

# Carbon Monoxide Safety

## Illinois Law Requires Detectors in All Residences

Often called the silent killer because of its odorless, tasteless, and colorless nature, carbon monoxide remains the leading cause of accidental poisonings in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Each year, carbon monoxide poisoning claims nearly 500 lives and causes more than 20,000 visits to hospital emergency departments.

In Illinois, every home is required to have at least one carbon monoxide alarm in operating condition within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes.

If a carbon monoxide detector in your house goes off, check to see if anyone in the house is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. If so, get them out of the house immediately and tell your doctor you suspect poisoning from the gas.

Regardless of whether anyone in the home has symptoms, ventilate the house, turn off all potential sources of carbon monoxide, call 911, and have a qualified technician check your gas appliances. Rock Energy does not provide this service.



## Know the Symptoms

Physical symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning vary depending on the amount in the bloodstream.

### Mild Exposure

- Slight headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fatigue
- Flu-like symptoms

### Medium Exposure

- Severe headache
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Rapid heart rate

### Severe Exposure

- Unconsciousness
- Convulsions
- Cardiac/respiratory failure

## Safety Tips

### Do:

- Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal-burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year. Rock Energy does not provide this service.
- Install a battery-operated CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. If the detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call your local fire department, not Rock Energy Cooperative.
- Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseous.

### Don't

- Use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window.
- Run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- Burn anything in a stove or fireplace that isn't vented.
- Heat your house with a gas oven.



Rock Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## More Power to You

# BY THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE COMMUNITY

**Shane L. Larson,**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

When you think of October, perhaps one of the first things that come to mind are pumpkins, Halloween, and the beautiful fall colors. But October also is notable for another reason—it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Rock Energy, celebrate who we are and, more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different from other types of businesses. When for-profit businesses decline to offer a product or service, or do so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

Similar to how Rock was built by members who came together to bring electricity to the Rock County countryside in the 1930s, cooperatives serve the common good. Your co-op exists to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to you—our valued members. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited

to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. Rock Energy's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines and are elected by neighbors like you.

A feature that sets Rock Energy apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." Here are just a few of the things we do to help our members and improve the communities we all call home:

- The co-op distributed \$1.2 million in capital credits in 2019. Since our founding, about \$18 million has been paid to past and current members.
- Our scholarship program continues to help young people in the area realize their dream of a college education. Since 1989, we have awarded more than \$102,000 in financial aid to deserving students.
- The co-op along with its employees and members donated thousands

of items to our Back-to-School Supplies Drive in July. These contributions were delivered to 15 area school districts so less fortunate students could start the school year with the tools they need to succeed.

- Our Co-op Connections program continues to help members save money on everyday purchases. You can get 2-for-1 restaurant deals, discounted movie and event tickets, hotel discounts, and cash-back online shopping in addition to all the healthy savings discounts available. In fact, local co-op members have saved about \$150,000 on prescription drugs through the years.

We hope you think of Rock as more than just your energy provider because we think of you as more than just a customer. Instead, think of us as a local business that supports the communities we serve. Rock was built by the community, for the community. Always remember that this is your co-op. Please let us know if we can do anything to improve our service to you.



October is  
National Co-op Month.



# Rock Energy Cooperative Director Districts



**District 9:**  
Wendell Boyer



**District 1:**  
Barbara Miller



**District 2:**  
Marian Trescher,  
Secretary



**District 4:**  
James Quade,  
Treasurer



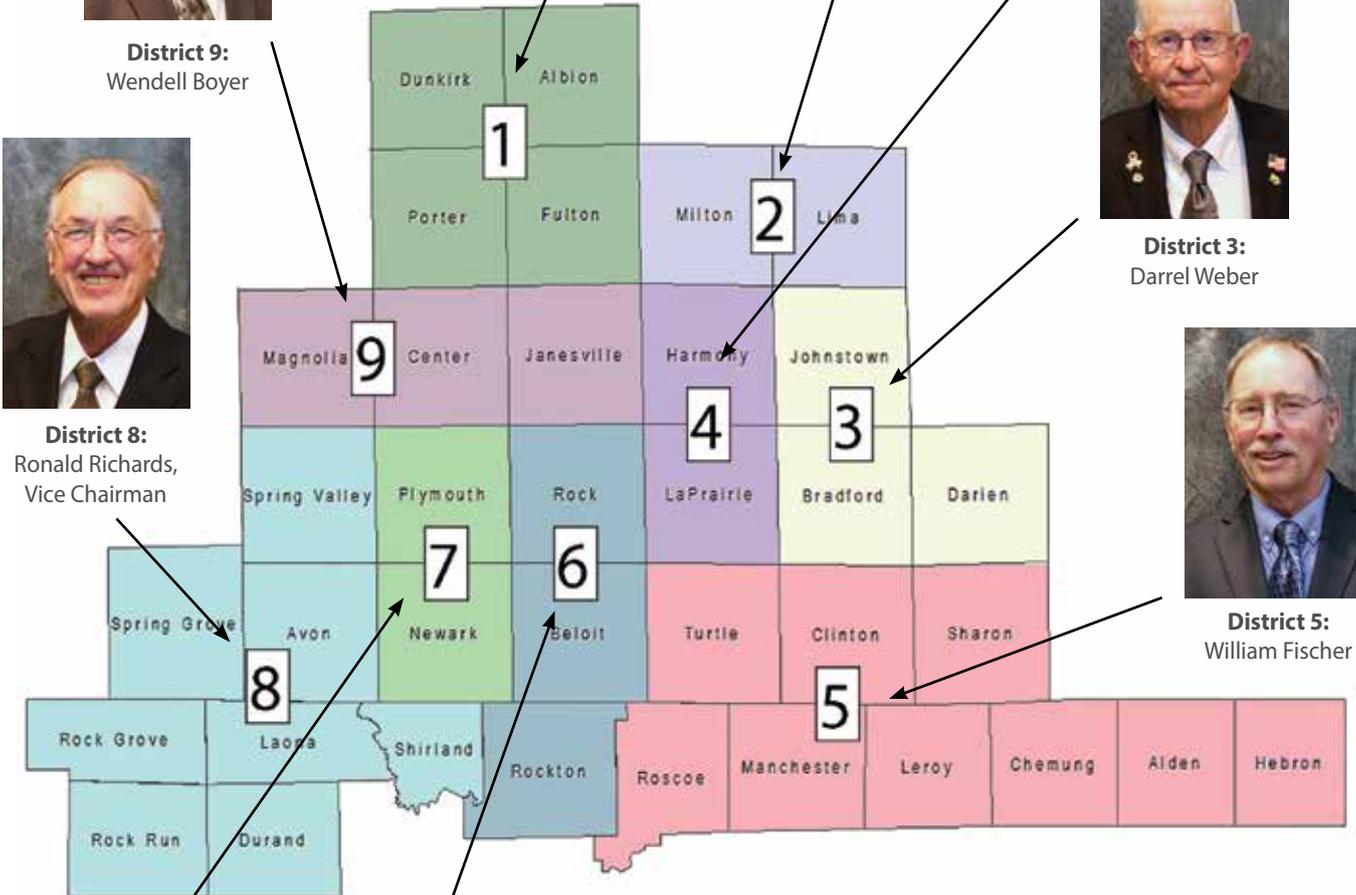
**District 3:**  
Darrel Weber



**District 8:**  
Ronald Richards,  
Vice Chairman



**District 5:**  
William Fischer



**District 7:**  
William Dietsch,  
Chairman



**District 6:**  
Clark Schoonover

## UPCOMING DIRECTOR ELECTION

The Rock Energy Cooperative Nominating Committee will be selecting candidates to run for board of director positions that will be on the ballot at the March 30, 2020, annual meeting.

Districts up for election are:

- **District 6:** Beloit and Rock townships in Wisconsin and Rockton Township in Illinois.
- **District 7:** Newark and Plymouth townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 8:** Avon, Spring Grove, and Spring Valley townships in Wisconsin and Durand, Laona, Rock Grove, Rock Run, and Shirland townships in Illinois.

Active members who are interested in running for a position on the REC Board of Directors must permanently reside in one of the areas up for election and meet all other qualifications. For more information, please contact the co-op at 866-752-4550 or send an email to [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop) by Nov. 29.

## BUDGET PAYMENTS RECALCULATED

### Avoid Winter Surprises by Enrolling Now

Members on Rock Energy's Budget Billing plan will see their monthly payment amounts change with the statement they receive in November.

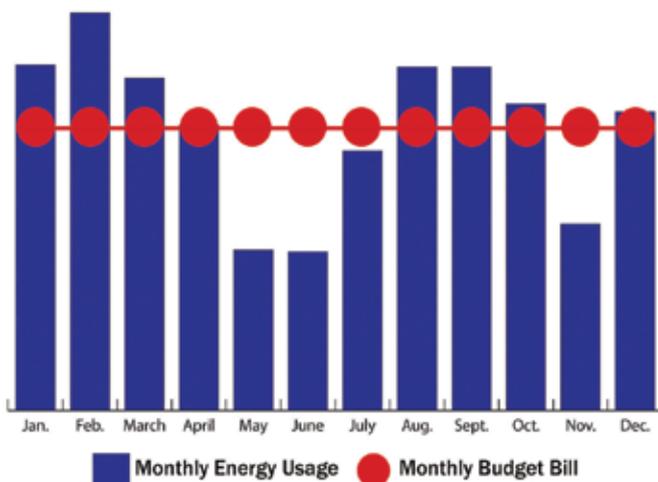
Budget payments are recalculated twice a year—in October and April—to help ensure that the amount you pay is similar to your true usage. We'll average the amount of energy you used in the previous 12 months to determine your new budget payment.

Also taken into consideration is whether you had a credit or if your budget payment didn't quite cover the amount of energy used in the previous six months. Depending on your actual usage, your future budget amount could increase or decrease.

About 1,300 members are currently enrolled in Budget Billing. If you'd like to join them, Stephanie Cammelot, consumer accounting supervisor, suggests that now would be a good time as we approach the winter heating season. You will pay same amount each month, avoiding higher than anticipated bills if the weather is exceptionally cold.

You are eligible for Budget Billing if you have received service from the co-op for at least six months and have a good credit history. Then you can pay your monthly bill however you choose—cash, check, credit card, mail, in person, drop box, kiosk. Or better yet, sign up for Auto Pay to fully automate your energy payments, assuring that you'll never pay a late fee.

If you would like more information on these programs or want to sign up, please call Member Services at 866-752-4550 between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday or email [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop).



This chart shows how Budget Billing evens out your monthly energy bills.

## HOME INSURANCE COVERS LOSSES FROM POWER OUTAGES

Rock Energy Cooperative works diligently to make sure your electricity and natural gas are there when you need it. But like all things, nothing is 100 percent guaranteed.

Outages or voltage issues—whether triggered by a storm, lightning, trees, equipment failure, animals, or vehicles hitting power poles—can damage computer equipment, TVs, and other appliances in your home. These events are out of our control, and Rock Energy Cooperative does not compensate for any damaged equipment.

However, most home and business insurance policies cover losses from interruptions caused by lightning, windstorms, and other sources. Make sure you're familiar with your policy and what is covered. Call your agent if you're not sure about your specific coverage.

You can help protect your own equipment by unplugging it during a power outage and by installing surge protection.



### JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST TO STAY INFORMED

Rock Energy Cooperative members who want to stay informed on co-op news can submit their email address to help us better communicate with you.

Don't worry. We won't load your inbox with unnecessary spam or provide your information to anyone for any reason.

We just want to help you save money with energy-efficiency tips, provide important safety information, invite you to co-op events, and keep you informed about all the co-op news.

Joining our email list is easy. Just go to [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop) and click on "Sign Up for Our Emails" at the upper left part of the page.



# TIPS FOR PARENTS ON TEACHING CYBERSECURITY

In today's world, digitally connected families must think about safety and security both online and offline.

Since 2003, October has been recognized as National Cybersecurity Awareness Month to ensure that everyone stays safe and secure online.

Every child is taught basic safety and security, like not talking to strangers and looking both ways before crossing the street. Parents must now also teach children how to stay safe online. Teaching young people easy-to-learn life lessons for online safety and privacy begins with parents leading the way.

The first step is to teach children how to STOP. THINK. CONNECT. by taking safety measures, thinking about the consequences of your actions, and then connecting only when you have taken steps to safeguard yourself and your family when online.

Here are some basic tips for how parents can teach their children about cybersecurity:

- **Share with care.**

What you post can last a lifetime. Help your children understand that any information they share online can easily be copied and is almost impossible to take back. Teach them to consider who might see a post and how it might be perceived in the future.



**2019 National Cybersecurity Awareness Month**

#BeCyberSmart

- **Personal information is like money.**

Value it and protect it. Information about your kids, such as the games they like to play and what they search for online, has value—just like money. Talk to your kids about the value of their information and how to be selective with the information they provide to apps and websites.

- **Post only about others what you would like to have them post about you.**

Remind children and family members about the golden rule and that it applies online as well. What they do online can positively or negatively affect other people.

- **Own your online presence.**

Start the conversation about the public nature of the internet early. Learn about and teach your kids how to use privacy and security settings on their favorite online games, apps, and platforms.

- **Remain positively engaged.**

Pay attention to and know the online environments your children use. The real world has good and bad neighborhoods, and the online world is no different. Help them to identify safe and trusted websites and apps. Encourage them to be cautious about clicking on, downloading, posting, and uploading content.

- **Stay current.**

Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online. Keep up with new technology and ways to manage privacy. Visit [staysafeonline.org](http://staysafeonline.org) or other trusted websites for the latest information about ways to stay safe online. Talk about what you discovered with your family members and engage them on a regular basis to share what they know about privacy.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Heating requires more energy than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42 percent of your energy bill. With proper equipment maintenance and upgrades like additional insulation and air sealing, you can save about 30 percent on your energy bill.—Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

**Shane Larson, CEO**

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**Barbara Uebelacker, Editor**



**ROCK ENERGY COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936