



Jerry Sorenson,  
General Manager

## ASK WILLIE

### “Avoided cost” value of solar power

I would like to thank everyone who attended our Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 27. We did not reach our quorum of 100 to approve bylaw changes or approve the 2020 Annual Meeting minutes, but we were able to give a business report and announce director elections. I hope to see you all next year.

At each annual meeting, Riverland Energy has Ask Willie forms available in which members can ask a question to the cooperative. Below is one we received following the meeting that I will do my best to answer.

**Why do you only pay solar customers a minimal amount for their excess kWh? Solar costs a big chunk of money upfront. You preach conservation and being “green”, but you aren’t helping the cause. Not asking you to pay what a kWh costs us like Xcel does, but somewhere in the middle would be fair.**

The Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (PURPA) requires utilities to purchase excess energy and



Riverland Energy  
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

capacity produced by qualifying facilities (wind turbine, solar array, etc.) at a rate equal to the utility’s full “avoided cost.”

The concept of “avoided cost” has been around for a while. The official definition has been around since 1978: *“The incremental cost of alternative electric energy is commonly referred to as the avoided cost and is generally defined as the “cost to an electric utility of electric energy or capacity or both which, but for the purchase from a qualifying renewable facility, such utility would generate itself or purchase from another non-renewable source.”*

The “avoided cost” value of solar power is lower than our average wholesale power cost. That is due to the natural intermittency of solar.

Dairyland Power Cooperative is Riverland Energy’s wholesale power supplier. Market price defines Dairyland Power’s avoided cost. Dairyland Power sells all of its generation into the market and then buys it all back. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), overseer for PURPA, has approved the use of avoided cost for the purchase of excess power from distributed generation (i.e. member-

Continued on page 18



**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 **May 17, 2021**, 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.




## CO-OP INVITES THIRD-GRADERS TO ENTER SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Calling all third-graders: Riverland Energy Cooperative and the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association are seeking entries for the 2021 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.

**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 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. The deadline is May 17, 2021.

Entry forms can be found on [riverlandenergy.com](http://riverlandenergy.com).



# A DIFFERENT LOOK FOR RIVERLAND ENERGY'S ANNUAL MEETING

## No rate increase announced at annual meeting; new director elected

It wasn't the usual gym-packed cooperative annual meeting this year. Riverland Energy held an in-person meeting, but with restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic still lingering. No pancake breakfast was held, masks were required, and social distancing was in place.

The meeting was held on Saturday, March 27, at the Arcadia High School in Arcadia. There were 84 registered members in attendance.

"In anticipation of streamlining the in-person meeting on March 27, we decided to cut back on the activities to minimize the number of bodies at the meeting so we could follow the CDC and county guidelines," said Riverland Energy General Manager Jerry Sorenson. "We streamed the meeting

live for those members that wanted to be involved but needed to be at home."

"Our reason for having an in-person meeting was to provide an opportunity to vote if members hadn't already voted online or by mail," added Sorenson. During this year's meeting, the co-op completed the election process by combining online, mail-in, and in-person votes.

Sorenson gave the business report, which included the financials, co-op operations activities and plans, and member services activities. Sorenson also announced that there will be no rate increase in 2021.

"While our operating costs continue to increase gradually from year to year, co-op staff and the board of directors have actively researched and utilized

methods to keep costs in check so we can hold the line on rates for our members," Sorenson commented. "While we are able to maintain rates right now, there is no guarantee rates will not have to be changed in the future."

A new director was elected at the annual meeting. Four districts were up for election this year. Cletus Foegen won a contested election over



Incumbent David Ernst in District 3. Incumbents Bryce Lisowski, District 2, was re-elected for one year; Dennis Frame, District 4, and David Paudler, District 8, all ran unopposed and were re-elected.

Reorganization immediately after the meeting saw David Paudler re-elected as president, while Dan Filla and Dennis Frame were re-elected as vice president and secretary-treasurer, respectively.



### EASY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

**SmartHub:** Access through [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com) or via the SmartHub app to pay online 24/7.

**Auto Bill Pay (ACH):** Deduct from your bank account. Sign up through SmartHub or call 800-411-9115.

**Pay Now:** Access at [www.riverlandenergy.com](http://www.riverlandenergy.com) to pay online 24/7.

**Automated Phone System:** Call 888-220-8233 to make a payment 24/7. For first-time users, select option #3 to create a PIN.

**Drop Box:** Drop off a payment at your convenience at one of our drop boxes outside of our offices in Holmen and Arcadia. Payments are picked up from the drop box each morning.

**In-person:** Our lobbies are open. You can make a payment in either of our offices between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

# RIVERLAND ENERGY COOPERATIVE

## APPLIANCE & ELECTRONICS RECYCLE DRIVE

Wednesday, May 12  
Arcadia REC  
N28988 State Rd 93  
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 13  
Alma REC  
1225 S. Main St.  
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Friday, May 14  
Holmen REC  
1800 Granary St.  
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

### ACCEPTED ITEMS - FREE

Cable Boxes (FREE)  
Cables & Cords (FREE)  
Cameras & Camcorders (FREE)  
Cassette Tapes (FREE)  
Cell Phones/PDAs & Chargers (FREE)  
Clocks (FREE)  
Coffee Makers (FREE)  
Desktop Computer Towers (FREE)  
Docking Stations (FREE)  
DVD/VHS/Blu-Ray Players (FREE)  
DVD Disks & VHS Tapes (FREE)  
External Drives (All types) (FREE)

Fans (FREE)  
Fax Machines (FREE)  
Hair Dryers (FREE)  
Holiday Lights (FREE)  
Ink & Toner Cartridges (FREE)  
Laptops (FREE)  
Land line Phones (FREE)  
Monitors (FREE)  
MP3 & iPod Players (FREE)  
Projectors (FREE)  
Radios (FREE)  
Satellite Dishes & Receivers (FREE)

Scanners (FREE)  
Servers (FREE)  
Stereos & Speakers (FREE)  
Toasters (FREE)  
UPS & Jump Starters (FREE)  
Vacuum Cleaners (FREE)  
Video Game Consoles (FREE)

### ACCEPTED ITEMS - FOR A FEE

Refrigerators (limit 2 per member)	* FREE (non-member pays \$15)
Freezers (limit 2 per member)	* FREE (non-member pays \$15)
Air Conditioners (limit 2 per member)	* FREE (non member pays \$15)
TV's- All Types (limit 3 per member)	\$20
Printers & Copiers	\$5
Microwaves	\$2
Humidifiers	\$2
Washers	\$5
Dryers	\$5
Dishwashers	\$5
Stoves	\$5
Furnaces	\$5
Water Heaters	\$5
Dehumidifiers	\$15

\* Refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners are only free to Riverland Energy members. All others will pay \$15. Bring a copy of your electric bill to qualify.

### ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED

Bulbs  
Capacitors  
Gas Cylinders  
Liquids  
Medical Waste  
Ballasts  
Radioactive Waste  
Smoke Detectors  
Vape Pens  
Treadmills

Recycling by:

Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations  
Onalaska, WI  
877-781-4030  
[www.dynamicrecycling.com](http://www.dynamicrecycling.com)



# HAVE A SUCCESSFUL PLANTING SEASON, ROOTED IN SAFETY

As farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, Riverland Energy Cooperative and Safe Electricity urge farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines.

- Always be aware of the location of power lines, and designate preplanned routes that avoid hazard areas.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors are equipped with radios and communications systems that have very tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators or raising truck beds near power lines, and never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Simply coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole, or truck. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs,

## KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU HIT A POWER POLE

**STAY PUT**

If your equipment contacts a power line, stay inside.

**DO NOT EXIT.**  
Call 911.

**JUMP CLEAR**

If you must exit due to a fire, jump from the equipment so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop or shuffle with your feet together at least 50 feet away.

**STAY AWAY**

When you are clear of the area, call for help and keep others away. **DO NOT** approach your vehicle again until utility crews and emergency responders tell you it is safe.

tires, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust, and dirt contamination.

- When guy wires (a grounded wire used to stabilize utility poles) are broken, these normally neutral wires can be anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Do not do it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, always call the electric utility.
- If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives.
- If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment before the power has been shut off.

For more electrical safety information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

## Ask Willie Continued from page 15

owned renewable generation). And, FERC has ruled that the wholesale power supplier’s avoided cost is the avoided cost for its member distribution cooperatives including Riverland Energy Cooperative. Furthermore, FERC has determined that avoided cost (market price) is fair.

As an electric cooperative, our rate policy strives to maintain fundamental cost fairness among all of our member-consumers as a form of consumer protection.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

**Jerry Sorenson, General Manager**

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.–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