

Steve Lucas, CEO

For me, this is a time of year for reflection, and topping my list of things I'm grateful for is our wonderful community. I know I speak for all Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative (SREC) employees when I say that we are thankful to be in such an incredible place. We are fortunate to live in the same place where we work, which makes our ties to this community that much stronger.

You may recall that last month, my column touched on the first three Cooperative Principles, so this month, I'd like to tell you about the remaining four principles. The Cooperative Principles are essential to the co-op business model and benefit all members of the co-op.

Autonomy and Independence

The fourth principle, Autonomy and Independence, means that the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves. SREC has nine members on our board of directors, all of whom are members and live in our communities as well.

Education and Training

The fifth principle, Education and Training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of the co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine every month, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips. If you have questions about your service, please let us know. We are happy to help.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation Among Cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way that co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry.

In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts—and we of course extend the same help to them when they need us. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

In addition, because we are part of the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an ever-changing energy landscape.

Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism, or donations to local causes, we invest in this community because it's our home too. Our staff adopts a local family each Christmas season and our linemen participate in area parades with our bucket trucks. Through Operation Round-Up, SREC donates funds to over 100 area charities including food pantries, rescue/fire/EMT services, hospitals, and many more.

I think you'll find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.

On behalf of everyone at SREC we're thankful for your membership, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

**Community born.
Community led.
Focused on YOU.**



DO YOU NEED HELP WITH YOUR HEATING COSTS?

WHEAP provides assistance to qualifying households

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) provides assistance for heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations. Operating with federal and state funding, the program provides assistance to households across the state to help lower the burden incurred with monthly energy costs.

Most types of fuel are eligible to receive assistance. Whether you use wood, propane, natural gas, electricity, or fuel oil to heat your home, energy assistance is available if you qualify.



Heating Assistance

WHEAP assistance is a one-time payment during the heating season. The funding pays a portion of the heating costs, but is not intended to cover the entire cost of heating a residence. The amount of the energy assistance benefit varies depending on a variety of factors, including the household's size, income, and energy costs. In most cases the energy assistance benefit is paid directly to the household energy supplier.

Electric Assistance

Your household may be eligible to receive a payment for non-heating electric energy costs through funding provided by Wisconsin's Public Benefits.

WHEAP electric (non-heating) assistance is a one-time benefit payment during the heating season. The funding pays a portion of the household's electrical (non-heating) costs, but is not intended to cover the entire cost of the non-heating costs.

The amount of the non-heating assistance benefit varies depending on a variety of factors, including the household's size, income, and non-heating costs. In most cases the non-heating assistance benefit is paid directly to the household energy supplier.

Crisis Assistance

A household may be eligible for crisis

assistance if you are experiencing an energy emergency. Crisis assistance is available through local WHEAP agencies that provide a 24-hour crisis phone number to help with emergencies that occur after business hours. Crisis assistance is intended to provide emergency and/or preventative services to assist eligible households experiencing an energy emergency.

Non-emergency or preventative crisis services are also available and include providing information on how to reduce fuel costs, counseling on budgeting and money management, providing payments to a fuel supplier, and co-pay agreements.

Furnace Assistance

WHEAP emergency heating system assistance can provide services to eligible homeowners if the furnace or boiler stops operating during the heating season. Heating system assistance includes payment for repairs, or in some situations your residence may qualify for a total replacement of a non-operating furnace or boiler. Call the local energy assistance office immediately if you are experiencing a no heat situation.

How to Apply

Your household may be eligible for WHEAP services based on a number of factors. However, if the gross income

for your household is less than the amount shown on the chart below, you might be eligible to receive assistance. Households must complete a Home Energy Plus application through the local WHEAP agency or apply online via: <https://energybenefit.wi.gov/>.

For more information on WHEAP and how to apply, please call **1-866-HEATWIS (432-8947)**, or visit the "Where to Apply" tab on www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov to find your local energy assistance agency. You may also apply online at energybenefit.wi.gov/.

homeenergy+

Income Guidelines for the 2021–2022 Home Energy Plus Program Year (10/01/2021 through 9/30/2022)

60 percent of state median income guidelines

Household Size	One Month Income	Annual Income
1	\$ 2,591.92	\$31,103
2	\$ 3,389.42	\$40,673
3	\$ 4,186.92	\$50,243
4	\$ 4,984.42	\$59,813
5	\$ 5,781.92	\$69,383
6	\$ 6,579.42	\$78,953
7	\$ 6,729.00	\$80,748
8	\$ 6,878.50	\$82,542



GIVE SAFETY A SHOT WHEN PREPARING FOR HUNTING



Hunting is a great tradition passed down from generation to generation. It is cherished time spent with family and friends, but it is also an important time to share critical safety practices in addition to skills with a bow or gun. SREC staff members, many of who are hunters, see the damage and danger that can be caused when hunters shoot at electric equipment.

Over the years, our staff has seen “shocking” damage to our power lines and electrical equipment.

“Shooting at birds on the power lines sounds like great target practice, but it can result in a seriously frayed line,” said Jason Knapp, line superintendent.

Hunters are traditionally very aware of the land they are hunting on and they treat it well. We also know they take safety seriously, yet we all know accidents can happen. Knapp warns that “sometimes the accidents are simply due to people not knowing that our lines and poles are potential dangers.” The insulators and other equipment on top of power poles are tempting targets, but they are very dangerous and can cause injury, power interruptions, and worse if hit.

SREC staff members, both the hunters and non-hunters, want you to use basic safety practices such as: only shoot when you know what you are aiming at, don’t use power poles for tree stands, and be aware of the overhead lines. We know that the right-of-way areas, which are cleared near power lines, can look like a great place for a tree stand or blind, “but it is way too dangerous to be that close to power lines,” states Knapp.

We know you have your sights on wild game; however, thoughts of electrical safety can help prevent an accident with



Left: SREC employee Jake Freiburger, Rae, and Emily with their trophy buck. Right: Taylor Schneider, daughter of SREC Employee Phil Schneider.

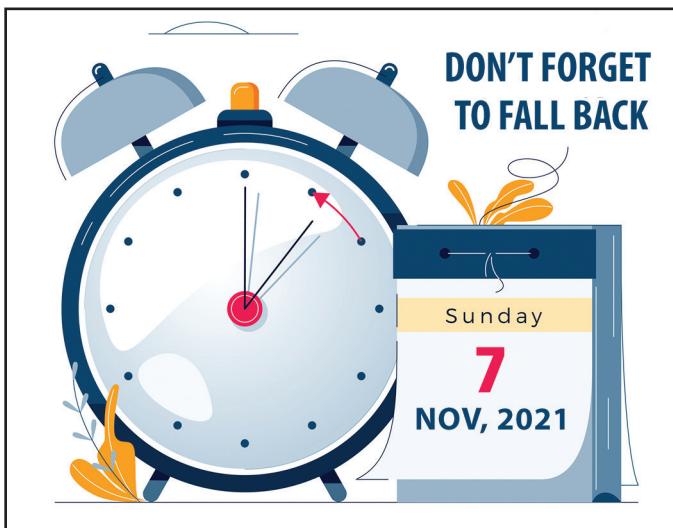
utility equipment. Our staff urges hunters to take precautions and be aware of potential electrical hazards while hunting.

- Before leaving for a hunting trip, make sure that you have safety items to signal for help in case of an emergency. Always carry emergency supplies in the event of an accident. Carry a cell phone, whistle, and flashlight with you throughout a hunting trip.
- Never shoot nearby power lines or other electrical equipment. A single shot can cause vast damage to the electrical system. Damage to electrical equipment can result in power interruptions and physical risks to those nearby.
- Note the location of power lines and other electrical equipment before you begin a hunt. Be especially careful and observant in wooded areas where power lines are easy to overlook.
- Obey all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when selecting the location for a tree stand. Tree stands are the leading cause for hunting injuries. If you are using a tree stand, make sure you read the manufacturer’s instructions and inspect the stand for wear before use.
- Never use power poles to support a tree stand. Look for an ideal tree for your stand, one that is sturdy and alive. While going up to the stand, keep at least three points of contact while you climb.
- When setting up and taking down the stand, make sure you do not make contact with any overhead electrical equipment.
- If you are using a portable electrical generator on your hunting trip, make sure that you do not run it in a confined area. Do not use it inside a cabin or RV. Make sure that it is used outside.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. Good luck to all our area hunters!



Trasen (left) and Taron (right) Crowley, sons of SREC employee Shane Crowley.



MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



The winning photo for November in SREC's 2020 Member Photo Contest was taken by Cheyanna Washburn of Soldiers Grove. Winning photos are featured in our 2021 Member Photo Calendar.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Fall is the perfect time to prep your home for the upcoming winter chill. One of the best ways you can save energy and stay comfortable is to caulk and weatherstrip areas that typically need sealing. Start by sealing around windows and doors. Seal plumbing, ducting, and areas where electrical wiring comes through walls, floors, and ceilings for additional energy savings.

Source: energy.gov



SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Steve Lucas, CEO

231 N. Sheridan St.
Lancaster, WI 53813
lancaster@srec.net

300 Barth Drive
P.O. Box 127
Darlington, WI 53530
darlington@srec.net

15985 St. Hwy. 131
Gays Mills, WI 54631
gaysmills@srec.net

608-723-2121 • 800-236-2141 • www.sre.coop

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