



Jerry Sorenson,  
General Manager

## ANNUAL MEETING PLANS


The board of directors set March 27, 2021, for the co-operative's annual meeting at the Arcadia High School in Arcadia. It is our hope that we will be able to meet in person for this annual event, but with the current pandemic, things are always uncertain. We know our members look forward to the annual meeting each year, and we are hopeful we can provide a traditional one for you. Please keep an eye on our publications

for any changes to this meeting.

Prior to the annual meeting, we hold district meetings in accordance with your cooperative's bylaws presenting the opportunity to place names on the ballot for director positions. The fact that we as cooperative members have the right to select our cooperative directors is what sets us apart from other electric utilities. The district meeting also serves as a prelude to the upcoming annual meeting on March 27, 2021. The meeting offers members the opportunity to learn more about important issues facing the electric cooperative. Those attending hear the



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financial position of the co-op, work activities that were completed in 2020, and activities planned in 2021.

### Happy New Year

Bringing in a new year is always about beginnings and endings. This year, we can look ahead to a fresh start. We may not know everything the year ahead holds, but I can say with confidence that all of us at Riverland Energy will continue to work hard every day to bring our members the quality electric service you deserve. Happy New Year, and here's to a better 2021!

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS TO BE SELECTED VIA FACEBOOK LIVE

Applications Are Due March 1, 2021

Due to the pandemic, our current eligibility requirements for scholarships have changed. Recipients and/or their parents are not required to attend our annual meeting this year. The recipients will instead be selected in a random drawing streamed live through Facebook on Friday, March 5, at 12 p.m. Recipients/parents do not have to be viewing to win.

### Traditional and At-Large Scholarships

Riverland Energy will award thirty \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors whose parent or guardian resides in Riverland Energy service territory. Two eligible graduating seniors from each of the following schools will be selected: Alma, C-FC, G-E-T, Independence, Osseo-Fairchild, Arcadia, Durand, Gilmanton, Mondovi, Whitehall, Blair-Taylor, Eleva-Strum, Holmen, and Onalaska. In addition, two at-large scholarships will be awarded to an eligible senior who lives in our service territory, but doesn't attend any of the schools listed above.

The recipients will be selected in a random drawing via Facebook Live on **Friday, March 5 at 12 p.m.** Applicants do not have to be viewing to win.

### Line Worker Scholarships

Two \$1,000 Line Worker Scholarship will be awarded to individuals pursuing a post-secondary education in an electrical line worker program. The applicant must be a senior



in high school. The applicant can apply for both the general scholarship and the line worker scholarship, but will only be eligible to receive one.

The recipients will be selected in a random drawing via Facebook Live on **Friday, March 5 at 12 p.m.** Applicants do not have to be viewing to win.

### Non-traditional Scholarship

Three \$750 non-traditional scholarships will be awarded to non-traditional students at schools of higher learning. These will be awarded to those returning to a university or technical college after spending a minimum of three years in the work place or raising a family. To be eligible, you or your spouse must be a member in "good standing" and a bona fide resident of the Riverland Energy Cooperative service territory.

Recipients will be chosen in a random drawing at the Riverland Energy Board of Directors' meeting from all completed and verified applications. The disbursement of non-traditional scholarships will be awarded after all qualifications are met with receipt of transcripts and verification of enrollment as listed above.

Applications can be submitted online; emailed to [balesch@riverlandenergy.com](mailto:balesch@riverlandenergy.com), or mailed to: Riverland Energy Cooperative, P.O. Box 277, Arcadia, WI 54612. Applications can be found on our website, at any of our offices, or through the high school guidance counselor.

The application deadline is **4 p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2021.**



# WINTER ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

In Wisconsin, December through March is a particularly hazardous time of year for storms and electrical power outages. Heavy snow, ice, and wind can ravage power lines, both on the main power grid and at home. Add to that the increased use of home heating equipment such as a space heaters and electric blankets and the potential for dangerous electrical hazards and home fires only intensifies. Keep your home and loved ones safe this season by following these important winter electrical safety tips:

**Use space heaters safely.** Keep them a minimum of three feet from furniture, bedspreads, drapes, or clothes and never leave them unattended when they're on. Don't use extension cords with your space heaters and always unplug the heaters when they're not in use. Keep space heaters away from wet or damp areas and never touch a heater when your body is wet.

**Use caution with electric blankets.** Never use an electric blanket while you're sleeping. Make sure the plug and cord are in good shape; otherwise it can pose a fire hazard. Be sure to dispose of electric blankets that have worn or damaged areas.

**Be careful with your kitchen appliances.** While crockpots and other slow-cooking devices get a lot of use in the winter, you should never leave them turned on when no one is home. Leaving them unattended is a major fire risk. And be sure to check electrical kitchen appliances for frayed or damaged cords and plugs before use.

**Make sure your home is equipped with functioning carbon monoxide detectors.** Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless gas that kills at high concentrations and causes serious and irreversible injuries at lower levels. Deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning increase during the winter months due to the use of common fuels like natural gas, wood, and coal. Installing an inexpensive carbon monoxide detector can save your family's life.

**Are your smoke alarms in working order?** It's important to make sure that you have an adequate number of smoke alarms throughout your home and that they are functioning properly. Simply push the test button to make sure it beeps and replace the batteries if needed.

**Don't overload circuits or wattage.** Despite the shorter, darker days of winter, don't go above the recommended wattage for your light fixtures. Don't overload wall outlets either, and only plug three-prong cords into three-prong outlets. Use extension cords sparingly and only for temporary purposes.

## BE PREPARED FOR WINTER WEATHER & OUTAGES

If you experience an outage, check to see that the power issue is not on your side of the electric meter. Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and any disconnect by the meter pole. Call your neighbors to see if the outage involves more than your premises. When calling in an outage, please have this information available:

- Your account
- Name on the electric account
- Service address where outage is occurring
- Phone number where you can be reached
- Cause of outage if known

If you call after business hours or during a widespread outage our call center, Cooperative Response Center (CRC), will answer and assist you. During widespread outages, power is resorted systematically. Attention is given first to substations and main feeder lines, followed by individual members.

### 3 WAYS TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

- Call: 800-927-6206
- Smarthub
- Text: 55050 (must be signed up for this service)

### UPDATE YOUR PHONE NUMBER:

Please make sure we have your up-to-date phone number. Call us at 800-411-9115, or update your phone numbers through SmartHub or through our website. Having your number up-to-date allows our automated phone system to identify your location when you call in an outage.

### LIVE ONLINE OUTAGE MAP

Our outage map shows the location and size of the outage. You can access it from our website with your computer or electronic device.

### COMMUNICATIONS

During large or prolonged outages of 500 or more, updates are posted on our website and on our Facebook page.

[www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com)





Spare change for community needs.

## SEEKING GRANT APPLICATIONS

We are currently seeking applications for the next cycle of our Community Cares grant program. Funds are used for local projects that benefit members of our communities. Community Cares funds may not be used for political purposes or to pay electric bills.

To apply for a grant, fill out the application found on our website at [riverlandenergy.com](http://riverlandenergy.com). Applications are due Feb. 20, 2021.



### Managing and paying your bill has never been easier!

Pandemic-induced social isolation has altered the relationship members have with technology. With the physical world now slowly receding, consumers are suddenly more reliant on apps for communication, shopping, staying healthy, and entertainment.

To make managing and paying your bill easier, Riverland offers SmartHub, an online application to help you manage your account 24/7.

With SmartHub, you can:

- make a payment
- check your electric usage and view your usage history
- notify us of account issues
- receive email or text alerts
- report an outage
- make updates/changes to your account

SmartHub is available in both mobile apps and a web version to give members secure access whether at home, at work, or on the go. Members with smart phones or tablet devices can download the SmartHub app from iTunes or the Android Marketplace. (Use search term "NISC SmartHub" or scan the QR code at right.)



For more information about SmartHub or other programs, visit our website at [riverlandenergy.com](http://riverlandenergy.com).

Riverland Energy is happy to announce the launch of our newly revamped website! With user experience and access in mind, the website has a new design featuring a clean, fresh look, with responsive views for both mobile and desktop users. We've also improved the structure of our content, making it faster and more intuitive to find the information you need.

Visit [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com) to see the new site.

## NEED HELP WITH HEATING COSTS?

### Energy assistance is available for qualifying members

If you need financial assistance in paying your electric bill, we suggest you contact one of the agencies listed below. The energy assistance program helps prevent the disconnection of electric service and long-term energy cost burdens for eligible families. Contact your county's Department of Human Services to apply:

**Trempealeau County:**

Trempealeau Co. Social Services: (715) 538-2311  
Western Wisconsin E.O.C.: (715) 985-2391

**Buffalo County:**

Buffalo County Human Services: (608) 685-4412

**La Crosse County:**

La Crosse Co. Human Services: (608) 785-5582  
Salvation Army: (608) 782-6126  
CouleeCap: (608) 634-4575

### Want to help someone pay their bill?

Members can help family, friends, neighbors, or even strangers stay current on their electric bill. If you would like to help a member by paying \$50, \$100, \$200, or any amount desired towards their electric bill, please send a check with the member's name, address, and phone number. If you have any questions, please contact our billing department at 800-411-9115 for more details.

MY CO-OP



# REACHING RURAL COMMUNITIES WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Riverland Energy Cooperative arose to provide electricity to some of the most remote areas in the country, and that's given us special insight into serving the agriculture industry. The history of electric cooperatives were founded by farmers and grew from their hard work and ingenuity, and our prospects for working together in the future are just as significant as our past.

Riverland Energy's primary goal is to provide reliable electricity at an affordable cost. That means being innovative and focused on the needs of its members. The co-op has a long history of promoting energy efficiency with a reduced cost burden to its members.

As the power provider for rural communities, Riverland Energy offers rebates to agricultural members for spe-

cific energy-efficient equipment purchase and installations unique to the ag industry. Rebates are one way farmers can reduce the expenditure required to improve energy efficiency. Eligible equipment includes: vending machine controls, dairy plate coolers/well water pre-coolers, dairy refrigeration, electric forklift battery charger, livestock waterer, exhaust fans, circulation fans, refrigerator compressors, and variable frequency drive rebates.



Riverland Energy Cooperative also provides rebates and incentives to its residential and commercial members for a variety of energy efficient equipment purchase and upgrades. Some of these include: lighting, appliances, heat pumps, air conditioners, and water heaters. Forms and detailed information can be found on our website at [riverlandenergy.com/rebates](http://riverlandenergy.com/rebates), along with additional information on more ways to save.

Riverland Energy Cooperative is committed to partnering with the agriculture community to improve the health, efficiency, and vitality in our local area.

For any questions or more information about these programs, please contact Aaron Torud at 800-411-9115. Visit our website for the list of available rebates for 2021!

## Agricultural, Commercial, and Industrial Rebates

Equipment:	Incentive:
Commercial vending machine controls	\$25
Dairy plate cooler/well water pre-cooler	\$500
Dairy refrigeration heat recovery – used with controlled electric water heater	\$300
Electric forklift battery charger – must be on load control as defined by co-op	\$200
Low/Zero Energy Livestock Waterer – ≤ 500 watts, insulated tank	\$50
Exhaust Fan*	\$1/inch
Circulation Fan*	\$1/inch
Scroll Refrigerator Compressor – Max incentive is \$1,000/compressor	\$30/HP
Variable Frequency Drive (VFD)	\$30/HP

\* Please refer to the form for details on specific requirements

### Specific Requirements:

- Equipment must be installed at the location which receives power from Riverland Energy Cooperative.
- Incentive not to exceed the equipment cost.
- Required documentation must be submitted no later than three months after equipment install date. Required documentation includes: the incentive form, a copy of the receipt or invoice for each item, and documentation showing the equipment has been installed.


## Jerry Sorenson, General Manager

N28988 State Road 93, P.O. Box 277, Arcadia, WI 54612  
608-323-3381 • 1-800-411-9115 • [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com)

## Beth Alesch, Editor



## Riverland Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

### District 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.–4:00 p.m.  
Holmen: 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

### Officers of the Board of Directors:

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