

WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

October is National Co-op Month - Power On

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local communities—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” This principle is the essential DNA of SREC and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.”

Who would have fathomed in March, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and SREC has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees began modified work protocols to maintain separation. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation. We also adjusted our walk-in office availability and in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. In addition, we hosted our Annual Meeting virtually in order to keep our members safe. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were and continue to be the prudent course of action for the times.

We know that many of our members have been impacted by COVID-19. At the April Board meeting, your Directors took action by postponing our anticipated rate adjustments. Further, the Directors voted to retire \$1.5 million in Capital Credits. *Members will begin receiving their Capital Credit payments in October.* Lastly, the Operation Round-up Committee will award over \$45,000 in funds to area charities this year (more on this in our

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Our lines are shaped by you, the members we serve.

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#PowerOn



2021 SREC Member Calendar

In celebration of Co-op Month, we will be mailing each member a **free 2021** SREC Member Calendar. These calendars feature the winning photos from our 2021 Members Photo Contest. We focused on the animals of our service territory and as you will see, the winning photos are a great representation of both the wild and domestic animals in our region. Congratulations to the following photographers (in no particular order) whose work will be featured in this year's calendar:

Maureen Prestbroten, Blanchardville
Karen Hlavacek, Argyle
Nancy Dowling, Gays Mills
Craig Grau, Livingston
Deb Gates, Eastman
Kim Hull, Gratiot
Mark Hackett, Boscobel
Herb Hottenstein, Platteville
Gary Cohen, Blanchardville
Katrina Jones, Boscobel
Mark Steffensmeier, Bloomington
Marsha Stewart, Platteville
Melissa Billings, Lancaster
Jennifer Bolstad, Viroqua
Pat Hinderman, Cuba City
Cheyanna Washburn, Soldiers Grove
Anna Schultz, Gratiot



Thank you to all of the members who submitted photos this year. We hope you will enjoy this free calendar throughout 2021. Details on our 2022 Member Photo Contest will be announced soon.

continued. . . October is National Co-op Month

November publications.)

While we certainly miss visiting with you in person, we are finding new ways to stay connected. We have increased our virtual presence via our Facebook page and we launched a new web-site (www.sre.coop) which is chocked full of tips and resources for our members. Additionally, you will soon receive a Scenic Rivers 2021 Calendar, which features member submitted photos from around our service territory. This is a **free gift** which will be mailed to each member this year as a way to celebrate Co-op Month. We want you to know that we value your membership and during Co-op Month, we celebrate you.

I tell you about all of these efforts not to boast about Scenic Rivers, but to explain how much we care about our communities—because we live here too. In 1938, SREC was founded by the community to serve the community, and that's what we'll continue to do – Power On. ■

ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



-  **Take notice** of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
-  **Do not** shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
-  **Know** where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.
-  **Be especially careful** in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
-  **Do not** place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
-  **Do not** place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month

This year's Cybersecurity Awareness Month theme is "Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart," aimed to empower individuals and organizations to own their role in protecting their part of cyberspace.

By increasing awareness and enhancing understanding of basic cybersecurity practices, we can all work together to combat cyberthreats. The human element is oftentimes the biggest cybersecurity risk. Each of us has a critical role to play to ensure the security of our personal and professional data.

National Cybersecurity Awareness Month is spearheaded by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The overarching message of this year's theme, 'If you Connect it, Protect it,' dives into the importance of keeping connected devices safe and secure from outside influence. With more people spending time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever before, connected devices are an integral part of how we communicate and access services essential to our well-being. Data collected from these devices can include highly-specific information about a person or business, which can be exploited by bad actors for criminal gain.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to shed light on these security vulnerabilities, while offering guidance surrounding simple security measures to limit the susceptibility of threats for common devices.

This year, the Cybersecurity Awareness Month's main weekly focus areas will revolve around:

- Understanding and following general security hygiene for connected devices and home networks;

- The importance of maintaining the security of connected devices for remote workers;
- How connected devices play a pivotal role in the future of healthcare; and,
- The overall future of connected devices for consumers, professionals and the public domain.

If everyone does their part—implementing stronger security practices, raising community awareness, educating vulnerable audiences or training employees—our interconnected world will be safer and more resilient for everyone.

Now in its 17th year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the ultimate goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safer and more secure online.

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month and how to participate, visit staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/. You can also follow and use the official hashtag #BeCyberSmart on social media channels. ■

Think Before You Click

- Always hover over a link first to be sure it is safe.
- Report suspicious emails or emails from an unknown sender to your spam filter and delete them from your inbox.



Defend Your Computer

- The best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats is keeping your equipment up to date.
- Work with our IT staff (or provider) to keep your software, including your web browser, and operating systems current.



Lockdown Your Log-in

- Create long and unique passwords. Use familiar phrases or song lyrics you'll remember.
- When possible, use 2-factor authentication as a second layer of defense.
- Change passwords regularly, and do not share them.



Protect Sensitive Information

- Use encryption to protect sensitive data.
- Limit the spread of any attack by only accessing files and folders you need.
- Do not put confidential information in emails, or instant and text messages.



Watch for Red Flags to Identify Potential Phish Attacks

- Phishing attempts seek to steal or compromise data and will often mimic a known sender.

Look for red flags:

1. the email is unexpected;
2. there is a sense of urgency conveyed;
3. there is an offer that seems too good to be true; and/or
4. there are typos and misspellings.



Practice Good Cyber Hygiene On the Go

- Treat all public Wi-Fi networks as a security risk, and don't make financial or other sensitive transactions over public networks.



Want more tips to improve your cyber hygiene?
Visit www.staysafeonline.org.



NOV.18
DualFuel TESTING

Dual Fuel Program Members
Load Management Test,
Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Please be advised that the Winter Preparedness Test for Interruptible Heat (Dual Fuel) Members is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 18th**. This load control test is performed in advance of the winter Full Load Control season to ensure member familiarity with the control sequence and to ensure that backup heating systems have been validated for proper function. Electric heat will be turned off around 5:00 p.m. and will be turned back on starting at 8:30 p.m., with everyone's electric heat scheduled to be back on by 10:00 p.m. This test is done to make sure your backup system and the Cooperative's load management system are working properly.

Please contact us at 800-236-2141 ext. 563, the following day if you experience any problems during this test.

Member Appreciation Celebrations Canceled

Due to continuing public safety concerns regarding COVID-19, SREC's annual Member Appreciation Celebrations have been canceled for the year. We will instead mark October Co-op Month by distributing a SREC 2021 calendar, featuring winning photos from our 2021 Member Photo Contest, to ALL SREC members – free. We look forward to the time when we can gather safely to celebrate October Co-op Month once again, but until that time, we hope you enjoy the sights from around our service territory. Thank you for being a valued Co-op Member.




Vegetation Management

Zielie's Tree Service will continue trimming on the Soldiers Grove south circuit in Crawford County along County Road X, County Road H and along State Road 61 in the month of October.

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.**



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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 LucasCEO

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



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