


# EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY:

## Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Returns over \$882,000 to Members During Co-op Month!

**Eau Claire Energy Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

**E**au Claire Energy Cooperative is more than just an electric utility—it is a cooperative. We are focused on our members and prioritize the needs and interests of our membership above all else. One way we demonstrate this commitment is by returning capital credits to members each year during cooperative month.

October is Co-op Month! We are here to celebrate you! This year, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative will return over \$882,000 to more than 15,000 members. In fact, ECEC has returned over \$21 million to our members since our inception in 1938. Capital credits are a unique benefit of your cooperative membership. Keep an eye out on your October bill for your bill credit!

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### What Are Capital Credits?

Capital credits are a unique financial benefit of being a member of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative. As you pay your monthly electric bills, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative uses funds to grow, operate, and maintain a safe and reliable electrical system. Any money received over and above the cost of doing business is called margins. Your portion of the margins is then returned to you in the form of capital credits. They represent your ownership stake in the cooperative. When you become a member and pay your electric bill, you are essentially investing in the cooperative. These investments, or capital credits, are allocated to members annually based on their usage of electricity and the cooperative's financial performance. Being a member of ECEC means these credits go back to you, our members, instead of to a group of shareholders. That is the cooperative difference!

#### Why Are Capital Credits Important?

**Community Ownership:** Unlike investor-owned utilities, cooperatives are owned and operated by the people they serve—the members. Capital credits reflect this ownership, giving members a say in how the board of directors is elected. This democratic structure ensures that decisions made by the cooperative align with the community's needs and values.

**Stability and Affordability:** By retaining and reinvesting

capital credits, cooperatives can maintain and upgrade their infrastructure, which, in turn, helps keep electricity rates stable and affordable for members. This also allows for more maintenance, meaning less outage time as well as more technology and communication for members.

#### How do I earn capital credits?

You earn capital credits by being a member of an electric cooperative and paying your electric bills. The amount you earn is typically based on the amount of electricity you use and the cooperative's financial performance for that year.

#### When will I receive my capital credits?

Each year, capital credits are applied annually as a credit to your billing due in October. To view how much you got back in capital credits, view the upper right corner of your October bill. You can view your bill in your SmartHub account by visiting [https://www.ecec.com/my\\_account/smarthub#smarthub\\_login](https://www.ecec.com/my_account/smarthub#smarthub_login).

#### Can I get my capital credits paid out?

Capital credits use a revolving system where the money is returned to you over time. This helps the cooperative maintain financial stability, which allows for reliability and affordability for all members. Members will receive an annual capital credit retirement applied as a bill credit in October of each year.

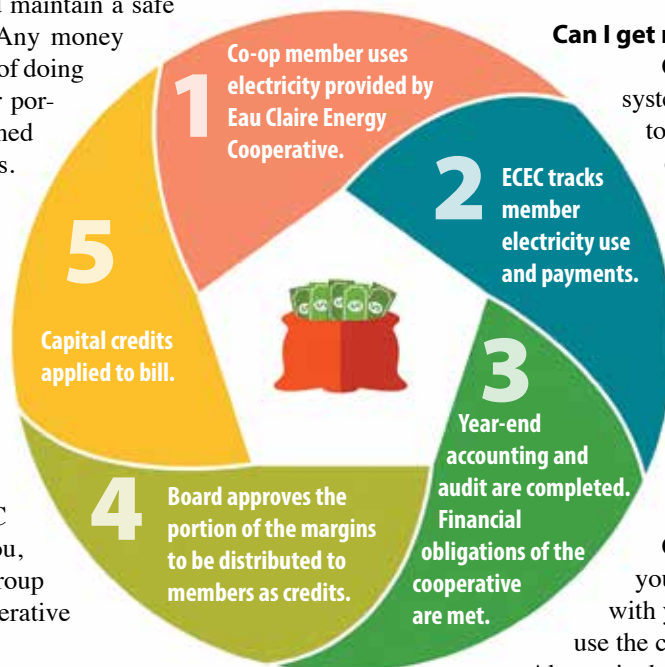
#### What happens to my capital credits if I move or no longer use the cooperative's electrical services?

Capital credits are associated with you and your membership and stay with you even if you move or no longer use the cooperative's electrical services.

Alternatively, you will receive your capital credits as checks until your funds are all retired. This is why it is important to keep your forwarding address up to date with ECEC, even after you move out of ECEC service territory.

#### Are capital credits taxable?

It's advisable to consult a tax professional for guidance on reporting capital credit refunds on your income tax returns.



# HOW TO JOIN ECEC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**1** Review Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's Bylaws



**2** Look for an open seat in your board district



**3** Take steps to get your name on the ballot



**4** Promote your campaign



**5** Members vote at the annual meeting



**4** Promote your campaign

## DISTRICTS UP FOR ELECTION IN 2024

### District 2

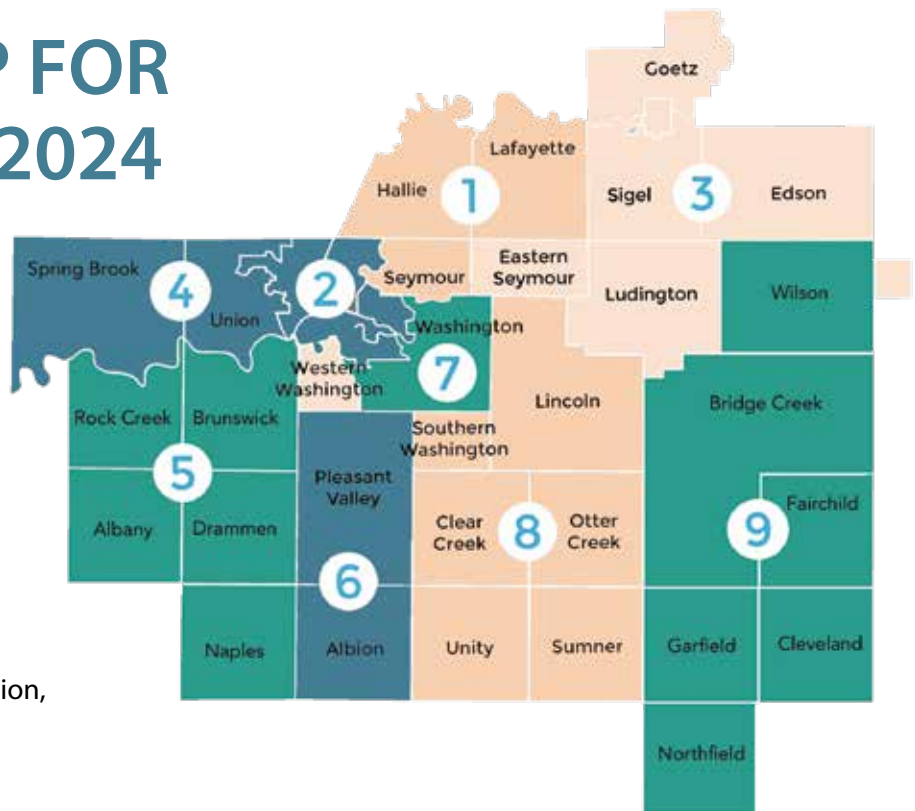
All Service Areas of the cooperative within the City of Eau Claire and the City of Altoona.

### District 4

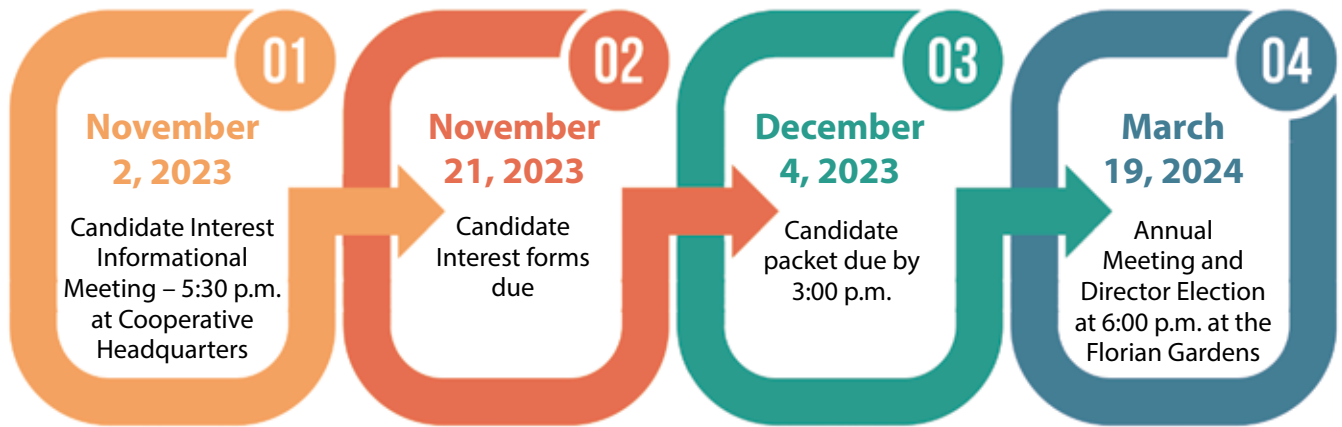
Washington West of South Lowes Creek Road and Union, Eau Claire County; Spring Brook, Dunn County, except land in District 2

### District 6

Pleasant Valley, Eau Claire County; Albion, Trempealeau County



# TIMELINE TO 2024 DIRECTOR ELECTION



## INTERESTED?

If you are a member of district 2, 4 or 6, and would like to be considered by the Nominating Committee for the 2024 Director Election, please fill in the information to your right and return it to ECEC or complete the registration form online by November 21, 2023.

Once we receive your request, we will send you a director information packet for you to review and complete. All inquiries will remain confidential. A member of the Nominating Committee will contact you to discuss your interest in becoming a candidate. This committee will meet to review and select the final slate of candidates.

Interested candidates will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about what it means to be an ECEC director at the Informational Meeting on November 2. ECEC staff and directors (who are not currently up for re-election) will be available to provide insight and answer questions. If you have any questions, please contact Jeni Thorpe at 715-836-6461.

**YES**, I am interested in becoming a candidate for the Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Board of Directors 2024 election.

(Please print information below.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Member Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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


Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this Candidate Interest form to be received at Eau Claire Energy Cooperative by November 21, 2023:**

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative  
Attn. Jeni Thorpe  
PO Box 368  
Fall Creek, WI 54742

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# SAVE THE DATE


## MEMBER APPRECIATION CELEBRATION

In celebration of Cooperative Month, join us for a sweet treat at ECEC headquarters at 8214 US Hwy 12 Fall Creek, WI 54742 for a member appreciation celebration! We are celebrating YOU, our amazing members with an afternoon full of coffee, pie, and ice cream. This event is our way of saying thank you for being a part of the cooperative! Join us on October 7 from 1-4 p.m. for heaps of fun and loads of pie and ice cream.

FREE ice cream spade for the first 150 members in attendance!



### **Eau Claire Energy Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

**Monica Obrycki, President and CEO**

**Taylor Skibba, Marketing and Communications Coordinator**

8214 Hwy 12, P.O. Box 368, Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368  
[www.ecec.com](http://www.ecec.com)   

**Lobby Hours:** 7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Monday–Thursday;  
7:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Friday

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

**Emergencies & outages:** Toll FREE 800-927-5090  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**Diggers Hotline:** 811 or 1-800-242-8511  
Call 3 working days before you dig.