




# RELIABLE POWER FOR TODAY – AND TOMORROW



**Riverland Energy Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



By Tim Holtan, CEO

**H**ave you ever considered how handy it is to flip a switch or push a button and have instant conveniences?

It seems so simple; you get a little cold or hot, you bump your thermostat up or down; your family gets hungry, you grab food from your refrigerator and heat it up in the microwave or cook a meal on your stove; stressful day at work, you jump into a hot tub of water.

Electricity is one of those reliable and instant conveniences. More than that, it is necessary to support our daily lives and plays a vital role in powering our future.

Our team at Riverland Energy is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across our service area. You may not realize it, but Riverland Energy doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, Riverland Energy is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions, and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps the cooperative save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming

keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. Technology advancements are helping us identify the cause and location of outages and problem areas quicker. Electronic equipment both at our substations and on the lines identifies a fault by calculating the amount of fault current. This calculation helps pinpoint the location of the fault.

As technological advancements continue to become more accessible, we plan to use this information on mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Wisconsin and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us—it's about cooperation, not competition. As we turn our focus to 2024, Riverland Energy will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.



**Proactive tree trimming keeps power lines clear of overgrown limbs that are likely to fall and cause interruptions in service.**

## JOINT MEMBERSHIP IS ENCOURAGED

People who are served by Riverland Energy Cooperative can have a joint or single membership.

A joint membership has two names listed on the account and bill. This is most often a spouse. Both people may inquire about account information or make changes to the service. Although only one vote is allowed per membership, either may cast the vote. Both are entitled to receive any capital credit refunds issued to the account.

A single membership lists one name on the account and bill. Only that

person will be able to inquire about specific account information or make changes to his or her service. In addition, only the person listed may vote in the cooperative's annual election, and any capital credit refunds will be issued in only that person's name.

Members who would like to add a joint member on their account will be required to have a new membership form signed by both the member and the joint member. Call our office or visit our website for the form. There is no fee for this change.

### Members Helping Members



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.

## SIMPLE STEPS TO LOWER HEATING COSTS AND KEEP YOU WARM

While cold temperatures mean higher heating bills, don't forget some easy steps to make your home more energy- and cost-efficient this winter.

Use these tips to help cut costs and improve heating efficiency and safety:

- Replace your furnace filter every month to save energy and improve heat circulation. Consider having a professional check and service your furnace system to ensure peak efficiency and safety.
- Use sunlight's natural heat to your best advantage. Open curtains and blinds on sunny days to let the sunlight warm your home, and close them on gloomy days and at night to keep the heat inside.
- Close your fireplace damper when you are not using the fireplace to prevent heat from escaping and cold from entering through your chimney.
- If you have older or leaky windows, consider temporary fixes, such as plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.

- Weather stripping is relatively easy to install and available at your local home-improvement store. Stop drafts from coming in and heat from leaking out of your home through drafty doors and windows. You could save up to 10 percent of your heating costs by eliminating those leaks.
- Use caulk to seal gaps in the walls of your home. Wherever different building materials meet, or wiring comes out of a wall, there are gaps that may contribute to heat loss in your home.
- Invest in a water heater insulation blanket. If the top of the electric water heater is warm to the touch, you are wasting energy. This means that the heater has to work even harder to heat the water in your home; therefore, it uses more energy.
- Use smart strips for electronics so that power is shut off when they are in standby mode.
- Use a microwave or counter-top appliances to cook; they use much less energy than a conventional oven.
- If you'll be out of town for an extended time during the holidays, set your home's thermostat to 50 degrees. This is a happy midpoint that avoids wasting energy to warm an empty house while still preventing damage to your pipes and plants.

## Happy Holidays!

Spark joy and light this holiday season. From our co-op family to yours, we wish you a safe and warm season with friends and loved ones.

Our offices will be closed on Monday, December 25, and Monday, January 1, for the holidays.



## Let SmartHub make your life easier!

### Make and Manage Payments

SmartHub allows you to make a payment or schedule a future payment on your account by credit card or bank account.

### Track Your Energy Usage

SmartHub gives you the ability to view your electrical energy usage. You can compare usage, charges, and temperature differences of any two months, side-by-side, to note seasonal or behavioral changes in usage. This is a great tool to help explain energy usage on your bill and assist you in making informed decisions about energy use.

### Enroll in AutoPay

Enroll in automatic bill pay using a bank account or credit card.

### Track Your Payment History

The payment history screen is a quick reference for viewing the amount paid, when it was paid, and by what method.

### Go Paperless

There is no need to save old billing statements. You can now view the actual bill images on your screen. Sign up to enroll in paperless billing so you can get your bill emailed to you instead of mailed. Eliminate paper and clutter!

### Manage Your Notifications

Do you want to know when your bill is available to be paid, if Riverland Energy received your payment, or a reminder that you have an upcoming payment due date? These are just some of the notifications available to members who want to be notified by email or text message.

# STAY SAFE

## AS YOU TRAVEL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The winter holiday season is a busy time of year for many of us. Along with putting out decorations and baking cookies, we often spend more time in our cars than usual: shopping for presents, traveling to family gatherings, or attending holiday events. However, all that time in the car can also mean facing extreme weather conditions that can make safe driving difficult.

Along with risk of injury, possible damage to your vehicle, and plain inconvenience, collisions may also involve downed power lines or other electrical hazards. Unfortunately, when this happens, it adds another very significant danger to the mix that can cause severe shock, burns, or electrocution. Knowing what to do in this situation can save lives.

If you are in an accident involving a downed power line:

- Call 9-1-1, and tell the dispatcher a downed power line or other electrical equipment is involved in a collision. Power company personnel will be dispatched to the scene to deenergize the power.
- Put your window down and alert others not to approach the scene. They could be shocked or electrocuted if they walk or run over the energized area or touch anything that is energized.
- Never attempt to drive over a power line or through water, snow, or other debris that could be hiding one. There is no way to tell if a power line is energized, even if it is not sparking or buzzing.
- Do not exit the vehicle UNLESS the vehicle is on fire or you see smoke. The vehicle acts as an insulator that keeps you safe from stray electricity.
- If you MUST exit the vehicle, cross your arms across your chest, put your feet together, and make a clean jump from the vehicle. Then hop with your feet together as far as you can—at least 50 feet away. Once a power line is in contact with a car or truck, the ground, or other objects, it energizes the area. The electrical current spreads to the vehicle and ground, and it ripples out. Each “ring” of the ripple represents a different voltage. Stepping from one voltage to the next can cause your body to become a path for electricity and electrocute you.
- If a power line is inside the vehicle due to damage or an open window, stay in the vehicle. DO NOT touch or try to move the wire. DO NOT attempt to use other objects to move it.
- If your vehicle collides with a pad-mounted transformer, which houses electrical equipment connected to underground power lines, the same safety precautions apply.



## YOU COULD WIN A \$25 BILL CREDIT!

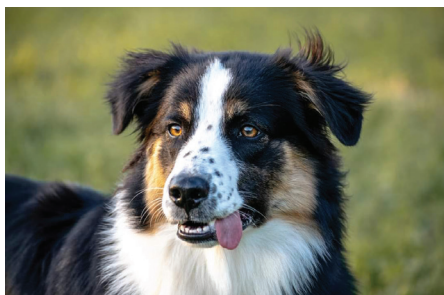
Congratulations to Erin Noll for getting the most votes for our October photo contest.

Submit your best photo and encourage your friends to vote! The photo receiving 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 at the end of the contest.

The December theme is Holiday Spirit. Photos can be submitted through December 25. Go to our Facebook page or website to submit and vote.



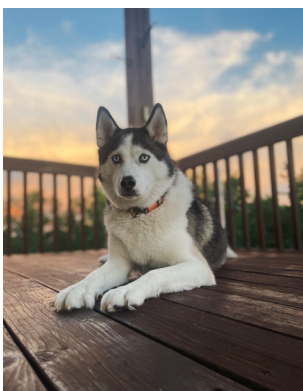
Some of our other favorite photos submitted for the October contest:



Frisbee time? – Joseph Jacobchick



Donkeys being silly – Stephanie Shank



Little Ray of Sunshine – Brianna Nisbit



## REBATE PAPERWORK DUE DECEMBER 31

Riverland members are eligible to receive rebates for energy-efficient upgrades. ENERGY STAR rated appliances, appliance recycling, central air conditioners, heat pumps, and various types of lighting are included on the 2023 forms. Agricultural and commercial rebates are also available.

### Important details:

- Only items that were purchased and installed between Jan. 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2023, are eligible.
- Rebates are only available while funds last. Once funds allocated for 2023 rebates are depleted, rebates will not be issued.
- Appliances must have the ENERGY STAR logo on the appliance. Send the logo in along with your form.

Rebate forms are available at [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com) or at any of our offices. Please review the rebate form prior to making purchases to ensure your item meets the rebate requirements for energy efficiency.

**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:

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