

# Pipelines deliver natural gas safely

Learn how to prevent damage, recognize potential problems

In recognition of National Pipeline Safety Day on June 10, Rock Energy Cooperative is informing members about its pipeline damage prevention program.

Rock Energy operates 173 miles of natural gas main in northern Illinois with more than 8,000 services. Nationwide, about 300,000 miles of transmission pipe provide natural gas to 69 million consumers, amounting to 25 percent of all energy used.

Pipelines are the safest and most economical method of transporting natural gas, according to the National Transportation Safety Board. Federal pipeline safety code requires that distribution systems comply with tough requirements for design, construction, testing, inspection, operations, and maintenance from the point of connection to the meter on your house.

Natural gas is completely safe when used properly. The following information will help you and your families stay safe around natural gas.

## How can I recognize a natural gas leak?

- By smell: Natural gas is colorless and odorless, but Rock Energy and other gas providers add a chemical that makes it smell like rotten eggs so any leaks can be easily detected.
- By sound: A hissing or roaring sound coming from a natural gas line might be a sign of a leak.
- By sight: If you see unexplained dead or dying grass in an area, natural gas might be leaking. Dirt or debris blowing in the air and water bubbling in a puddle, pond, or creek are other signs of leaks.

## What should I do if I suspect a leak?

### If you smell a faint gas odor:

- Make sure all gas appliances and burners on your stove are turned off completely.
- Open one or more windows and wait a few minutes for the gas odor



Members of Rock Energy's natural gas department provide safety tips to Rockton firefighters.

to dissipate before investigating further.

- Check the pilot lights on your gas furnace, water heater, stove, and oven.
- Don't try to relight a gas furnace, water heater, or stove while you can still smell gas.
- If you need assistance relighting the pilot light, call a heating or plumbing contractor.

### If you smell a strong odor:

- Leave the area immediately.
- Do not use the telephone or cell phone until you reach a safe location away from the suspected leak. Then call Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550 to report the leak's location.
- Do not light a match or turn on or off any light switches, flashlights, garage door openers, or other appliances because an electric arc might ignite the gas.

### How can I prevent pipeline damage?

- Call 811 before you dig or excavate to avoid hitting a natural gas pipe-

line or other buried utility line. State law requires people to call at least two days before any digging project. Utilities then will send a representative to the site so all underground lines can be marked. The call and service are free.

- Remember that Rock Energy maintains buried gas pipes up to the gas meter on your property. All gas pipes beyond that are the member's responsibility and should be periodically inspected for corrosion and leaks. Some examples are pipes that supply secondary buildings, such as a detached garage, or additional equipment, such as pool heaters or gas grills.

### How can I get additional information?

If you have any questions about natural gas safety, we would be happy to provide you with further details. Just call us at (866) 752-4550 or e-mail [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop).



### More Power to You

## Capital Credit Allocation Represents a Big Benefit of Co-op Membership

By Shane L. Larson,  
Chief Executive Officer

If you noticed a credit on the energy bill you received in May, you might have thought we were running a sale on energy. While I'm sure that would be greatly appreciated, that's not what happened. The credit represents your economic participation, as a member, in Rock Energy Cooperative and distinguishes the cooperative form of business from others.

We buy energy wholesale and distribute it to our members on a not-for-profit basis. Because we're a cost-of-service provider, the amount of money that exceeds the actual annual cost of doing business is returned to members as a capital credit. The amount of your capital credits is based on how much you paid for utility services.

In 2010, Rock Energy returned in bill credits and checks more than \$550,000 in capital credits. Since the co-op was incorporated 74 years ago, we have returned more than \$9 million to our members. Unlike other companies with out-of-town investors, the money goes back to you—the members—and helps the local economy.

The return of capital credits and competitive rates are just a couple of reasons why it pays to be a member of Rock Energy Cooperative.

### Stay Safe This Summer

Summertime is a great time for working and playing outdoors. It's hard to resist the temptation of a sunny June day, but please be careful out there. Danger can lurk both above your head and below your feet.

The electrical lines you see up in the sky almost everywhere can be dangerous if you come into contact with them. When standing on a ladder or working with overhead equipment, be sure to stay clear of the power lines. Also keep in mind that a wide open field is the best place

to fly a kite. You never know when a gust of wind might send that kite sailing into an energized wire.

It's just as important to be aware of your surroundings underground. Obviously, these dangers aren't as easy to see, but there are ways to find out what's below the ground's surface. If you plan to do any digging—whether you're planting a small shrub or installing an underground swimming pool—remember to call 8-1-1 first. That call will put you in touch with Diggers Hotline in Wisconsin and JULIE in Illinois. It's not just a good idea; it's the law.

After you call, utility companies will mark their electric lines and natural gas pipes with brightly colored flags and painted lines, so you know where not to dig. It's important to plan ahead. Illinois requires two business days to get the job done, while Wisconsin mandates three. The best part is that the 8-1-1 service is one of the few things in life that are still free.

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***Rock Energy returned more than \$550,000 in capital credits to members in 2010. Since the co-op was incorporated 74 years ago, our members have received more than \$9 million. It definitely pays to be a member of Rock Energy Cooperative!***

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### Family Night at the Ballpark

I hope you'll join us Saturday, June 12, for our ninth annual Night at the Ballpark when the Beloit Snappers play the Bowling Green Hot Rods. See page 16c for all the details.

The night is always a great time at a great price, starting with free player autographs and ending with a spectacular fireworks show. Tickets at \$2 each are available at both our Janesville and South Beloit offices. For another \$2, members can buy a food voucher at the ballpark to get a hot dog, chips, and soda. At those prices, a family of four can get a night of entertainment for less than \$25. You can't beat those prices.

As always, I want to thank you for allowing us to be your energy provider. If we can do anything to improve our service, please let us know. ■



# Rebates Available for Energy-Efficiency Upgrades

**R**ock Energy Cooperative members who live in Illinois are eligible for rebates of up to \$1,500 when they make specific energy efficiency improvements to their homes.

The HomE program provides rebates for central air conditioning, natural gas or LP furnaces, geothermal heat pumps, air-source heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and insulation. All heating and cooling system upgrades must meet federal Energy Star standards to be eligible.

The program is funded by a \$1.5 million federal grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that will be administered by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. A total of \$27,132 has been set aside for Rock Energy members. The program will continue until the funds are depleted.

## Who's eligible?

The program is open to residential co-op members who live in Illinois and do not receive low-income energy assistance. The home must be served by Rock Energy and be the member's primary residence.

## How does the program work?

Start by contacting Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550 to arrange an energy assessment, which is required to qualify for the energy-efficiency rebates. A \$25 fee will be collected at the time of the in-home assessment. Ap-



pointments will be scheduled between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday. After the assessment, you will receive recommendations about how to improve your home's energy efficiency, performance, and comfort.

## How do I get the rebate?

Based on the recommendations, you will decide what work will be completed. You then will submit a proposal form and cost estimate to us. We will return a signed copy to you, indicating that funds have been set aside for you. You then have 60 days to complete the project. After the work is completed, you will send us a completion form with copies of the receipts. We then will issue a check to you. Your project also may qualify for federal tax credits or other incentives unrelated to this program.

## Who can answer my questions about the program?

If you have questions about the program, call our office at (866) 752-4550 between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. You also can visit [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop) and click on the HomE logo. ■

## How much are the rebates?\*

Geothermal heat pumps	\$1,500
Air-source heat pumps	\$1,000
Central air conditioning	\$350
Natural gas or LP furnace	\$350
Heat pump water heater	\$250
Insulation/air sealing	\$500 maximum, 30% of project cost

\*Rebates will be approved for only one piece of heating or cooling equipment. Other restrictions may apply.

# Join Us Saturday, June 12, 2010 for **ROCK ENERGY** **FAMILY NIGHT** at the **BALLPARK**



## **Beloit Snappers vs. Bowling Green Hot Rods**

**7 p.m.  
Pohlman Field at Telfer Park  
in Beloit**

Come early to collect team autographs between 6:15 and 6:45 p.m. Then stay late for a spectacular fireworks show!

Stop at either our Janesville or South Beloit offices to buy game tickets and special Rock Energy Co-op seat cushions. Tickets are \$2 each (\$6.50 value) and good for any Snappers home game in 2010. Foam seat cushions are \$3 each. Take them with you to Snappers games and other sporting events.

Rock Energy members can buy food vouchers at the ballpark on Saturday, June 12. Get a hot dog, chips, and soda for just \$2.

The first 30 kids win a special gift! (Must be accompanied by adult member.)

**Show your Co-op  
Connections Card to buy  
food vouchers at the ballpark.  
If you don't have one,  
pick one up at either  
Rock Energy  
location.**



## Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card



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**500 Full-Color Business Cards (with purchase of 500 cards)**

For a complete listing of current deals, visit [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop). Terms and conditions subject to change as desired by participating businesses. You also can use your Co-op Connections Card to receive a discount on prescription drugs. In April, Rock Energy members saved \$1,532 on their prescriptions, a 38 percent discount.

## Have a Safe and Happy Independence Day!

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, July 5, in observance of Independence Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 6. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekend. Even though our offices are closed, standby crews are always available 24 hours a day. If you need to report a power outage, please call (608) 752-4550 or toll-free (866) 752-4550.



### Energy Efficiency

### Tip of the Month

During summer months when air conditioners work hardest, do energy-intensive tasks such as laundry and dish washing during off-peak energy demand hours, usually in the early morning or later evening.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy



Shane Larson, CEO  
Barbara Uebelacker,  
Editor

P.O. Box 1758  
2815 Kennedy Rd.  
Janesville, WI 53547

P.O. Box 126  
15229 Willowbrook Rd.  
South Beloit, IL 61080

(608) 752-4550 • (866) 752-4550