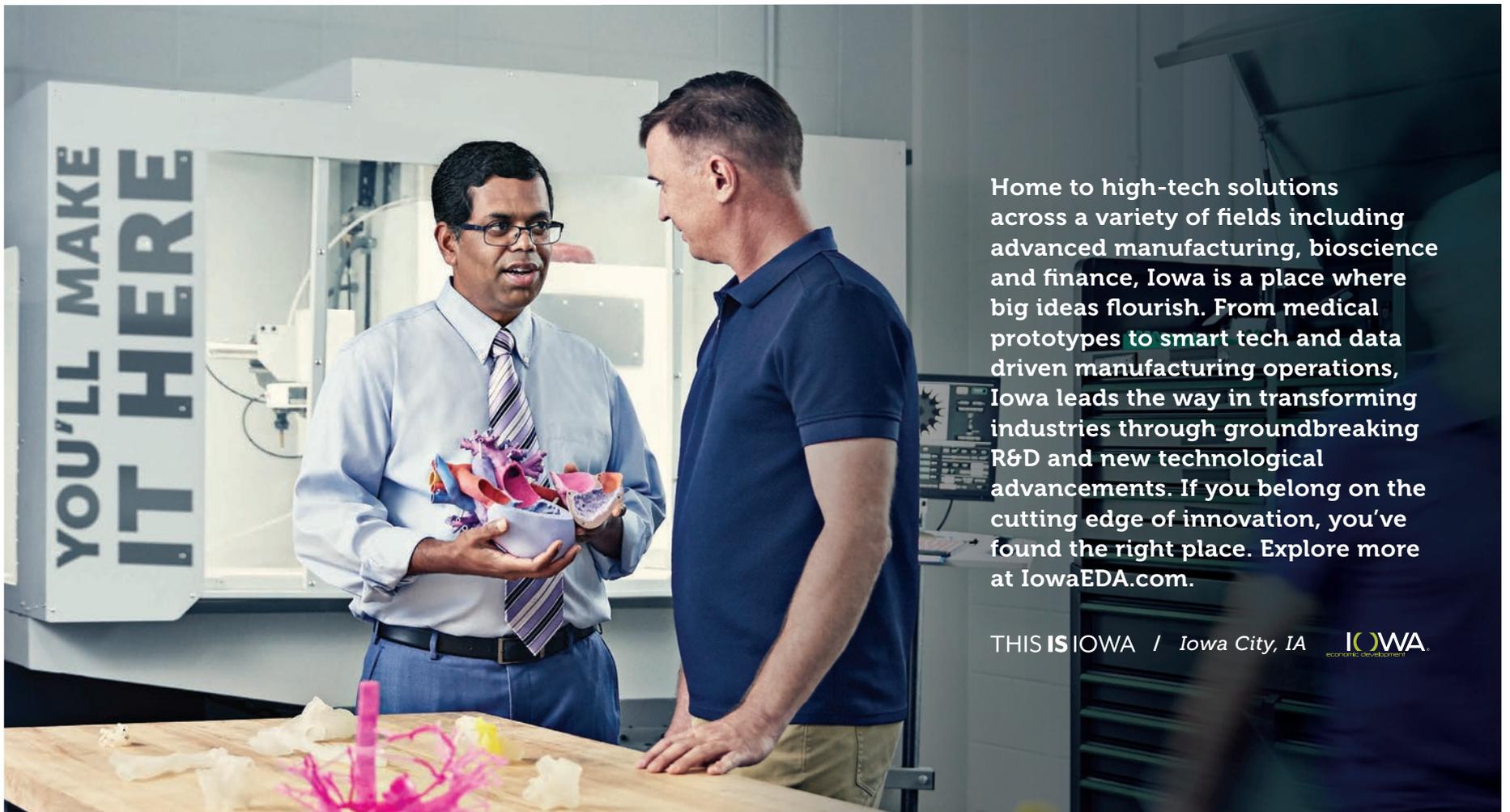
Infrastructure is a very hot topic right now, particularly at the federal level. In 2021, the Iowa Legislature and Governor Reynolds implemented very robust policy legislation and appropriation levels which will allow for the facilitation and deployment of high speed broadband infrastructure across the state in the years to come. ABI will continue to prioritize infrastructure in 2022 as policymakers continue to look at ways to strengthen and modernize our physical assets.

Regulatory Reform is a priority that ABI works on regardless of whether or not the Legislature is in session. We pride ourselves on being the regulatory watchdog for businesses as we work to ensure that rules and regulations aren't more stringent or onerous than the law prescribes.

With the 2022 priorities and policies now formulated, ABI public policy staff will begin meeting with policymakers as we look to enact the agenda put forward by our members. We appreciate and are thankful to everyone who took time to provide feedback and input during the policy process for 2022. ■



Brad Hartkopf
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THIS IS IOWA / Iowa City, IA



RESPONDING TO THE STORM: HOW IOWA UTILITIES REACTED TO THE DERECHO

*Terry Kouba, Alliant Energy President, shares with
ABI members Alliant's approach to natural disasters.*

BY GIGI WOOD

Few will soon forget the derecho of Aug. 10, 2020, and how quickly it moved through the state, causing destruction along its path and leaving thousands without power. At the storm's peak in western Iowa, winds reached 140 mph creating untold damage and destruction to homes, businesses and farmland. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has since named it the costliest thunderstorm in U.S. history with a price tag of roughly \$11 billion.

Iowa lost 89,000 acres of tree canopy, or 25% of its forest land in the storm. The derecho uprooted trees, snapped major tree limbs and toppled trees onto houses and other buildings. Trees and limbs were left tangled in electrical lines. Trees and major branches blocked roadways throughout the storm's wake. Not only was the storm fast and furious, cleanup was particularly difficult. Hundreds of thousands of people were left without power for days, some for nearly two weeks, as crews worked to remove tree limbs and live power lines from neighborhoods.

Typically, Iowa's utilities are well versed in responding to natural disasters and major weather events. These companies have decades of experience in restoring power and have thorough protocols in place when extreme events take place. The derecho tested these systems, as there was so little warning and the storm created severe damage across such a wide swath of the state. Alliant Energy, Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) and MidAmerican Energy had hundreds of employees on the ground throughout the state, along with thousands of mutual aid workers, tasked with restoring power to homes and businesses. Officials at the three utilities recently talked about how they respond to these events and what they learned from the derecho.

RESPONDING TO STORMS

Each utility has a plan in place to handle power outages from major weather and related events.

For Alliant, 341 communities the utility company serves were affected. After the derecho, more than 3,600 poles were replaced, which would typically take 10 months of work. The company also replaced 6 million feet, or 1,200 miles, of wire for the more than 250,000 customers across Iowa without power.

"We are always ready to respond to any major weather event or disaster that impacts our customers or the communities we serve," said Terry Kouba, senior vice president at Alliant Energy and president of the Iowa Utility Co. "At Alliant Energy, our purpose is to serve customers and build stronger communities. And that purpose guides our work every day. Immediately after a storm hits, our entire team jumps into action, assessing the damage and working to restore power as quickly and safely as possible."

Prioritizing recovery work and breaking down the response into smaller pieces helps utilities restore power more quickly, said Dan Burns, vice president for utility operations at CIPCO.

"Prompt action is vital to securing the system. CIPCO immediately sectionalizes the system in order to restore offline substations as quickly as possible," Burns said. "This allows power to be rerouted from damaged stations and restore power quickly to some areas. Following this, CIPCO performs a systemwide damage assessment. It is critical to know exactly what you are dealing with as soon as possible."

More than 290,000 MidAmerican Energy customers, or 60% of the utility company's customer base, were without power after the derecho, said Kathryn Kunert, MidAmerican's vice president of community relations and economic development. There were also 1,500 gas leaks for MidAmerican to fix.

"MidAmerican Energy has protocols that are established. Weather events are not unique or different to MidAmerican Energy, unfortunately, and we've gotten very good at weather responses or incident responses," she said. "It goes with the territory when you live in a four-season climate. I think what was unique about this one is the mere fact that typically with a tornado or a blizzard, it hits one spot, and you then have the opportunity to pull your resources in from the other areas within your service territory that were not affected by the storm. And that's what was really unique about the derecho is that it just kept building up steam and it came across our entire service territory."



BURNS



KUNERT

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MUTUAL AID ASSISTANCE

In the aftermath of the derecho, there weren't enough workers to remove debris and restore power because such a large territory, including neighboring states, experienced damage and outages. Utility companies relied on mutual aid assistance, calling in workers from other areas of the country to help with the damage.

MidAmerican had more than 2,500 workers from 24 states responding to the damage.

"It truly had a huge impact. While we're really good at disaster response and we've got a great plan and great protocols put in place, it really forced us to think outside the box, obviously, and then to really gauge and engage resources that were not here," Kunert said.

CIPCO also looked outside its service territory for help with power restoration and damage response. Burns said responding to the derecho required 10 times the inventory the company typically has on hand for disaster response.

"In the case of the derecho, the damage turned out to be well beyond our ability to deal with it in a timely fashion with just our own crews," Burns said. "Mutual aid assistance was called in as soon as we knew we needed more help. As soon as the damage reports start coming in, materials for the repairs needed to be determined and located."

Alliant called upon thousands of utility workers from 35 companies across the United States and Canada to help restore power.

"Following the derecho, we immediately knew this was an unprecedented storm and the restoration would be unlike any other we've experienced," Kouba said. "During major events, we can receive mutual assistance from other utilities like we did after the derecho. This partnership enables energy companies to increase the size of their workforce by borrowing workers and equipment. We send our crews to help with emergencies in other parts of the country too. Recently, our crews traveled to Louisiana following Hurricane Ida."

ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION

Iowa's utility companies were in constant communication with local, county and state governments and emergency management teams, as well as media, customers and other groups, throughout and after the storm.

Alliant also had a constant presence at Iowa's State Emergency Operations Center in Johnston.

"Communication with the communities we serve is extremely important," Kouba said. "We communicate with our customers and coordinate our efforts with community and state leaders, as well as local emergency management. After the derecho, we participated in daily press conferences in order to update communities and customers on the restoration efforts."

CIPCO was also working in partnership with other utility companies to prioritize repairs.

"Communications with the operations staff from our member distribution co-ops and our transmission partners was critical and nearly continuous over the next two weeks," Burns said. "All the electrical systems are interconnected and affect each other. We needed to make sure we were working in tight coordination so one utility wasn't wasting time working on a system that another utility had as a low priority. Work plans had to be

A CUSTOM PUBLICATION FOR ABI

tightly coordinated to speed the restoration. These communication efforts were very difficult, especially early on, because the storm also took out cellular and radio systems used to communicate throughout the system. Sometimes, only text messaging worked."

"Following the derecho, we immediately knew this was an unprecedented storm and the restoration would be unlike any other we've experienced."

Terry Kouba, Senior Vice President, Utility Operations Interstate Power and Light, President, Alliant Energy.

MidAmerican works with several emergency management coordination teams and communicates to media and residential customers, as well as the business community, Kunert said. MidAmerican business customers can access real-time outage restoration alerts through their online account, for example.

"We have communications that we send both directly through our employees that are assigned to our large customer accounts, as well as we use a lot of email communications, and then all of the other communications that are at our fingertips," she said. "So we use all of the media channels that you can imagine, both mainstream media through press releases, on-air interviews or on-camera interviews. We use social media channels, we use our websites. We are hands-on and we have employee teams at the key account and business account level that have direct contact with our customers, as well."

LESSONS LEARNED

While Iowa's utility companies have in place sophisticated storm response policies and procedures, they have made updates and alterations to those procedures since the derecho. For example, CIPCO now uses drones to examine storm sites and to help locate fallen branches and other obstacles to power restoration, Burns said. The company also created a GPS app that helps utilities determine which power lines are theirs.

"One of the difficulties was broken poles blocking roads, making it very difficult to assess damage, especially in hilly areas where sight distance was limited. We now have three drones that can be used to fly damaged lines, which allows us to assess the damage much quicker," Burns said. "We are owners in a heavily integrated transmission system with an investor-owned utility, and the line ownership changes very frequently. You can't always tell by looking at the line which company owns it, so another bottleneck was having enough staff with adequate system knowledge to be able to determine what damage was actually ours. CIPCO now has a phone app with GPS positioning that makes it possible for

nearly any employee to run the lines and know precisely which lines are ours, and they are able to make pinpoint damage comments directly within the app. During the derecho, we had many employees that wanted to help, but most of them didn't have enough background. The app now allows just about any able-bodied employee to assist us with damage assessments in the future."

One of the greatest challenges of the derecho was the lack of communication, due to internet and other outages.

"Radio communications was not only difficult due to damage, but due to having different radio systems that wouldn't talk to each other even if there wasn't any infrastructure damage from the storm," Burns said. "We now have consolidated our network and we have radio equipment on order that will be able to talk with any other radio on our system regardless of where they are located within the state of Iowa. We are piggybacking on a very robust, damage-resistant radio system owned and operated by the state of Iowa that is used by emergency responders, such as the Iowa State Patrol. Their system did not go down in the derecho, and had we had these radios back then, communications wouldn't have been an issue."

CIPCO also created a fleet of pallet-based storm crates where they store special hardware that is ready to go on a moment's notice and can quickly be loaded onto a truck by a forklift, he said.

Alliant is working to increase its underground lines to help reduce the number of weather-related outages, Kouba said. The company also uses smart meters that allow the company to communicate remotely with the meters to help detect outages more quickly.

"Every storm is different and poses unique challenges," Kouba said. "We continue to learn from every storm we experience. We'll continue to be prepared for the next major stressor on the system."

Following the derecho, MidAmerican decided to improve communication efforts and direct nontechnical employees to help with storm response.

"With every disaster or even a simple incident, we do a very thorough and intensive lessons learned. And with every storm, as good as we are, we always have the opportunity to learn new things," Kunert said. "Some of those things we've incorporated now into our processes are using the personnel and our employees that aren't doing hands-on work, asking them to step in and support and provide assistance where needed. The other thing that we learned is, you cannot communicate enough, absolutely cannot communicate enough. I'm very proud of the work that we did there because we created new, real-time ways to communicate with customers and we're actively and proactively out there in front of it."

Each of the utility companies sent hundreds of employees to the derecho disaster sites to help local communities recover from the damage. After the storm, Alliant created Project ReConnect to help customers who needed financial assistance to pay for needed electrical repairs so power could be restored. Approximately \$315,000 in funds were available from Alliant's foundation.

"Working with our nonprofit partners, we helped to provide food throughout impacted communities. Many of our employees volunteered countless hours by delivering food and assisting neighbors in communities," Kouba said. ■

EXPERT ADVICE

How Secure is my Business?



Denny Fisher
Chief Client
Experience Officer
ACS

It can be difficult for leaders to know how at-risk their organization is when it comes to cybersecurity. Many rely solely on the expertise of their internal team to protect critical data and systems without question. The age-old mantra “Trust but Verify” is vital when it comes to cybersecurity. You may not be aware, but C-level executives and board members can be held personally liable in the event of a cyber breach. If questioned, could you say with certainty that your company is doing all it can to protect corporate and client information? A cybersecurity assessment can help you understand where the threats lie and how to mitigate risk to the company and yourself.

Things to look for in a cybersecurity assessment:

1. **Conducted by a certified cybersecurity professional and Based on Nationally Recognized Standards**
Ensure the assessment is completed by a knowledgeable cybersecurity expert. The organization you engage should hold nationally recognized certificates such as the Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) certificate. This designation is one of the top certifications in the world for cybersecurity and is based on globally recognized standards. The assessment should be based on nationally recognized standards and should review more than just your technology environment.
2. **Easy to understand**
The assessment should provide the information in an easy-to-understand format so that both your technical decision makers and non-technical decision-makers can understand the information and take action.
3. **Evolves with the Threat Landscape**
Cyber criminals are always evolving their tactics. Just as businesses innovate to stay relevant, so much hacking techniques, therefore the assessment must consider the changing tides of the threat landscape. If the assessment doesn't consider new threats and tactics, the results will be outdated before you even begin. ■

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EMBARRASSED EXECUTIVE

What does “resilience” mean, and can I really do anything about it?



Mike O'Donnell
Associate Director, Iowa State University CIRAS

Iowa businesses have been inundated by disruptions for the past several years. COVID-19, natural disasters, and the associated shocks to the global supply chain continue to threaten your success. The term resilience is regularly used as part of the path forward.

Resilience is the ability of a business to capitalize on positive opportunities and/or bounce back from negative events caused by sudden change.

If you are in business today, you are resilient. What really matters is not checking that box, but continually building your ability to be more responsive to change. Many of the things you do on a daily basis are the foundation of a resilient business: sound processes, diversified customers and suppliers, cross-training and more.

To further build resilience, create a culture focused on being ready for change. Some annual activities might include:

Identify a backup outside source for a key internal process.

Attend a conference in an industry outside of your current markets.

Conduct a table-top scenario planning exercise to determine actions for a potential “black swan” event.

Participate in training programs to develop skills outside of traditional job duties.

It is impossible to plan for all the potential opportunities and risks that face your business. Instead, focus on building the skills and culture in your business to create flexible processes, recognize change quickly, and adjust the business in response. ■

TOP TIPS

A Doctor's Tips for Avoiding Illness this Fall



Michael Sinklier, DO
The Iowa Clinic

Cold and flu season is starting and with COVID-19 still rampant, it's never been more important to prioritize prevention.

Cold, flu and COVID can all be transmitted person-to-person or between people in close contact, mainly through droplets created when someone coughs, sneezes or talks. The good news? The preventative measures you'd use to prevent getting COVID-19 work just as efficiently for avoiding the flu (with the addition of getting your flu shot) or the common cold.

Here are my top recommendations for protecting yourself from illness this fall:

1. Wash your hands frequently for a full 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
2. Wear a mask when indoors when in close proximity with others.
3. Avoid touching your face, mouth and eyes.
4. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
5. Avoid shaking hands.
6. Disinfect high-contact surfaces frequently.
7. Get your flu shot!

If you do become ill, stay home and seek out testing if you're worried about COVID-19. You can also contact your Primary Care Provider for guidance if you're concerned about your symptoms. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 4-5

Leadership Iowa
Mt. Pleasant

DECEMBER 2

Connecting Statewide Leaders
Pella

DECEMBER 2-3

Leadership Iowa
Pella

DECEMBER 7

Iowa Food Industry Overview and Challenges Seminar
Ames

JANUARY 12, 2022

Legislative Briefing and Reception
Iowa Events Center | Des Moines

MARCH 8, 2022

Day on the Hill
Iowa Association of Business and Industry | Des Moines

Visit www.iowaabi.org and click the "Events" tab for details on upcoming events, including updates in response to COVID-19-related safety restrictions for public gatherings.

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- Project Implementation Assistance
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Eligible Borrowers:

The IADG Energy Bank is focused on making loans to businesses and industries for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy projects. Preference will be given to manufacturers.



Lighting



Equipment Upgrades

MORE DETAILS:

For program overview, related requirements, and ensure availability of funds, contact Bruce Nuzum or visit:

IADG.com/EnergyBank

Contact:

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