

EAU CLAIRE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

Wisconsin

# ENERGY COOPERATIVE

MONTHLY SINCE 1940

DECEMBER 2007

News



'Tis the  
season  
to save.

**\$3** Instant  
Reward

per LED holiday  
light set

**\$2 additional  
reward from ECEC**

*Details on page 28*

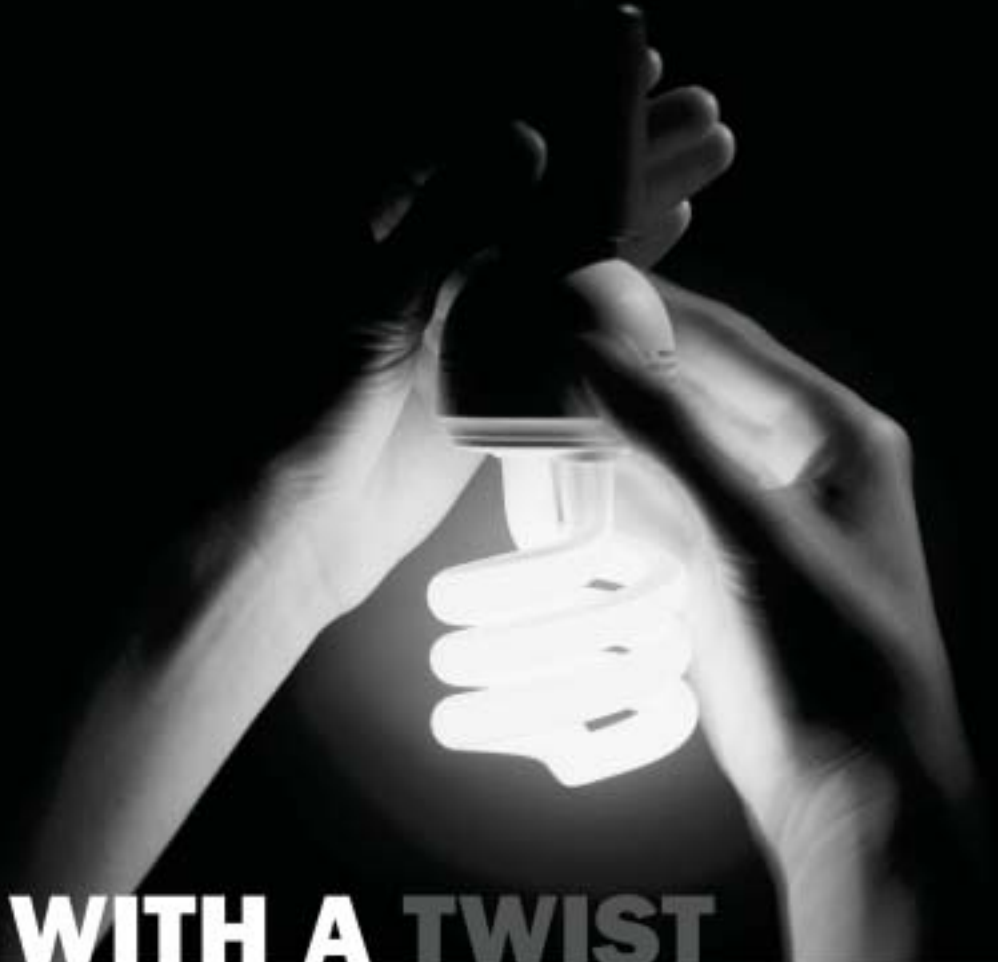
**Eau Claire Energy  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



**focus on energy™**

*The power is within you.*



# SAVINGS WITH A TWIST

**Make your next light an ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup>.** You typically spend more to light your home than you do to operate your refrigerator all year long. If you're still using standard bulbs and inefficient fixtures, you're wasting a lot of energy and money. Switching to energy efficient lighting can save you time, energy and money, and help protect the environment.

**ENERGY STAR qualified bulbs:**

- Use up to 75% less energy
- Last up to 10 times longer

By replacing the five most frequently used light bulbs in your home with ENERGY STAR qualified models, you can save about \$35 each year in energy costs.

**Make your next light an ENERGY STAR.  
\$2 Cash Rewards available.**

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PO Box 368 Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368  
715-832-1603 • 888-832-1604

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

For more information, contact  
Focus on Energy at **800.762.7077**,  
or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).



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Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Members,

Your Board of Directors has been evaluating numerous issues related to expected future electric rate increases. We have already experienced rate increases due to dramatic rail road rate increases for the shipment of coal. Some of the drivers of future electric rate increases include the addition of new generation, such as our share of the Weston 4 coal-fired plant near Wausau, with expected operation next year. Other increased costs are associated with mandated new environmental improvements which our power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative, is required to undertake at its existing power plants.

We are convinced that the resulting wholesale rate increases from investment in base load generation and environmental controls are justified. However, there are other probable rate increase issues being considered that concern us, with the most significant of those related to greenhouse gases and climate change. You have undoubtedly heard and read a lot about this in the media. We hope to help you move beyond the headlines to gain a better understanding of the potential impacts of this issue.

The major thrust of your Board's future involvement to ensure affordable and reliable electric service will be to focus on legislative activities at both state and national levels. Our affiliated national organization, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), has been very involved in these issues on our behalf. NRECA has conducted studies which show that the climate change regulations currently being proposed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions will significantly increase the cost of our electricity in the next decade, perhaps with little meaningful results.

Your Board takes the issue of climate change seriously and embraces the need for a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. However, we are not convinced that the standards being considered by some of our legislators are technologically achievable within the time frame being contemplated. Equally troublesome is the lack of discussion about the economic impact of implementing aggressive carbon reduction regulations. At this time, it appears that our legislators could adopt regulatory mandates that would potentially double your electric bill within the next 10 years! Proposals with such sweeping consequences must be evaluated in a logical and reasonable way.

We, as an electric cooperative organization — AND as individual member-owners, need to communicate our concerns to our elected representatives at the state and national levels. We must communicate the idea that our electric cooperative supports the concept of establishing criteria to reduce our greenhouse gas footprint, providing the goals are reasonably achievable and that the economic impact is studied and evaluated relative to affordability by all of our cooperative members. Many of you remember or have heard of "The day the lights came on." We do not want to create a new memory: "The day the lights went out," due to unaffordable rates for many of our members.

Your Board of Directors is preparing plans to positively influence the anticipated legislative mandates that are likely to increase our electric rates. It is our intent to keep you informed and to get you involved! We hope to do this by generating a "grass root" effort to advise our state and national legislators of our concerns about affordable electric service for all of our members. We hope that you will join us in this effort. You may contact John Luehrsen, CEO, or Mary Kay Brevig, Manager - Communications and Public Relations, at 715-832-1603 or 888-832-1604, toll free.

Thank you.

Your Cooperative's Board of Directors

# Interested in Serving as a Director?

Cooperative members electing their own directors is just one part of the democratic process at Eau Claire Energy Cooperative. As a member of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, you also have the opportunity to serve on our Board of Directors.

If you live in one of the districts listed below and would like an opportunity to be considered for a director position, please fill in the printed request form below or register online at [www.ecec.com](http://www.ecec.com). Make sure we receive your request in our office no later than December 10, 2007.

In 2008 your cooperative has three board positions up for election. These board members have the option to run again for their positions:

**District No. 1: Jerry R. Graham**

Includes: Seymour township in Eau Claire County; Hallie and Lafayette townships in Chippewa County, except service area in District 2

**District No. 5: John R. Bilderback**

Includes Brunswick and Drammen townships in Eau Claire County; Rock Creek township in Dunn County; Albany township in Pepin County; Naples township in Buffalo County, except service area in District 2

**District No. 8: Jeffrey Frieberg**

Includes Clear Creek and Otter Creek townships in Eau Claire County; Sumner and Unity townships in Trempealeau County.

**December 10, 2007**

**Candidate Registration Deadline**

Return the candidate request form below to Eau Claire Energy Cooperative by December 10, 2007.

Once we receive your request, we will send you a director information packet to review. All inquiries will remain confidential. The nominating committee will meet in January 2008 to review and select the final slate of candidates. If you have any questions, please contact ECEC at 715-832-1603 or toll free at 888-832-1604, extension 245.

**March 18, 2008 Annual Meeting**

Members will have the opportunity to vote via absentee ballot or at the annual meeting on March 18, 2008, at the Plaza Hotel & Suites on Clairemont Avenue in Eau Claire. ■



**Green Ideas Lego Team Wins Top Honors!**

*It's all about conserving energy. A group of young people that call themselves "The Green Ideas" took the Champion's Award November 10 at the First Lego League Regional Tournament at UW-Stout Lego Team competition at UW-Stout in Menomonie. Competing against 21 other teams from Northwestern Wisconsin, the Green Ideas Lego Team earned 100 out of 100 points for creative presentation, research quality, innovative solution, and project impact for their energy audit of a rural Eau Claire Energy Cooperative member business. The Green Ideas also built a robot using the Lego Education Mindstorms NXT computer program and Lego set. The teams are required to design their robots to complete Lego energy model challenge missions. The Green Ideas Team moves on to the State Tournament in Appleton December 9. The team is sponsored by Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, Lowes Creek Tree Farm, Minnesota Wire and Cable of Eau Claire, and Eau Claire Medical Clinic. Watch for the January issue of the WEC News magazine to read more about The Green Ideas! Pictured above, back row, left to right: Leilah Kidess, Aissa Kidess, Sydney D'Huyvetter. Front row: Nick Sperry, Lars Olson, Alex Gehrke.*

**Director Candidate Request Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this form to Eau Claire Energy Cooperative by December 10, 2007.*

**'Tis the season to save.**



**\$3 Instant Reward**  
*per light set*

**Holiday lights that use light emitting diode (LED) technology:**

- Use approximately 90% less energy than standard incandescent holiday lights
- Feature up to 20-year life
- Produce almost no heat
- No glass bulbs to break or replace

**Promotion begins October 15, 2007**

Visit a participating Ace Hardware, Mendrds, Mills Fleet Farm and True Value retailer. Customers of some cooperative or municipal utilities may not be eligible. Promotion ends 12/31/07. Limit twelve (12) light sets per customer. Some restrictions may apply. RES-30920807

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800.762.7077 [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com)

## **Additional \$2 LED Holiday Lights Cash Reward!**

In addition to the \$3 Instant Reward for each set of LED holiday lights, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is offering an additional \$2 cash reward for its electric co-op members!

### **How do I receive my additional \$2 Rewards?**

After you receive your \$3 Instant Reward at the qualifying retailer, fill in the Reward Form that was mailed with your energy bill or you can find it at [www.ecec.com](http://www.ecec.com). Bring or mail that Reward Form with your receipt and the UPC codes from the qualifying LED holiday light containers to Eau Claire Energy Cooperative. A check will be mailed to you for the rewards.

Limit 12 light sets per member. You must submit your qualifying receipts to Eau Claire Energy Cooperative by December 31, 2007.

## New Automated Meters to be Installed

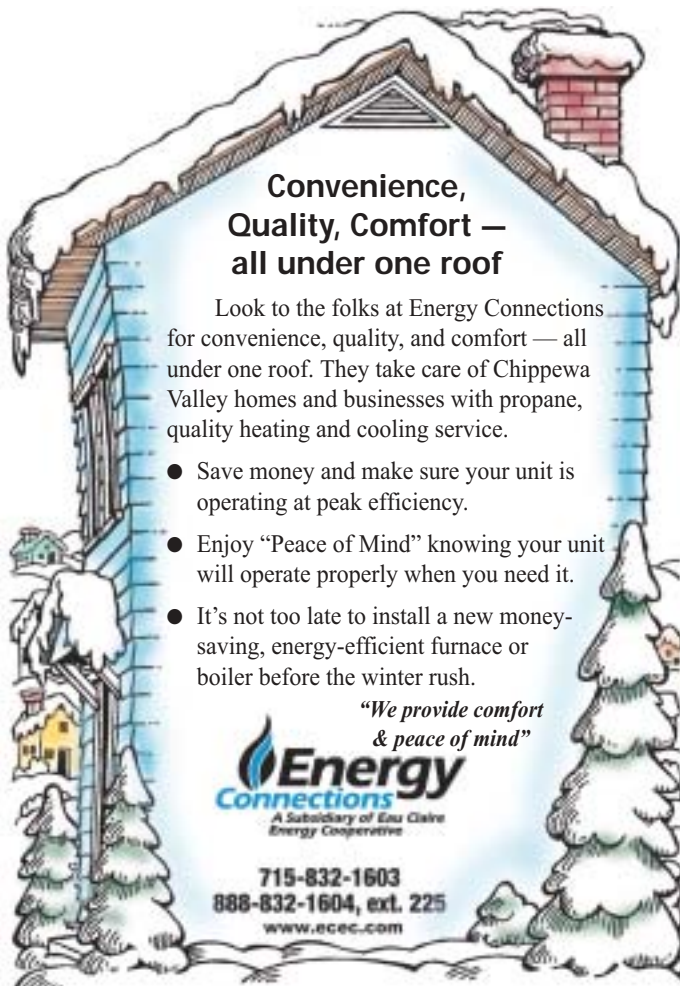
Beginning on Monday, November 26, new electric digital AMR (Automatic Meter Reading) meters will be installed at 642 cooperative member homes, farms, and businesses served by Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's Drammen Substation. The new electric meters are being installed by Chapman Metering, LLC from Avoca, Iowa. Please be aware that their employees are authorized to disconnect the current meters and install the new meters. Letters have already been mailed to all Eau Claire Energy Cooperative members included in this part of the project. Watch the *WEC News* and our web site for more updates as we install new AMR meters at all of our member homes, farms, and businesses over the next year. ■

## Save Energy and Money This Holiday

When members get their power bill in January, they often ask why their usage increased so much. They often forget the bill they receive in January reflects December usage. It is easy to forget all the entertaining and additional cooking and baking that's done in December during reduced daylight hours, as well as all the holiday lights that are on for hours at a time. But there are ways to celebrate the holidays while still saving energy.

### Holiday Energy-Saving Tips

- Purchase energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights, which use approximately 90 percent less energy than standard incandescent holiday lights and can last up to 20 years. Over a 30-day period, lighting 500 LED lights cost only 24 cents.
- Run your lights on a timer preset for three to five hours.
- Icicle lights have more lights per linear foot than regular light strands and use more energy. Instead, use mirrors or tinsel around indoor lights to heighten their effect.
- Turn lights off when no one is around to enjoy them.
- Use your microwave as much as possible when cooking holiday meals. It uses up to 75 percent less energy than a conventional oven. A slow cooker can cook a whole meal for less than 10 cents worth of electricity. ■



**Convenience,  
Quality, Comfort —  
all under one roof**

Look to the folks at Energy Connections for convenience, quality, and comfort — all under one roof. They take care of Chippewa Valley homes and businesses with propane, quality heating and cooling service.

- Save money and make sure your unit is operating at peak efficiency.
- Enjoy "Peace of Mind" knowing your unit will operate properly when you need it.
- It's not too late to install a new money-saving, energy-efficient furnace or boiler before the winter rush.

*"We provide comfort & peace of mind"*

**Energy Connections**  
A Subsidiary of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

715-832-1603  
888-832-1604, ext. 225  
www.eccec.com

### Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

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Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368

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**Non-emergencies:** 715-832-1603

Toll FREE 888-832-1604

**Emergencies & outages:** Toll FREE 800-927-5090

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**Diggers Hotline:** 1-800-242-8511

Call 3 working days before you dig.

**Eau Claire Energy  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



We've helped **businesses** across the state save energy and money each year.

## Now it's your turn.

### Announcing Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's new partnership with Focus on Energy.

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy program, is now working with Eau Claire Energy Cooperative. Together, we can help you save energy and manage your energy bills.

Check with Focus on Energy before you buy new appliances, heating or cooling systems, light fixtures and bulbs, or equipment for your farm or business. If you make energy efficient choices, you can earn financial incentives when you purchase qualified equipment.

We can answer your questions and tell you about smart energy efficiency and renewable energy options. Call us at 800.762.7077 – our energy experts are here for you.

Last year, Focus on Energy helped more than 240,000 customers across Wisconsin save energy. It's time to put your name on this list.

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