



MEMBER RATE ADJUSTMENT NECESSARY TO MEET INCREASED COSTS

By Interim General Manager Tim Holtan

Our board and staff work continuously to keep costs as low as possible, but as we analyze the costs of providing you electric service, along with financial projections for the next few years, the cooperative recognizes a need to adjust rates.

Much like the increasing cost of the goods we purchase for our homes and family, the cost of the cooperative's materials and supplies used for our operations and maintenance have also increased. In December, our power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), announced a projected wholesale power base rate increase of 5.63 percent to electric cooperatives, effective January 2023. Wholesale power prices are the main driver to retail electric rates, as wholesale power is over 60 percent of our total expenses. A 5.63 percent base rate increase equates to an overall projected rate increase to Riverland Energy of 6.64 percent.

To cover this rate increase, in addition to increases in our costs to continue to maintain, grow, and improve the electric system into the future, we must adjust the rates to our members. Effective May 1, 2023, all members will see a 6.64 percent increase across the board. This is the first change in rates in three years.

The cost of electricity fluctuates based on things like weather, demand, and power plant outages. Each month, we evaluate the costs compared to the budgeted amount we need to run and maintain the cooperative. As a cooperative, we are a not-for-profit organization. This means that we charge you only enough to operate your cooperative. When the cost to purchase power is significantly more or less than anticipated, we pass a charge or credit onto our members. This is called a Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) and it's a direct pass-through of the actual cost of energy.

The PCA is a line item on your bill each month that reflects the charge or credit. In 2022, the PCA allowed us to return over \$1,000,000 dollars to our members as the cost of purchased power was lower than predicted. The PCA could fluctuate in 2023, but having the PCA is a benefit to members because adjustments can be made on an as-needed basis without continually adjusting electric rates.

The rate increase will appear on members' bills in June for the May usage. The 6.64 percent increase includes the energy

charge (from \$.1208/kWh to \$.1285/kWh) and a \$.07 increase in the base service charge. The base service charge, currently \$1.18/day, will go to \$1.25/day. This base service charge is common among electric utilities; it helps utilities recover the fixed costs of the equipment, poles, wire, and transformers necessary to get power to members' accounts. All members pay this fee regardless of how much energy they use each month. The cost of these items has gone up considerably in recent years. All other rate classes will also be adjusted to reflect the rate increase.

I encourage you to peruse our website and publications, or give our office a call for some energy usage tips. We also offer a time-of-use rate that provides members with pricing that encourages you to lower usage during peak times, either by using less energy during on-peak times, or moving usage to off-peak times.

Please understand Riverland Energy's Board of Directors and its management have the responsibility of ensuring that the cooperative operates as efficiently as possible and maintains a sound financial position. We all take that responsibility very seriously and we will make every effort to ensure that we limit any increase to you, our valued members, and will keep the cooperative financially sound.

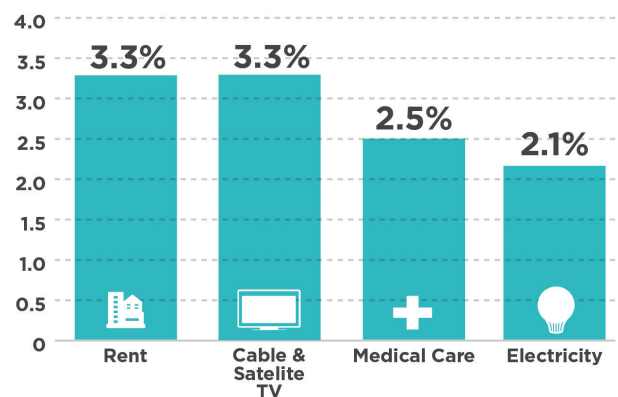
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we are a not-for-
profit organization.
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ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

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 2016-2021

Percent



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Youth Ambassadors Tour Dairlyand's JPM Station

The youth ambassadors toured the John P. Madgett Station (JPM) power plant last month, getting a glimpse of how electricity is produced. The tour gives the students an opportunity to understand the process of transforming coal to energy.



SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Recycle Drive Coming in June

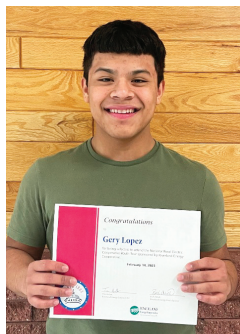
We will be holding our annual appliance and electronics recycle drive in June this year at all three of our locations.

- **June 6** – Arcadia – N28988 State Road 93
- **June 7** – Alma - 1225 S. Main St.
- **June 8** – Holmen – 1800 Granary St.

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

YOUTH AMBASSADOR SELECTED TO ATTEND YOUTH TOUR

Riverland Energy is proud to announce that **Gery Lopez** has been selected to attend the 2023 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in June. He will join over 1,500 students from across the United States for a one-week, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. While on the Youth Tour, students will have the opportunity to learn more about electric cooperatives, meet and interact with congressional leaders, and visit historic monuments.



The Youth Tour is open to high school juniors who are a part of the Riverland Energy Youth Ambassador Program. They are selected through an essay contest. This year, the trip is scheduled for June 15–21.



CELEBRATE

the Power Behind Your Power.

Lineworker Appreciation Day | April 10, 2023

National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has recognized the second Monday in April as National Lineworker Appreciation Day since 2015. Riverland Energy Cooperative wishes to recognize our lineworkers for their dedication in serving the co-op and its members.



EFFICIENCY UPGRADES TO HELP YOU SAVE THIS SUMMER

Spring and summer are great times for home upgrades and DIY projects. Consider projects that promote better efficiency. Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money—and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an ENERGY STAR®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, devices like

smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And when you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors and brightness levels—and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, **sealing air leaks around your home** is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around

doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation. Adding insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs.

Additional efficiency upgrades can make a big impact on energy use, like replacing old appliances with ENERGY-STAR® models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. An energy audit can easily identify areas to boost efficiency, and then you can determine the projects you want to tackle first.

THIRD-GRADERS INVITED TO ENTER SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Riverland Energy Cooperative and the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) are seeking entries for the 2023 electrical safety poster contest. All local children in third grade are invited to submit an original poster that supports electrical safety.

Prizes All who enter will have a chance to win local and state-level prizes. Three local winners from Riverland Energy Cooperative service territory will each receive a prize from Riverland Energy and a \$25 gift card from WECA. The three winning entries will also be submitted to the state contest, for a chance to win state-level prizes.

The top three prizes in the state contest are a chrome book for first place, a \$100 gift card for second place, and a \$75 gift card for third place.

Winning posters will be shared by the co-ops to help educate all kids about the safe use of electricity.

Contest rules The contest is open to all third-grade students in Riverland Energy Cooperative's service territory. There is no cost to enter. Posters must be original artwork by the student and must communicate an electrical safety theme. No computer-generated images will be accepted. The poster should be at least 8.5x11 inches, but no larger than 11x14 inches. Entries must include the completed entry form and student's name must be written on back of the poster.

Submit entries to Riverland Energy Cooperative, Attn: Safety Poster Contest, P.O. Box 277, Arcadia, WI 54612. They can also be e-mailed to info@riverlandenergy.com or dropped off at any of our offices. The deadline is May 31, 2023.

Entry forms can be found on riverlandenergy.com.



**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 your local electric
cooperative by **May 31, 2023**, 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 for
details and an entry form.



CONCERNS ABOUT STRAY VOLTAGE? LET US KNOW

As a member of Riverland Energy Cooperative, you should feel free to call us anytime with concerns related to your electrical service. One area that can be a concern, particularly for livestock farmers, is stray voltage.

Stray voltage is the common term used to describe neutral-to-earth voltage in a cow or livestock contact area, usually in the barn. When a cow makes contact between two points with a difference in voltage, such as a watering cup and the concrete floor, an electric current may flow through the cow, which the cow may feel. Such situations can be caused by a variety of electrical problems both on farm and off farm.

Neutral-to-earth voltage may never be completely eliminated because it is present on all grounded electrical distribution systems. However, much can be done to resolve stray voltage concerns. There are fairly simple electrical tests that can be performed by qualified individuals to determine whether stray voltage is present at unacceptable levels on your farm.

If you believe you may have stray voltage, Riverland Energy stands ready to investigate that possibility. We have the equipment and trained personnel to offer assistance and advice pertaining to stray voltage.

DAIRY FARM REWIRING PROGRAM



Many agricultural facilities in the upper Midwest have been aging, and reinvestment in them has been made more difficult due to low milk prices. Riverland Energy Cooperative and Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) have stepped up to the plate and created a new farm rewiring financial assistance program for dairy producers.

The Safety First! Loan and grant program is designed to assist dairy farmers with their farm's rewiring to meet current electrical code standards.

This is a cost-sharing program with the following requirements:

- **Dairy farms only (including cows, goats, and sheep that are kept for the production of milk)**
- **Existing farmstead on Riverland Energy's lines**
- **Pre-and post-program inspections by an approved state-certified inspector**
- **Work must be completed by a Master Electrician who has completed the Farm Rewiring Program**
- **Before work commences, a bid from the electrician must meet loan/grant requirements**
- **A signed service agreement for length of loan**
- **Credit eligibility requirements – financially, this program offers a loan/grant combination up to \$30,000.**

Other financing is available as well:

- **Grants are available for 20 percent or up to \$6,000 from WECA**
- **Loans are available for 80 percent or up to \$24,000 from Riverland Energy. A 3-percent interest applies to this loan, and the farmer can take up to five years to repay the loan.**

The co-op is offering this financial assistance in order to protect the safety of their members and to help preserve and extend the life of important assets for farmers. For more information on the Safety First! Rewiring Program visit our website at www.riverlandenergy.com, or call and ask for our operations department at 800-411-9115.


Tim Holtan, Interim Manager

608-323-3381 • 1-800-411-9115 • 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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Dennis Frame, Osseo,
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