

WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

Unplug With Meaningful Community Programs

Most adults have a vague memory of a time when “checking for messages” meant listening to an answering machine. We carried on with our days without relying on cell phones and managed just fine. But today, we are more connected than ever through our smart phones and other devices.

Our phones are so much more now—from cameras to calendars to social media connections—and truly disconnecting from them can be tough. But it’s even harder for our kids to unplug because they only know life with these tiny screens. It’s difficult for them to imagine life without computers, gaming devices, tablets or cell phones.

But there’s great value in unplugging for children *and* adults, even if it’s for just a short period of time.

For kids, time away from the screen to be outside with other children allows them to connect with nature and others in a way that a virtual experience simply does not allow. They are able to experience life in the moment and allow their creativity and energy to break free.

Fortunately, we have access to great community programs and organizations in our service territory which provide children with a safe place to play, learn and grow, while cultivating new skills and interests.

These clubs and programs offer kids an opportunity to explore activities and interests outside of school academics. Children can investigate areas they might not otherwise have access to and discover new interests and passions. They often learn new skills and strengthen existing ones. It’s no secret that the broader the range of experiences and activities children are exposed to, the more likely

they are to find their own path and possibly a career. Community programs also foster important leadership development and public speaking skills. Through guided and informal play and activities, children learn problem-solving and interpersonal skills that enable them to resolve conflicts peacefully and improve interpersonal relationships.

Adults can also find meaningful opportunities to

spend time with the kids when we all unplug. From board games to craft projects to playing in the park, there are many ways we can unplug for some family fun.

While you and your children are disconnecting, take a moment to identify potential energy savings. Unplug electronics that are not in use to avoid “vampire” energy loss.

This is the energy that is drained from technology and electronics even when they are not in use. For example, although it is turned off, your TV is waiting to receive a signal from the remote and your DVR is waiting to record the next show or perform an update.

Let’s encourage youngsters to step away from the screens and join in. To play and be part of an organization that helps them connect with others and find meaningful interactions and explore new activities and interests.

When you do plug back in, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is here to help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy saving programs and services. While we’d love to see you in person, we’re also just a call or click away. Visit us on Facebook or on our website anytime – www.sre.coop. ■



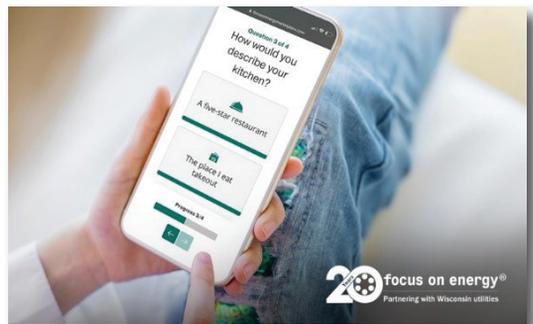
We Can Help You Pick Your Perfect Pack.

Decisions, decisions. We make tons of them every day, and deciding on something important like how to save money and energy isn't always easy.

Our partner FOCUS ON ENERGY® wants to take the guesswork out of energy savings. They've created this interactive quiz to help you decide which of their five FREE energy-saving packs is the best fit for your home. Just answer a few simple questions, and they'll make a recommendation and ship your perfect pack right to your door.

From LED lightbulbs to handheld showerheads, everyone can find a pack that takes their home's efficiency to the next level. Get yours today, take the quiz now.

focusonenergymarketplace.com/free/quiz. ■



Think Safety When Operating a Generator

Thinking Safety Can Save Your Life

A generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep appliances working during a power outage. Generators can be either temporary or permanently installed.

A permanent generator is wired into a house by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch that prevents a generator from feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before ever purchasing a generator, you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on.

Once you have purchased the proper generator, follow these tips from Safe Electricity to properly operate your generator:

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.



- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation occurs.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. ■

Going up or digging in?

Ten tips for using rental equipment safely

Are you planning to rent a scissor or boom lift? Scaffolding? A backhoe?

When you rent, borrow or use equipment that will either elevate you or break ground, be sure to use it safely. Whether you are a novice *do-it-yourselfer* eager to embark on a lofty project or you have used several types of outdoor equipment or machinery before, keep these safety tips in mind:

1. Before using equipment, obtain proper training; in some cases, certification is required.
2. Prior to each use, follow the manufacturer's checklist to verify it is in good working order.
3. Always evaluate and assess your location before using a scissor lift, a bucket truck, a boom lift or scaffolding (or anything that elevates you). Look up and look out for power line locations, and do not use equipment underneath or near a power line or utility pole. Keep in mind your equipment's reach (height and width) when fully extended, and make sure it will not get too close to a power line. Always follow the 10-foot rule: Keep 10 feet between yourself or an object you are holding and a power line or pole at all times.
4. If you rent a backhoe, a post hole digger or other digging equipment, be sure to call 8-1-1 two to three days prior to starting your project. The locating service is free and marks all public underground lines. You are responsible for having all private underground lines and pipes marked, such as those that service a garage or outbuilding, sprinkler system, invisible fence or private water system. If you or a previous homeowner had the lines installed, they are most likely private.
5. When using rental equipment that lifts you off the ground, always wear your safety harness. It's a simple step that helps keep you safe if you lose your footing.
6. Do not use a scissor or boom lift (or any other piece of equipment) for a job it was not designed for.
7. Before starting a job, account for external conditions, such as wind. High winds could push you too close to or into a power line, and you could be seriously injured or electrocuted.
8. Starting a project can be exciting, but don't just jump in. Instead, read and review the operating instructions first and take the time to familiarize yourself with the equipment. For example, learn how to use the controls close to the ground before using them at a higher elevation.

9. Don't ignore the specifications for each piece of equipment, such as maximum platform capacity.
10. When you are elevated, keep both feet on the platform at all times and use appropriate boots or shoes that have slip-resistant soles. Make sure your shoes or boots are not oily, muddy or greasy.

We would be happy to answer any questions or discuss the details of any outdoor projects that could potentially take you close to a power line, whether overhead or underground. Your safety is our top priority.

These recommended safety tips are not exhaustive. Always read and follow the safety guidelines and operating instructions provided by the manufacturer.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. ■

Can You Dig It?

- An underground utility line is **damaged once every 9 minutes** because someone didn't call 811.
- Call 811, the "Call Before You Dig Number," at least **2 business days** prior to digging.
- 811 locators **do not detect** underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems, or gas piping to a garage.
- Even if you have previously had underground utilities marked, **utilities can shift**, so it's best to call before starting a new project.
- Once **all of your utilities** have been located, then you can start your digging project!
- Learn more at SafeElectricity.org

BACK TO SCHOOL: BE SAFE AND SMART



PICK A BACKPACK THAT IS THE CORRECT SIZE, HAS PADDED BACK/SHOULDER STRAPS AND HAS REFLECTIVE MATERIAL

USE EXTRA CAUTION AND SAFELY SHARE ROADS WITH SCHOOL BUSES, PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS



ALWAYS USE THE CROSSWALK WHEN ONE IS AVAILABLE

REMINd TEEN DRIVERS TO STAY OFF THEIR CELL PHONES WHILE TRAVELING TO SCHOOL



BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE SCHOOL YEAR FROM SREC



Vegetation Management

Zielie's Tree Service will be finishing the trimming on the Castle Rock Substation west circuit in Grant County and starting the Mt. Zion Substation trimming in Crawford County during the month of September.

It is important for SREC to maintain its rights-of-way for the following reasons:

- Accessibility for field crews, vehicles and equipment
- Fire prevention
- Reliable electric service
- Quality service with the reduction of outages and blinks
- Safety for workers and the public
- Meeting state and federal code requirements

On a daily basis, SREC employees and contractors are working throughout the area, at times on your property, to operate and maintain the electric system and our rights-of-ways. During this time, we especially appreciate your cooperation as we maintain social distancing between our essential staff and our members. **If you have questions, please contact Jay at jgardner@srec.net or call 800-236-2141 ext. 566.**



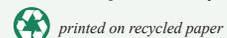
Watt's Happening is published monthly as an information service to the member-owners of Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative.

Any questions or comments can be directed to Watt's Happening, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, 231 North Sheridan, Lancaster, WI 53813 or telephone (608) 723-2121 or toll free 800-236-2141.

www.sre.coop

Steve Lucas CEO

Our board of directors consists of Chuck Simmons, Don Schaefer, Sandra Davidson, Ellen Conley, Jack Larson, Delbert Reuter, Steve Carpenter, Marcus Saegrove and Lily Long.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

We will be
Closed
on
Labor Day
September 6, 2021