



By Tim Holtan, CEO

# FOUR-YEAR CONSTRUCTION WORK PLAN UNDERWAY



Riverland Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Maintaining our electric distribution system is the most important—and a costly—component of providing safe, reliable electric service. Riverland Energy’s

construction work plan encourages proactive planning for the future growth and includes major and minor upgrades and maintenance to keep the system running top notch.

The board approved a four-year work plan this year that details the expected short-term growth and operating expenses while allowing for expansion of service throughout the system. The plan includes improvements and upgrades to the co-op’s electricity distribution system.

For the next four years Riverland Energy will invest \$23.1 million in completing these projects. These projects have been carefully analyzed to make sure we are making the best use of the dollars spent.

The projects established within our plan for 2024 include:

- The Pleasantville circuit project will convert a single-phase line to a three-phase line from County Rd EE to Huskelhus Rd. This upgrade will help address capacity and reliability issues.
- The Nelson circuit project will involve upgrading a single-phase line to three-phase along County Road F, just outside of Urne. The project will start just north of the intersection of County K and continue for approximately 1.5 miles north. This upgrade will help balance the load and provide voltage support.
- The Osseo circuit project aims to increase capacity by upgrading a section of the power line to a larger conductor. The project will start near Kings Valley Ag along Highway 53, south of Osseo, and will extend for about 4.5 miles to the intersection of County Road E and County Road OO.
- The New Amsterdam Circuit project is a new three-phase line needed for capacity reasons. This will be a half-mile project located near Pow Wow Ln. outside of Galesville.
- The Nelson Circuit project will convert a single-phase overhead line into a single-phase underground line. This line is located along County Road I and will start at the intersection of Pleasant View Road, heading north for approximately 1.5 miles. This upgrade is necessary as the aged line has been troublesome in the past.
- The Maxville circuit project will convert a single-phase line into a three-phase line, helping to balance the load and provide voltage support. The project is located along County Rd FF and spans roughly 2 miles, stopping near the intersection of County Rd PP.

- The Elk Creek Substation project is required for capacity improvements and voltage support, spanning 9 miles. It begins at the Elk Creek substation on Highway 93 and continues north to County Road Y.
- The Glencoe Substation project involves upgrading an aged underground single-phase line. This is a 1.5-mile-long project located along Ziegler Rd.
- The Nelson Substation project aims to replace aged overhead lines that have been problematic in the past. This project is located along Windsong Terrace Rd.
- Lastly, the Nelson Substation upgrade project aims to replace an aged single-phase tap along Badland Rd.

With all these upgrades, Riverland plans to spend approximately \$2,385,000 of the \$5.8 million in 2024.

As we prepare for the future energy needs, Riverland Energy remains committed to investing members’ dollars into infrastructure improvements that ensure safe, reliable, and affordable energy to its members.



**CALLING ALL THIRD-GRADERS:**

You’re invited to participate in the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association’s

**ELECTRICAL SAFETY POSTER CONTEST**

Submit an original poster supporting electrical safety to Riverland Energy Cooperative by **April 30, 2024**, for a chance to win a **\$25 gift card!** The top three posters will be entered into the statewide poster contest for a chance to win one of three great prizes:

**1st place – Chromebook**  
**2nd place – \$100 Gift Card**  
**3rd place – \$75 Gift Card**

Visit [www.weca.coop](http://www.weca.coop) for details and an entry form.



# RATES BREAKDOWN

We've been talking the last several months on rates, ratemaking, adjustments, and factors that go into your bill. You all should have received a letter in your bill, informing you of the rate adjustments. If you do not get a paper bill, the link to the letter can be found through your bill that was emailed to you. Here is a breakdown: effective May 1, 2024, Riverland Energy Cooperative will implement a 2.5% rate increase across all rate classes, along with adjustments to certain rate structures. These changes will be for May usage, and will be seen on the June bills.

## What are the changes to the new rate structure for residential members?

- Decrease in the kWh charge
- Increase to the base service charge
- Newly implemented Demand Charge

## What is the main reason for the rate restructure and increase?

- A cost-of-service study conducted in 2023 determined a rate increase is necessary to meet revenue requirements.
- To recover the cooperative's fixed costs—operations, inventory, maintenance, repair, administration, etc., and to reflect the inflation affecting nearly every aspect of our daily lives. Material costs are averaging a 40% increase over the last three years.

## What factors contribute to rates?

- **Generation and Transmission:** Approximately 60 percent of your electric dollar goes toward the cost of the generation and transmission system required to deliver wholesale purchased power. The largest component of the remaining 40 percent of your electric dollar goes toward the costs of constructing and maintaining REC's distribution system.
- **Line Density:** Our density factor is just under six members per mile compared to Investor-owned utilities with an average of 35 and municipal utilities over 40. Utilities must fully recover the costs of the system.

## How much will my bill increase?

For the average residential customer, this could result in an approximate monthly bill increase of \$5–\$9.

## Why did you add the Demand Charge?

It collects costs more accurately and fairly from members. Breaking out Demand from energy usage helps Riverland Energy bill members in a way that is fair. Some members create more Demand by using appliances simultaneously and, as a result, a higher Demand for electricity. Affordable technology available today can capture Demand, so it makes sense to unbundle Demand and make sure everyone pays their fair share. It encourages members to manage their electricity use efficiently and helps ensure that the cooperative can meet peak demand without straining the electric grid.

## How is the Demand Charge measured?

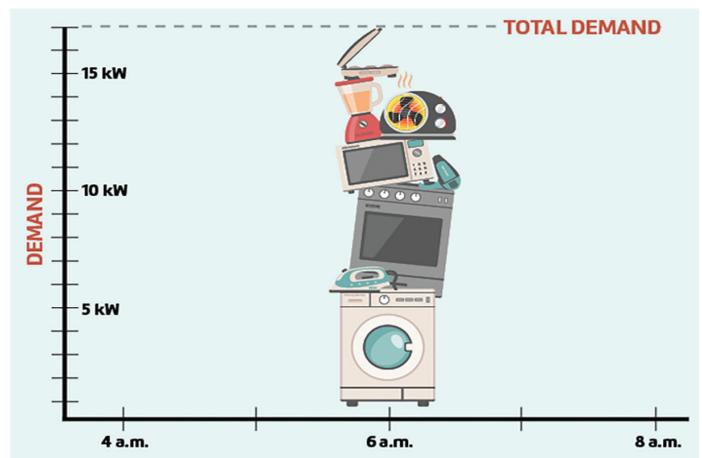
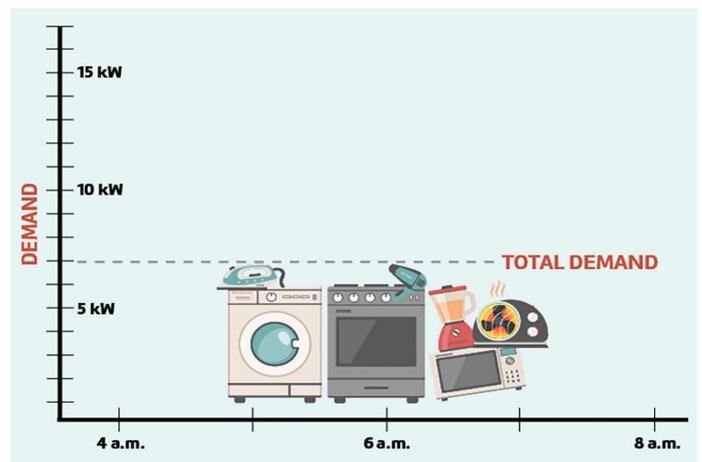
The Demand charge is measured in kilowatts (kW) in 15-minute intervals, between the peak hours of 6 a.m.–9 p.m. It is only charged once per billing cycle.

## How can I reduce my Demand?

How you reduce Demand will be about deciding when to use appliances. For example, don't run the washing machine at the same time your dishwasher is running. Spreading the use of these items will help lower your Demand rate. You can also shift the large appliances to run during off-peak hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.

## How can I monitor and stay on top of Demand?

Managing your Demand can be as simple as being aware and remembering to space your times when you are using large appliances instead of using them all at the same time. Another tool that can help you monitor your energy usage is the free SmartHub app. The SmartHub app doesn't show Demand (yet), but you are able to see when your highest usage took place, either monthly or daily.





# CELEBRATING LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

On April 8, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, dedicated to recognizing the contributions of the lineworkers who make sure we have power when we need it, rain or shine, day or night. Lineworkers courageously face challenging conditions to guarantee we have access to electricity whenever we need it.

Lineworkers must be committed to

their career, because it's not just a job. It's a lifestyle. The long hours of ever-present danger can genuinely take a toll. They often work non-traditional hours outdoors under challenging conditions.

From learning the intricacies of the electric grid to climbing utility poles carrying 40+ pounds of equipment, lineworkers spend thousands of hours training and learning throughout their

career. Their dedication is nothing short of extraordinary and a testament to their commitment to powering our local communities.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep the power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. Please join us as we recognize them on April 8.



Jenny Curran, Lead Meter Technician; Adam Siebenaler, Lineman; Bill Mason, Assistant Line Superintendent; Brandon Foss, Meter Technician; Todd Hong, Assistant Line Superintendent; Josh Abramczak, Line Superintendent; Brett Palmer, Lineman; Tyler Vitse, Lineman; Adam Pronschinske, Lineman; Kevin Helgeson, Line Foreman; Chase Stello, Lineman; Marc Mades, Lineman; Todd Anibas, Lineman; Mitchell Thompson, Apprentice Lineman; Wyatt Johnson, Apprentice Lineman; Nick Kovel, Lineman; Brian Glass, Lineman; Dale Kircher, Line Foreman; Dillon Marten, Lineman; Hayden Gran, Lineman; Rob Sosalla, Operations Manager; Jeff Kulig, Meter Technician. Missing from photo: Royce Kosik, Lineman, and Jake Llimberg, Apprentice Lineman.

**NEW!**

## PREPAID BILLING OPTION

Riverland Energy's new Prepaid Billing Program is an optional program for members to pre-pay for their electricity. Instead of receiving a bill at the end of the month for power you have already used, you have the flexibility of purchasing electricity when you want. Pay amounts that fit your budget—daily, weekly, or monthly.

Because you pay in advance on prepaid billing, you control how much you use and spend before you get billed for it. Keeping an eye on your account in SmartHub helps you recognize how you use electricity and when you need to cut back to stay on budget.

If your funds get depleted, you get a notification prior to service being disconnected. This gives you a chance to make a payment without ever losing service.

### Eligibility Requirements:

In order to participate in the Prepaid Billing Program, you must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must complete and sign the Prepaid Billing Agreement form.
- Must have a valid email address and a SmartHub account.
- Must not be enrolled in Auto Pay or Budget Billing
- Must not be a Net Metering Account
- Must not have a Medical Necessity Document on file.

### Prepaid Billing Account Management

- To initially set up the account, you must make a minimum initial payment to your Prepaid Billing Account in the amount of \$50.
- You will not receive a paper monthly statement in the mail. You can access the monthly statement through your SmartHub account.
- Prepaid accounts bill daily and also go through a monthly billing cycle. All fixed charges (base service charge, security lights, etc.) are prorated based on thirty (30) days of use and subtracted on a daily basis.
- Prepaid Billing Accounts follow the Cooperative's rate schedule. The standard monthly base charge is required for the Prepaid Billing Program and is automatically allocated daily.

Visit our website for more information or to sign up!

# ENTER OUR PHOTO CONTEST FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$25 ELECTRIC BILL CREDIT

Congratulations to Kay La Duke and Gary Robinson for getting the most votes for our January and February photo contest.

Submit your best photo and encourage your friends to vote! The photo receiving the most votes will win a \$25 electric bill credit and will be printed in our magazine, along with a few other favorites. By entering, you will also be entered into a drawing for a \$250 electric bill credit taking place in September.

The May theme is Sunrise or Sunset. Photos can be submitted through May 25. Go to our Facebook page or website to submit and vote.



MAY PHOTO CONTEST

## Sunrise or Sunset

Submit your favorite sunrise OR sunset photo by the 25th for a chance to win \$25 bill credit!



Other January Favorites: "The Eagles" by Dean Hestekin, turtle by Dawn Arentz.

Save the Date!

### Annual Recycle Drive Coming in June

We will be holding our annual appliance and electronics recycle drive in June this year at all three of our locations.

- **June 11** – Arcadia – N28988 State Road 93
- **June 12** – Alma – 1225 S. Main St.
- **June 13** – Holmen – 1800 Granary St.

All events will be from 7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Other February Favorites: "Hungry deer" by Jerald Doken; "Me and grandpa discussing life while fishing" by Lisa Tourville.



**Tim Holtan, CEO**

608-323-3381 • 1-800-411-9115 • [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com)

**Beth Alesch, Editor**



**Riverland Energy Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

**Arcadia Office**

N28988 State Road 93,  
P.O. Box 277,  
Arcadia, WI 54612

**Holmen Office**

1800 Granary St.  
Holmen, WI 54636

**Outages & Emergencies**

Call 1-800-927-6206  
24 hours a day

**Office Hours**

Arcadia: 7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.  
Holmen: 7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

**Officers of the Board of Directors:**

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Dan Filla, Arcadia, Vice-President  
Dennis Frame, Osseo,  
Secretary/Treasurer