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Rock Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



More Power to You

JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FAMILY FUN AS WE SAY THANKS TO MEMBERS

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive
Officer

“All-around a great family event! Our boys ask about it and look forward to it all year, particularly the bucket truck ride, bounce house, face painting, oh, and the pancakes. Thank you!”

Well, boys, get ready to have some more fun! Rock Energy’s 2019 Member Appreciation Day Pancake Breakfast with all the activities you love will take place on Saturday, Sept. 14. This is an annual event that allows all of us at the co-op—employees and directors—to express our gratitude to all our great members.

We received the comment above from a member after last year’s event. Many others expressed similar sentiments. One member said the event might even motivate kids to be future lineworkers.

“Our granddaughter just loved the bucket truck rides. She went twice. It may inspire kids to go into the trades. The congenial staff also are such a good influence on the kids.”

In the early 2000s we transitioned from a small open house with cookies to what we now affectionally call MAD. While the event’s format has changed through the years, fun and education have always been the focus. When MAD switched from cookies, we served a barbecue luncheon with hot dogs, hamburgers, and brats. In 2010 we decided to set our alarms early and serve breakfast instead of lunch. The pancake breakfast allows members to spend a couple hours in the morning having fun with us and still have most of the day for other activities.

To offer extra value to our members, we added electronics recycling and document shredding to the event in 2012.

Those two services have been a big hit with members. In seven years, more than 89 tons of electronics have been recycled and about 20 tons of paper shredded.

Electronics recycling and document shredding not only provide a valuable service to our members, they also support one of the seven principles followed by cooperatives throughout the world: Concern for Community. By participating in our recycling events, members help keep these items out of our community landfills.

The old electronics may not be valuable to us anymore because they’re broken or obsolete, but the products



When you see LED Lucy at Member Appreciation Day, be sure to give her a thumbs up.

contain valuable resources. The metals, plastics, and glass used in electronics require energy to mine and manufacture. By recycling electronics and reusing the materials, we are conserving our natural resources as well as reducing the energy demands from mining and manufacturing.

The document shredding not only helps with recycling, but it also gives members the security of knowing that their personal information will not fall into the wrong hands.

Through the years, we’ve also added more activities for kids, like face painting and balloon figures. The event was designed to have a fun, carnival-like atmosphere that would be fun for everyone. Based on all the smiles I see every year, I think we’ve succeeded.

Please join us on Saturday, Sept. 14, so we can express how important you—the members—are to the co-op. All the details are on page 20B.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

The July 19–20 storms that devastated some areas of Wisconsin caused minor damage in our area, and for the most part we were spared the deluge of outages experienced by some energy providers. Fortunately, only about 300 members were affected when lightning along with high winds toppled trees into power lines and knocked out power. Most power was restored between one and three hours. The longest outage was six hours.

Five in our co-op family—Polk-Burnett, Barron, Chippewa Valley, Central Wisconsin, and Oconto—requested assistance getting the aftermath of the storms cleaned up and power restored. Rock sent Field Engineer Scott Manogue and Line Foreman Tim Gillitzer to help the Oconto crews. They joined linework-

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MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

Electronics recycling, document shredding at different location again

ROCK ENERGY MEMBERS ONLY!

Bring your old electronics and documents to Universal Recycling Technologies and your appetites to Rock Energy Cooperative's Janesville warehouse on Saturday, Sept. 14, for our Member Appreciation Day.

Electronics recycling and document shredding again will be located at a different site to provide a safer environment for co-op members and employees. These two services have become so popular that we don't have the space at our Kennedy Road location to accommodate the increased traffic.

Members can bring their items to Universal Recycling Technologies, 2535 Beloit Ave., Janesville, between 8 and 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14.

The pancake breakfast and all other activities associated with Member Appreciation Day will continue to be at our Janesville headquarters from 8 to 10:30 a.m. the same day.

We hope to see you on Sept. 14!

Pancake Breakfast

- 8–10:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14
- Rock Energy headquarters, 2815 Kennedy Road, Janesville
- Activities: Health fair, bucket truck rides, prize wheel, LED Lucy, bounce house, face painting, balloon figures, and lots more!

Electronics Recycling, Document Shredding

- 8–11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14
- Universal Recycling Technologies, 2535 Beloit Ave., Janesville (enter through south driveway)



Accepted electronics

- TVs, personal computers, printers, scanners, fax machines, calculators, cell phones, keyboards/mice, radios, stereos, telephones, DVD/CD players, VCRs.
- **No** air conditioners, microwaves, dehumidifiers, vacuums, toasters, or large appliances.
- **No** businesses please.

Shredding procedure

- Each member can bring four boxes or bags of material, including CDs and credit cards.
- All material will be shredded on site.
- You do not need to remove staples, paper clips, hanging files, or black binder clips from materials.
- No three-ring binders.



Maps and directions at www.rock.coop/MemberAppreciation

KEEP THOSE BIG GREEN BOXES CLEAR OF OBSTACLES

They're big. They're green. They might be in your yard, and you need to stay away from them.

We're not talking about a giant insect or other creature that might harm you. Instead, we're referring to our pad-mount transformers or what some people refer to as "electrical boxes."

These transformers play an important role in distributing electricity through underground power lines, which many people prefer to improve aesthetics in their neighborhood. While this eliminates utility poles and overhead wires, it requires installing pad-mount transformers so high-voltage electricity can safely be brought to a lower voltage to power your home.

Our line crews need easy access to the transformers so they can inspect the equipment, perform routine maintenance, and repair problems as they arise. During inspections workers frequently find that members have built fences or planted flowers and shrubs around the transformers to hide them from view, said Chris Tullar, south operations manager.

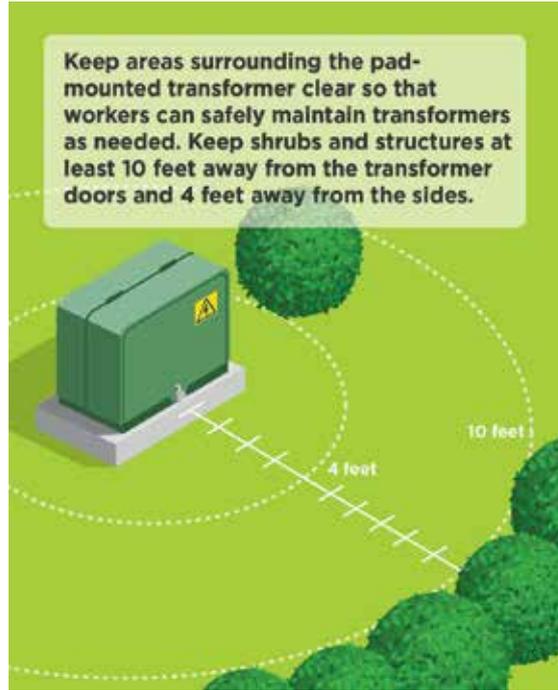
"We realize landscaping represents an investment of time and money," he said. "We respect the effort and care our members invest in making their properties attractive. But fences or landscaping around electrical equipment interferes with our ability to deliver reliable power."

Rock Energy requires at least 10 feet of clearance in front of pad-mount transformers and 4 feet on the other sides. Members can easily identify the front of the unit by looking for the warning label.

That distance allows for tool use, including hot sticks, which are 8 feet long. The hot sticks allow lineworkers to make repairs on transformers while they are energized so members don't experience an interruption in service. Workers also need the space so they can back away if problems occur.

When workers can't access a transformer for inspection or routine maintenance, they often leave a note advising that the vegetation, fence, or other obstacle needs to be removed. However, if workers are

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MY CO-OP



1. This transformer is almost entirely covered with vegetation that prevents lineworkers from accessing it for repairs and routine maintenance. 2. This bush grew too close to the transformer. Remember to plan for a plant's growth when landscaping.

3. This fence was built so close to the transformer that the hinged box cannot be opened. Workers need at least 10 feet of clearance in front of the box and 4 feet on the other sides. 4. Debris like this around a transformer is a safety hazard.





More Power to You (Continued from page 20A)

ers from other co-ops in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and Michigan through the ROPE program, which shortens outages after storms by having co-ops help each other.

ROPE stands for Restoration of Power in an Emergency and is at the heart of what co-ops are all about. It's a prime example of the co-op principle: Cooperation Among Cooperatives. Whenever we can, we lend a helping hand because you never know when it will be our turn to need assistance.

During the recent storm, about 4,000 Oconto members lost power. The damage was so extensive that some were without power for almost a week.

This serves as a reminder that severe weather can and will hit. When it does, we do the best we can to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. But some members' homes are equipped with life-sustaining medical equipment that requires a consistent source of power. For these people, a power outage is much more than an inconvenience. It could be deadly.

If your health depends on power that is never interrupted, we recommend having a battery backup or standby generator to keep the equipment operating in the event of an outage. Alternatively, families can devise a plan so the person who relies on critical-care medical devices will have somewhere to stay until power is restored.

Thanks for allowing us to be your energy provider. If there's anything we can do improve our service, please let us know. I hope to see you on Sept. 14!



In the spirit of cooperation, Rock Energy sent two lineworkers and a bucket truck to help Oconto Electric Cooperative repair damage from last month's storm.



Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2, in observance of Labor Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 3. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekend and at the new payment kiosk outside our South Beloit office, 15229 Willowbrook Road. 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 866-752-4550.

Pad-Mount Transformers (Continued from page 20C)

responding to a power outage that requires immediate access, they will do the work themselves. That can slow down power restoration.

"We appreciate members' cooperation in keeping the transformer in their yards unobstructed," Tullar said. "This helps us in our mission to provide safe and reliable electricity."

Here are some other safety reminders related to pad-mount transformers:

- Never dig near them because they are surrounded by underground cables. Hitting a cable could result in electrical shock or disruption of service. Always call 811 before you dig.
- Make sure children know to never touch, climb, or play on the equipment. Tell them never to put fingers, sticks, or other objects through openings in the transformer box.
- Report any problems to Rock Energy. If you notice anything amiss, like an unlocked transformer or one that has been damaged, please call us at 866-752-4550.

Shane Larson, CEO

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Barbara Uebelacker, Editor



**ROCK ENERGY
COOPERATIVE**
Empowering Members Since 1936