




# SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENERGY TRANSITION

By Tim Holtan, CEO



Riverland Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

What does it mean to be sustainable? For us at Riverland Energy Cooperative, it is ensuring we are keeping our promises to you, our members – the promises that power our needs and wants 24/7/365. Safety, reliability and the clean energy transition are key elements of sustainability. These three elements must work in tandem to successfully meet low-carbon goals while ensuring a reliable and affordable supply of electricity.

Members often hear about how electric cooperatives like Riverland Energy Cooperative are focused on providing safe, reliable, affordable and sustainable power. Our wholesale power provider – Dairyland Power Cooperative – is guided by the same mission.

Recently, Dairyland has celebrated two major “wins” for the clean energy transition and reliability. As a member of Dairyland Power Cooperative, Riverland Energy Cooperative and all our members share in these successes that are truly for the greater good.

First, Dairyland was awarded a \$579 million New Empowering Rural America (New ERA) grant to accelerate the clean energy transition. President Joe Biden joined U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack for an event on Sept. 5 celebrating this achievement. The funds will develop 1,020 megawatts (MW) of solar and wind energy projects in the Upper Midwest region. New ERA funding will accelerate Dairyland’s carbon profile goals, resulting in a 3.3 million metric tons carbon reduction for over 70% decrease in carbon emissions. (Dairyland has already retired 579 MW of coal generation since 2014 and reduced its coal generation investment by 60% since 1999.)

Second, after more than a decade of planning and construction, the 345-kV Cardinal-Hickory Creek Transmission Line was placed into service at the end of September by co-owners ITC Midwest, ATC and Dairyland. The new line is finally providing a vital pathway to help ensure the renewable energy that consumers are seeking is available and affordable by increasing capacity and reducing congestion on the transmission grid. In addition, the new line is improving the reliability and flexibility of the region’s transmission system.

As of June 2024, there were 160 renewable generation projects in Wisconsin, Iowa and other Upper Midwestern states dependent upon completion of the Cardinal-Hickory Creek line – enough to power millions of homes and businesses. That energy is now flowing down the line.

Balancing the pace of change with the need for safety and reliability is a daily challenge and opportunity. The

energy transition is reliant on time, technology and innovation. In the meantime, baseload or “always available” generation, like natural gas, is crucial to keeping the lights, heat and air conditioning on during times of peak energy use – and to facilitate major new wind and solar investments. Natural gas will continue to be essential for reliability as Dairyland and all utilities work to achieve carbon reduction goals during the energy transition. For example, Dairyland’s Elk Mound Combustion Turbines and RockGen Energy Center are ready to be called upon to support energy demand in any weather.

In addition to its massive investments in renewable energy, Dairyland is actively exploring carbon-free power supply technologies, including small modular reactor nuclear plants and pumped storage hydropower. An all of the above

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approach is essential for sustainability.

The regional electric grid is managed by the MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator). Both the North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) and MISO have raised awareness about reliability

concerns. Key factors impacting reliability during the energy transition:

- Power plant retirements are outpacing the installation of new generation resources.
- A significant amount of new generation resources coming online are wind and solar, which are intermittent and not always available when needed. (We need to supplement wind and solar with energy resources such as nuclear and natural gas, which can ramp up quickly during any weather conditions to provide reliable back-up to renewable resources.)
- Rising energy consumption.
- Transmission congestion.

As noted earlier, 160 renewable energy facilities were waiting on the completion of Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line.

We are living in an exciting time for the energy industry. Riverland Energy Cooperative looks forward to sharing more “wins” with you in the future and many conversations about our path ahead.

# FUN FOR ALL AT MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENT



Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate Riverland Energy Cooperative's Member Appreciation Day on October 1. We had approximately 650 co-op members and guests attend the event at the Onalaska Omni Center in Onalaska for food, games, music, giveaways, and door prize drawings.

Members had a dinner of brats and hotdogs catered by Pogy's Catering out of La Crosse. Attendees received a first aid kit and enjoyed music by the MadLee Band who are from the Gilmanton/Mondovi area. Kids had the opportunity to play games, build with the giant LEGOS, jump in the bounce houses, and check out some of the trucks and equipment. New this year, we tied in National Drive EV week with our event by having different Electric Vehicles on display. We had Riverland Energy's Ford Lightning, Dairyland Power Cooperative's Toyota BZ4X, and partnered with Clason Buick GMC for them to bring a Hummer EV SUV 2X! This was a great opportunity for members to look at Electric Vehicles and ask questions. Other entertainment included Balloons by Kevin, face painting, milkshakes from the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau, and a prize wheel for members to answer co-op trivia. We had our Riverland employees working co-op informational booths on different co-op programs and promotions to answer any questions.

Just for attending, members entered their names to win door prize drawings of \$25 electric bill credits to 30 members, and one \$250 electric bill credit! Congratulations to Karla Walker



for winning the \$250 electric bill credit, and to the following for \$25 electric bill credits: David Maliszewski, Mike Ehrsam, Tom & Donna La Fleur, Lucy Webb, Zac Knutson, Vicki Christopherson, Larry Nyseth, Laura Hoffman, Brant Hill, Diann Will, Randi Menk, Mick & Carol Schuldt, Don & Gerda Anderson, Alanna & Jesse Petersen, Gary Christenson, Marge Hickey, Don Kalmes, Tom Heffernan, Richard Schroeder, Anna Anthony, Waldera LLC, Deborah Laufenberg, Francis Haney, Emily Dengel, Brenda Killian, Gary Erickson, Rena Patterson, Andy Beckstrom, John Hamilton, and Laura Holley.

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's event, we are already looking forward to next year!





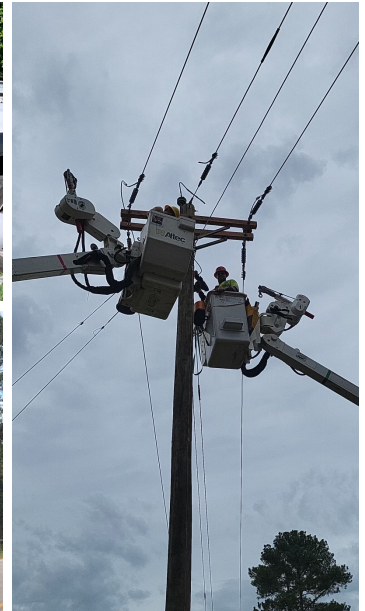
# RIVERLAND SENDS CREW TO SOUTH CAROLINA FOLLOWING HURRICANE HELENE

One of the principles that guides all electric cooperatives is Cooperation Among Cooperatives. Since rural electrification began in the 1930s, electric co-ops have relied on one another to help when disaster strikes. Highly trained linemen and other employees from one cooperative can quickly assist other co-ops that might need help recovering from electrical infrastructure damage caused by disasters such as tornadoes, floods, fires, ice/snowstorms, and in the recent case, hurricanes.

Hurricane Helene made landfall on the Florida Gulf Coast on September 26, 2024. Helene's largest impacts were across the southern Appalachians where widespread severe and unprecedented flooding occurred. Strong wind gusts damaged property and blew trees and power lines down from the Gulf Coast to the North Carolina mountains. A two-man crew from Riverland, as well as other co-op crews from across the state made their way to help make repairs and restore power at Aiken Electric Cooperative in South Carolina.

During the peak of their outages, Aiken Electric Cooperative experienced power loss in 27 out of their 29 substations. The area suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Helene, making it one of the hardest-hit regions. As a result, the cooperative faced not only restoration efforts but also a complete re-build of their infrastructure.

Riverland sent two linemen, Royce Kosik and Brian Glass, to help. When asked about their experience they said, "We worked around the North Augusta, South Carolina area. We came to help others in a time of need, it really brings satisfaction and happiness to be able to help those who really need it. We hope we can make a positive difference for



someone and that others would be willing to help us in hard times." When asked about members they said, "Everyone had very positive interactions with members. They welcomed us with open arms, gave us thank you notes, water, food, and a lot of handshakes." Riverland was very happy to be part of the 45 linemen from Wisconsin Electric Cooperatives working to help re-build Aiken Electric Cooperative in Aiken, South Carolina.

Through Cooperation Among Cooperatives, co-op members across the U.S. can be assured that their power will be restored faster with the help of cooperative neighbors.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to Jessica Rustad for getting the most votes for our September photo contest, "Best of Fall."



Second place: "Backpacking Porcupine Mountain in the Fall" by Sarah Pederson.



Third place: "Harvesting giant pumpkins in the Fall" by Cathy Ausen.

## SEASONAL REMINDERS



### Interruptible Heat Test November 20

This is a reminder that the 2024 Winter Preparedness Test for Interruptible Heat (Dual Fuel) Accounts is on Wednesday, November 20. If you use Riverland Energy's interruptible heating, your system will be tested on that day. This test makes sure your backup heating works and keeps your home comfortable during load control periods this winter. It also checks that the control equipment is working properly.

### Snowbirds

If you're planning to leave your home for an extended time this winter, remember to make billing arrangements while you are away. Riverland Energy has multiple options to pay your bill:

- Automatic checking/savings withdrawals or credit/debit card payments.
- Online Payments, readings, account management, and daily/monthly power use available through SmartHub on our website or download the SmartHub App.
- Prepaid billing allows you to control your budget well beyond what you can with monthly billing. 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 usage daily instead of waiting until the end of the month.

### Thanksgiving Closing

Riverland Energy will be closed November 28-29 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. You can report outages any time by calling 800-411-9115, texting 55050, or through SmartHub (online or through the app).

### 2024 Rebates


Riverland Energy offers rebates to members who buy energy-efficient products that meet certain standards. These rebates are available until the funds run out or until December 31, whichever comes first. You can get rebate forms at [www.riverlanenergy.com](http://www.riverlanenergy.com) or by calling 800-411-9115.

**Tim Holtan, CEO**

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



**Riverland Energy  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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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.

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