

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* June 2026 NEWS

***Eau Claire Energy
Cooperative***

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

SAVOR JUNE'S DAIRY DAYS

SHINE ON

**LOW- TO NO-COST WAYS
TO SAVE ENERGY**

**PROTECTING YOUR POWER AND
YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION**





PROTECTING YOUR POWER AND YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

By Monica Obrycki, President and CEO

Every day, you trust Eau Claire Energy Cooperative to deliver reliable electricity to your home. But that trust goes beyond keeping the lights on. It also includes protecting the personal and financial information you share with us. In today's world, scams and cyber threats are becoming more common. It is more important than ever to safeguard both our electric system and our members' data.

Protecting the information our members share with us is a responsibility we take seriously. Whether you are setting up service, paying your bill, or contacting our office, your information is handled through secure systems designed to keep it safe. Access to member information is limited to only those who need it, and we continually review our processes to make sure we are meeting current security standards. As technology evolves, so do the methods used to protect it, and we are dedicated to continuously strengthening our security practices.

Scams targeting utility members have become more common and more convincing. These scams often come in the form of phone calls, emails, or text messages that appear to be from a trusted source. A common tactic is to claim that your account is past due and that service will be disconnected if immediate payment is not made.

These messages are designed to create urgency and pressure you into acting quickly without stopping to verify the information.

It is important to know that Eau Claire Energy Cooperative will never take payment information over the phone or threaten disconnection without proper notice. We will also never require payments with a Green Dot card or a wire transfer. If you are ever unsure whether a claim is legitimate, hang up and call us back directly. Scammers have become increasingly sophisticated and may spoof our phone number to make it look like we are the ones calling. Contacting ECEC directly using the phone number or website listed on your bill is always the best way to ensure your information stays out of a scammer's hands. Taking a moment to verify can prevent a costly mistake.

There are simple steps you can take to protect yourself. Be cautious about sharing personal or account information, especially if you're contacted unexpectedly. Use strong passwords for your online accounts and avoid reusing the same password across multiple sites. If available, take advantage of additional security features that add an extra layer of protection, such as two-factor authentication. SmartHub has this capability. Keeping an eye on your account activity and reporting anything unusual right away can also help stop

potential issues early.

Protecting member information is critical, and we are equally focused on keeping the system that delivers your power secure and reliable. The electric grid relies on a combination of physical infrastructure and advanced technology, and both require strong protection. We take steps to secure facilities and equipment, monitor for unusual activity, and reduce vulnerabilities across our system. This includes both physical safeguards and cybersecurity practices that help defend against evolving threats.

The same technology that allows us to operate more efficiently and respond quickly to outages also requires careful oversight. We use a layered approach to cybersecurity, including system monitoring, secure network practices, and regular updates. Our employees work to recognize potential risks and respond appropriately, because maintaining a secure system depends on both technology and people.

At Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, protecting our members means just as much as delivering electricity. It means safeguarding the information you trust us with and maintaining a secure, reliable system. Security is a shared responsibility, and by staying informed and aware, we can work together to keep both power and personal information protected.

UNDERSTANDING DEMAND, LOAD MANAGEMENT, AND THE SUMMER SHIFT

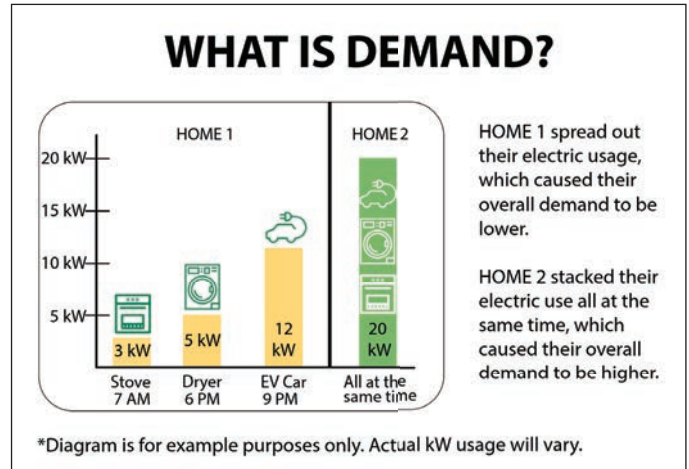
Electricity works a lot like water flowing through a hose that serves an entire neighborhood. On a normal day, the flow is steady and manageable. There's enough pressure to meet everyone's needs as they come. But when many people all start using water at the same time, watering lawns, running dishwashers, doing laundry, taking showers, the demand for that water suddenly increases. The pressure has to rise quickly to keep up.

The electric grid is comparable. Instead of water, it manages electric demand, the amount of electricity being used at any given moment. When a lot of homes and businesses use electricity at the same time, demand peaks. Meeting the energy needs of that surge isn't always possible with available generation alone, which can require purchasing higher-cost power. Because electricity must be generated and delivered as it's used, the system is constantly balancing supply and demand to maintain reliable service.

One of the most predictable spikes in demand happens in the evening when people return home from work and school. Lights turn on, heating or cooling systems adjust, and multiple appliances begin running within a short window. It's not just how much electricity is used, but how much is used at the same time that creates these peaks.

At Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, all of our power is purchased through our wholesale provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC). DPC plans generation based on when its member cooperatives need power, but when demand across the broader system is higher than expected, additional energy may be purchased through the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) market. Managing demand during peak times helps reduce the need for those higher-cost purchases.

One of the tools ECEC and other co-ops use to help manage demand is our load management program. This program allows certain electric loads in participating homes and businesses to



be temporarily controlled during high-demand periods. When all load management devices are controlled, it is called a peak alert.

During a peak alert, selected devices such as electric water heaters, air conditioners, dairy water heaters, and electric heat (in winter months) may be temporarily cycled or controlled. These short, targeted adjustments help reduce strain on the system during the most critical times. Similar to how reducing water flow to certain areas during high usage helps maintain pressure for everyone else on the system.

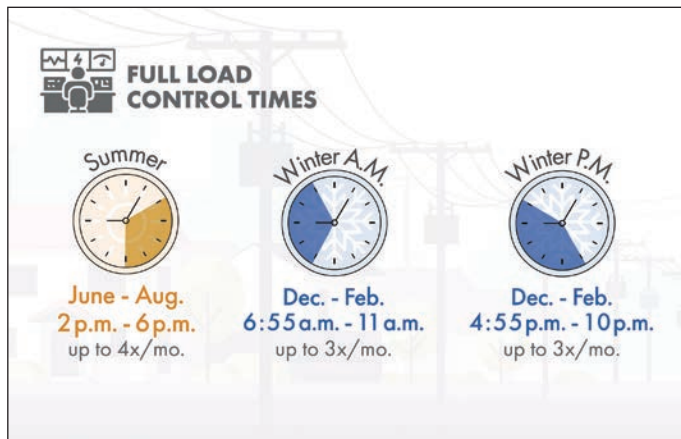
Peak alerts are called by DPC. They are usually during extreme weather conditions like hot summer afternoons or very cold winter mornings, when electricity use is expected to be at its highest. They may also be triggered by conditions elsewhere within MISO's service area. In rare cases, broader grid conditions may require additional steps beyond peak alerts, highlighting how closely supply and demand must be constantly balanced to maintain reliability.

During the summer months, members can also participate in the Summer Shift by consciously making an effort to reduce demand during peak hours, typically between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Small adjustments can make a meaningful difference. Running dishwashers, washers, and dryers earlier in the morning or later in the evening, adjusting thermostats slightly during peak hours, closing blinds to help keep homes cooler, and using timers on dehumidifiers are all easy ways to help reduce demand when it matters most.

To understand how demand builds, consider a typical evening in an average home:

5 p.m. – family members arrive home and lights, electronics, and televisions are turned on.

5-6 p.m. – dinner preparation begins, ovens and stovetops



are running, refrigerators are cycling more frequently, and heating or cooling systems are working harder depending on the season.

6-7 p.m. – After-activity showers are taken, the water heater kicks on, exhaust fans run, clothes are thrown into the washing machine, clothes left in the dryer from this morning are fluffed, and the vacuum turns on to clean up after dinner.

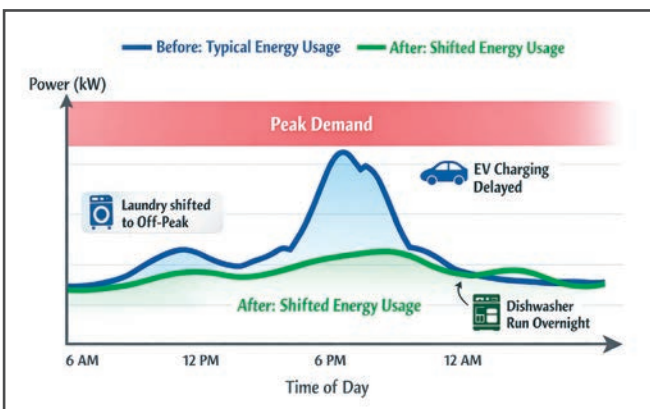
7-8 p.m. – dinner wraps up, the dishwasher starts, and devices are plugged in for charging.

8-9 p.m. – activity begins to slow down. Lights are turned out, and families wind down for the night.

Individually, none of these actions are unusual. But when they happen at the same time across thousands of homes, they stack together to create a system-wide peak in electricity use, driving the need for additional generation or higher-cost purchased power. Spreading that same energy use out over time helps flatten the peak, reducing strain on the system and helping stabilize costs for all members.

This is where the Summer Shift and the load management program work together. The Summer Shift encourages voluntary changes in when electricity is used, while load management provides a system tool to reduce demand during peak alerts. While different in approach, both are designed to reduce demand when the system is under the most stress.

Electricity must be produced and delivered in real time, and keeping that system reliable depends on balancing supply with demand. By understanding how demand builds and making small adjustments during peak hours, members help reduce strain on the grid, manage costs, and support reliable service, even during the times the system is under the most pressure.



The blue line shows typical daily energy use with a sharp peak in the evening, while the green line illustrates how shifting activities—like laundry, EV charging, and running the dishwasher—to off-peak hours helps reduce peak demand and balance energy use across the day.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE July 14-16, 2026 | UW-Stout Campus

CALLING ALL HIGH-SCHOOLERS:



Youth Leadership Conference is an annual event hosted by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) and Wisconsin electric cooperatives. The event engages high school students in activities that emphasize team building, grows cooperative business knowledge, practices life skills, and builds leadership qualities. YLC is an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about cooperatives while building strong leadership and interpersonal skills. Past attendees have found it motivating, educational, and, of course, fun! To attend, the applicant's parent(s)/legal guardian must be an active member of the Cooperative. The applicant must be a student at one of the following high schools in the Cooperative's service territory:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Altoona High School | Eau Claire North High School |
| Augusta High School | Eau Claire Regis High School |
| Cadott High School | Eleva-Strum High School |
| Chippewa Falls Area High School | Elk Mound High School |
| Chippewa Falls McDonell High School | Fall Creek High School |
| Cornerstone Lutheran High School | Mondovi High School |
| Eau Claire Immanuel Lutheran High School | Osseo-Fairchild High School |
| Eau Claire Memorial High School | Stanley-Boyd High School |
| | Home School/Charter School |

There's no cost for you to attend!

For more information and registration materials, please contact our office at 715-832-1603 or visit www.ecec.com.

**All registrations must be submitted by
June 19, 2026.**

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026 | 7AM-11AM

EAU CLAIRE COUNTY BREAKFAST ON THE FARM

KAROW FARMS
E21535 KAROW RD
AUGUSTA, WI 54722



ADULTS: \$10
KIDS: \$5
UNDER 4: FREE



Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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   

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.

ECEC is closed on Friday July 3 in observance of Independence Day.