

**Eau Claire Energy
Cooperative**Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

At Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the member-owners we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety year-round. We took the opportunity to talk with Alex, a journeyman lineman, about what he thinks are some of the most important safety topics.

Q: As a lineworker, what are some key safety measures you take while working around electricity?

A: Safety is extremely important in our line of work. We always assume that every line is energized until proven otherwise. This means we use proper personal protective equipment (PPE) such as insulated gloves, safety glasses, and flame-resistant clothing. We also undergo extensive training on how to work safely around electricity and how to respond in emergency situations.

Q: What are some common mistakes members make around electricity, and how can they avoid them?

A: One common mistake is not respecting the power of electricity. Members should never attempt to work on electrical equipment themselves. Always hire a qualified electrician for any repairs or installations. Additionally, members should never ignore warning signs of electrical issues such as flickering lights or sparking outlets.

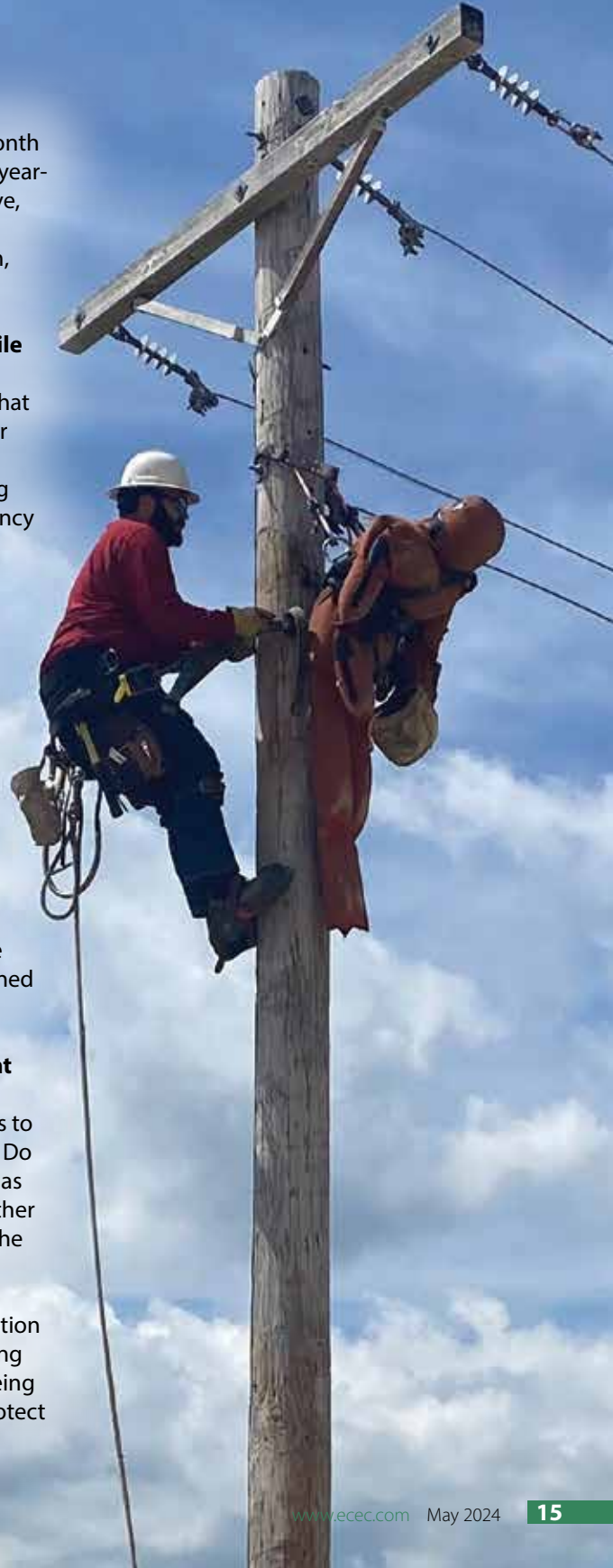
Q: What should I do if I encounter a downed power line?

A: If you encounter a downed power line, always assume it is energized and extremely dangerous. Keep a safe distance of at least 30 feet away and warn others to stay back as well. Do not attempt to touch or move the power line, and never drive over it. Instead, call 911 and the power provider immediately to report the downed line and wait for trained professionals to handle the situation safely.

Q: What should someone do if they are involved in a vehicle accident involving power lines?

A: The most important thing is to stay inside the vehicle and warn others to stay away. If possible, call 911 and the power provider's emergency line. Do not attempt to exit the vehicle unless there is an immediate threat such as fire, in which case, exit by jumping from the vehicle with both feet together and hopping away. Wait for trained professionals to safely de-energize the lines and provide assistance.

Electrical safety is a shared responsibility that requires vigilance and caution from both lineworkers and members alike. By being cautious and heeding the advice of professionals, we can mitigate risks and ensure the well-being of our communities. Together, we can create safer environments and protect against the dangers posed by electricity.



WHAT IS DEMAND?

In today's world, the cost of energy is determined not just by how much energy is ultimately used, but by when we use it. Demand and consumption are two distinct components that play an important role in keeping the lights on, delivering energy when we want it, and determining how much we pay for it. These components are defined as follows:

- **Demand** is the maximum amount of electrical power required at any one given time.
- **Consumption** is the amount of electricity a member uses over a period of time.

What is your demand?

The amount of electricity you

consume in a month is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), while "demand" is measured in kilowatts (kW). The maximum demand is the highest energy used in a 15-minute period over a month. That means the 15-minute interval that your business or residence is consuming (or "demanding") the most electricity, in a given month, establishes your demand for the month. This structure aligns with how the co-op is charged from our power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative.

Members can find their monthly demand by reading under the usage tab in SmartHub. Currently there is no charge associated with the demand component on residential rates. However, 34% of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's total cost are attributable

Shifting energy use away from peak times saves the cooperative money on demand charges and as a not-for-profit cooperative, those savings help keep your rates stable.

to the demand portion of the wholesale power cost. The more members are able to limit their peak demand, the lower costs to the cooperative will be.

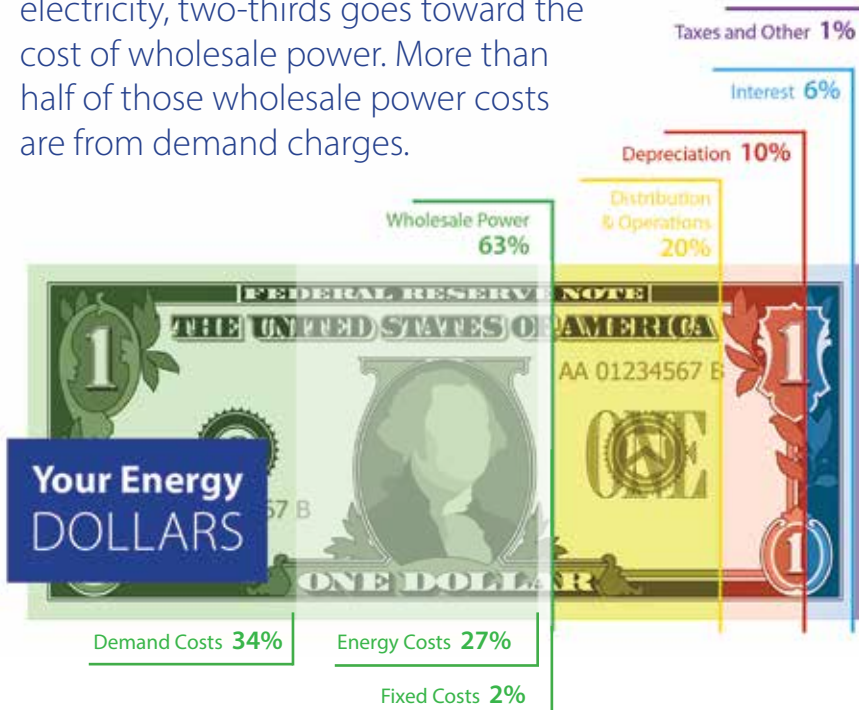
How can you avoid high peaks?

On very hot or very cold days, the demand on the system gets high, sometimes reaching very close to the available capacity limit. If at some point demand exceeds available capacity, a brownout/blackout can happen. Members may hear radio announcements, receive text or email alerts, or see posts on our social media pages stating we are experiencing a peak (demand) alert. This is typically during the afternoon/evening, from 2 to 7 p.m., when families return home from work or school, cook dinner, and use appliances the most. You can help reduce these alerts by spreading out your electric load and staggering the use of appliances across the day, avoiding the peak hours whenever possible. This helps balance capacity and demand.

How does demand affect residential energy rates?

At the utility level, we are charged for both energy usage and demand. It is important to understand that demand isn't necessarily about how much

For every dollar you spend on electricity, two-thirds goes toward the cost of wholesale power. More than half of those wholesale power costs are from demand charges.



energy you use, but how and when you use it over the course of a month. Shifting energy use away from peak times saves the cooperative money on demand charges and as a not-for-profit cooperative, those savings help keep your rates stable.

Another way to help keep costs as low as possible is by participating in

the load management program. This voluntary program helps us reduce the amount of demand on the system during peak hours by utilizing a load control device. The load control device, often connected to electric heat and water heaters, receives a signal from Dairyland when there is a need to lower energy consumption. Items connected to this

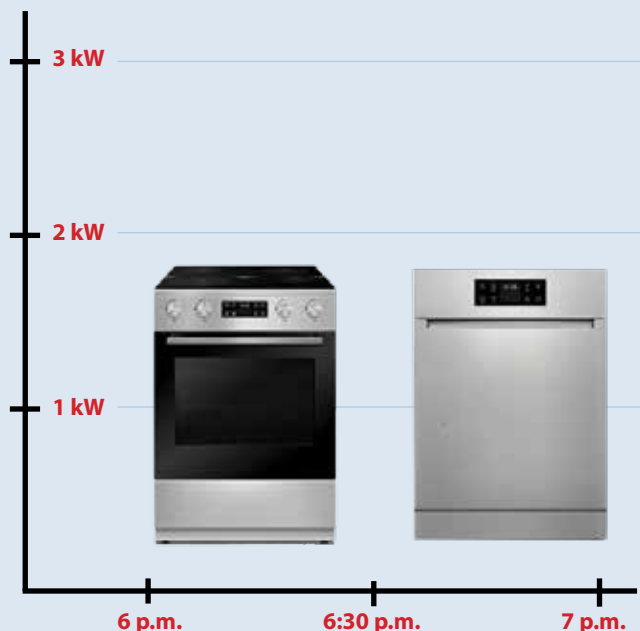
device will have their power turned off for a few hours during these peak periods.

As we continue to face the challenges of growing energy needs, it becomes increasingly important to find innovative solutions that balance the demand for electricity with environmental sustainability.

Using multiple electric appliances at the same time increases the demand for electricity on the grid and, therefore, increases the cost of wholesale power for everyone.



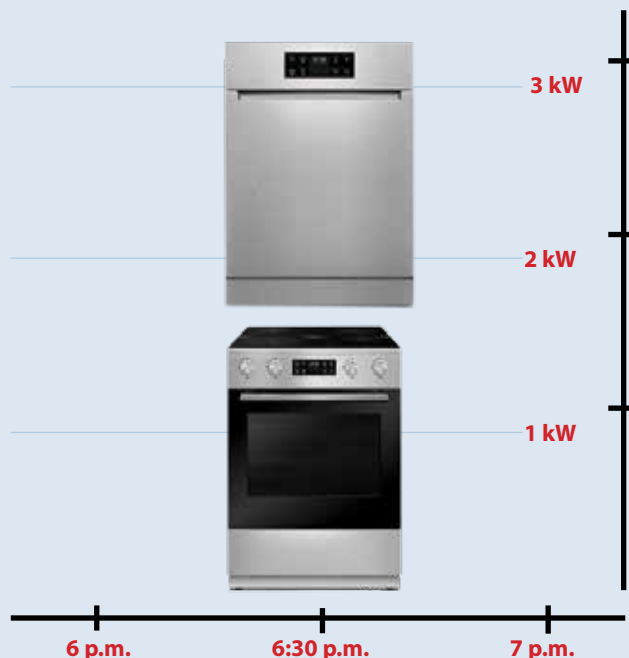
Jane cooks her food for one hour and runs her dishwasher for an hour afterward.



Jane
Energy: 3.3 kWh
Demand: 1.8 kW



John runs his dishwasher at the same time he's cooking his food.



John
Energy: 3.3 kWh
Demand: 3.3 kW

Average Appliance Use (60-minute run time)
Range: 1,500 Watts = 1.5 kW/1.5 kW
Dishwasher: 1,800 Watts = 1.8 kW/1.8 kW

87th ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN MARCH

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative held its 87th Annual Meeting, drawing over 250 members to the Florian Gardens. It was an event filled with insights and updates, highlighting the cooperative's commitment to its members and the future of energy.

The meeting began with a warm welcome from Board Chair Andrew Bourget and Eau Claire Energy President and CEO Monica Obrycki. They introduced esteemed guests, including ECEC's Youth Ambassadors and the Member Advisory Council. Following, they celebrated the 15 Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Federated Youth Foundation scholarship winners, each receiving \$1,000 to support their education—a testament to the cooperative's investment in the community's future leaders. Particularly noteworthy was the recognition of the Pocerlich family, recipients of the 8th annual Concern for Community Award, acknowledging their enduring dedication to community service.

The keynote speaker, Dairyland Power Cooperative CEO Brent Ridge, took center stage, addressing the crucial topic of reliability in the evolving landscape of clean energy. Ridge emphasized the importance of striking a balance between renewable energy integration and maintaining a reliable power supply, especially during

challenging weather conditions like extreme cold or heat. He highlighted the significant role of traditional energy sources like coal, nuclear, and natural gas in safeguarding reliability during these demanding circumstances.

Ridge provided updates on key projects like the Nemadji Trail Energy Center and the Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line, essential endeavors aimed at reducing emissions, lowering costs, and enhancing grid stability. Despite facing legal hurdles, these projects remain vital for connecting renewable energy sources to the grid—a crucial step towards a more sustainable future.



Michael Golat



Judi Anibas



Frank Neibauer

In the board elections, incumbents Michael Golat, Judi Anibas, and Frank Neibauer secured another term by acclamation, highlighting the trust members have in their leadership. The meeting also featured an engaging Q&A session where members had the opportunity to inquire about various topics ranging from nuclear energy to infrastructure security.

As Eau Claire Energy Cooperative continues to navigate the ever-changing energy landscape, one thing remains constant—their unwavering commitment to reliability, sustainability, and serving the needs of their members.

Each year, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative provides a few lucky members in attendance at the cooperative's annual meeting a chance to win \$100. This year, ten lucky members were selected by drawing to win. Congratulations to Avery Burton Jr., Melvin Flanders, Dennis Scheuermann, Audrey Roecker, Karen Lind, Gavin McCann, Tobie Matherne, Gary Hetchler, Regina Mauer, and Nora Camlek!

On March 27, the board convened for its organizational meeting, electing officers to steer ECEC's strategic direction. Andrew Bourget continued in the role of chair, supported by Thomas Schwartz as vice chair and Frank Neibauer as secretary-treasurer, reflecting a collective commitment to effective governance.



Andrew Bourget, Chair



Thomas Schwartz, Vice Chair



Frank Neibauer, Secretary-Treasurer





Clockwise, starting above left: Director Judi Anibas visits with members before meeting; Board Chair Andrew Bourget with members of the Pocernich family, who received the 8th annual Concern for Community award; members of all ages had fun with the photo booth; President and CEO Monica Obrycki visits with members; ten lucky members went home with a \$100 bill when their names were drawn for the attendance prize.



Mark your calendars for the 88th Annual Meeting, scheduled for March 18, 2025, at The Florian Gardens in Eau Claire.



CONGRATULATIONS

2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Each year, Eau Claire Energy awards scholarships to member-students through the Federated Youth Foundation scholarship program. This year, ECEC awarded fifteen \$1,000 scholarships! To apply for a scholarship from Eau Claire Energy Cooperative in the future, watch this magazine, our website, and our social media posts for further information. Typically, the cooperative opens scholarship opportunities in the fall of each year.



Abigail Turk
Altoona
High School

Winona State
University
Special Education



Spencer Pilgrim
Augusta
High School

Chippewa Valley
Technical College
Welding



Logan Matherne
Cadott
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Stevens Point
Chemical Engineering
and Paper Science
Engineering



Emma Brown
Eleva-Strum
High School

Chippewa Valley
Technical College
Diagnostic Medical
Sonography



Marley King
Elk Mound
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Madison
Economics or Business
Finance



Jacob Wathke
Fall Creek
High School

University of Wisconsin
– Eau Claire, Stout,
Platteville, or Stevens
Point



Bryce Sydow
Immanuel Lutheran
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire
Pre-Engineering



Noah Felix
Eau Claire Memorial
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire
Environmental Science
and Spanish



Owen Rozenboom
Eau Claire North
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Madison
Mechanical Engineering



Brooklyn Bauer
Mondovi
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Madison, or University of
Minnesota-Duluth
Marketing



Addi Koxlien
Osseo-Fairchild
High School

University of Wisconsin-
Madison
Paralegal



Mark Mauer
Regis High School

Chippewa Valley
Technical College
Architectural Structural
Design



Breana Smith
Stanley-Boyd
High School

University of Wisconsin-
La Crosse
Biology



Jordyn Miles

Chippewa Valley
Technical College
Nursing



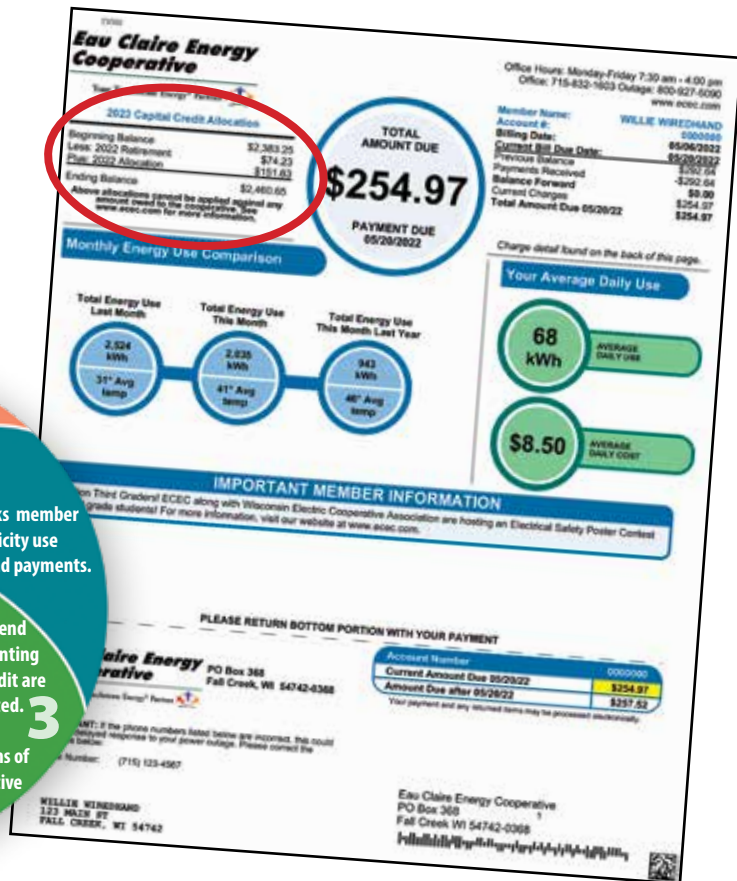
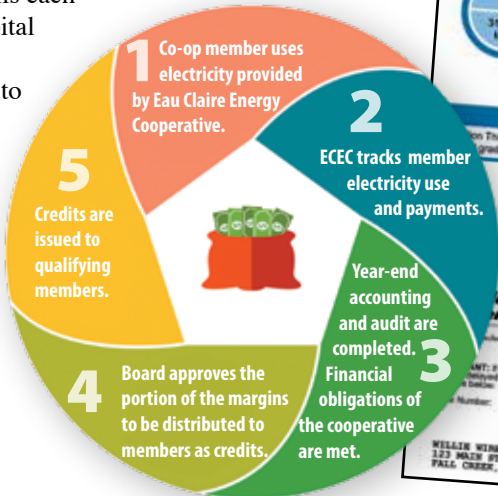
Brady Dehnke

University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire
Social Work

2023 CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION NOTICES ON MAY BILLS

Each year, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative allocates capital credits to its member-owners based on usage the prior year. The 2023 allocation notice will be printed on the May 2024 bill. The notice details each member-owner's total capital credit balance including 2023's retirement applied to the October 2023 bill and 2023's allocation.

The 2023 allocation notice will be printed in the top left corner of page 1 of your billing statement. If you receive paperless statements, you can view your bill by logging into your SmartHub account either in the app or on our website.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

UW Stout | July 16-18, 2024

Attend Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) to learn the purpose, operation, and scope of cooperative businesses. This dynamic three-day event is a unique opportunity for cooperative students to develop their leadership skills and network with other students from across the state.

Who should apply?

High school students with parents or guardians who are members of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

What does it cost?

All registration costs for ECEC students are covered by the

How do I sign up?

Click on Community tab at www.ecec.com to register. **Deadline is June 14, 2024.**

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Monica Obrycki, President and CEO

Taylor Skibba, Marketing and Communications Coordinator

ECEC will be closed May 27 for Memorial Day

8214 Hwy 12, P.O. Box 368, Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368

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.