



Shane L. Larson,  
Chief Executive Officer

## More Power to You

# COOPERATIVES SEE THE FUTURE

Dramatic changes are transforming all aspects of the energy industry. Consumers want greater control over their energy use and payment methods. The use of smart-phone apps and smart technology for the home is increasing.

There's no denying that energy providers will have to make changes to accommodate these trends. Fortunately, Rock Energy Cooperative is uniquely positioned to meet these changing energy needs because we are a cooperative.

October is National Co-op Month, and this year's theme is "Cooperatives See the Future." Cooperatives are locally governed, looking out for the long-term needs of their members.

Energy cooperatives belong to the communities they serve. This heightened community focus allows us to quickly adapt to evolving consumer expectations. Our closeness to the community ensures a better response to these needs because we are led by the people we serve.

Cooperatives exist to meet a need that was previously unmet in the community, and they

are always striving to anticipate and plan for the future needs of their members.

Our new metering system is one of the ways Rock Energy is positioning itself to continue meeting your needs well into the future. Installation of new meters required to support the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system started this summer and will continue throughout the year.

In the June co-op magazine, this column explained how the new AMI system will help us serve you better by improving reliability and making our operations more efficient. That column is available on our website at [www.rock.coop/new-meters](http://www.rock.coop/new-meters).

During National Co-op Month, we like to remind members that the co-op business model is unique. It puts people first. Co-ops strive to be a trusted voice in their communities. Co-ops have earned that trust because they always have their members' best interests at heart and are determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the communities they serve—now and in the future.

One of the seven principles of cooperatives around the world is "Cooperation Among  
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Rock Energy linemen Matt Meichtry and Bill Wright were among those deployed to help restore power to Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative members after storms swept through the area.





# Rock Energy Cooperative Director Districts



**District 9:**  
Wendell Boyer



**District 1:**  
Barbara Miller



**District 2:**  
Marian Trescher,  
Secretary



**District 4:**  
James Quade,  
Treasurer



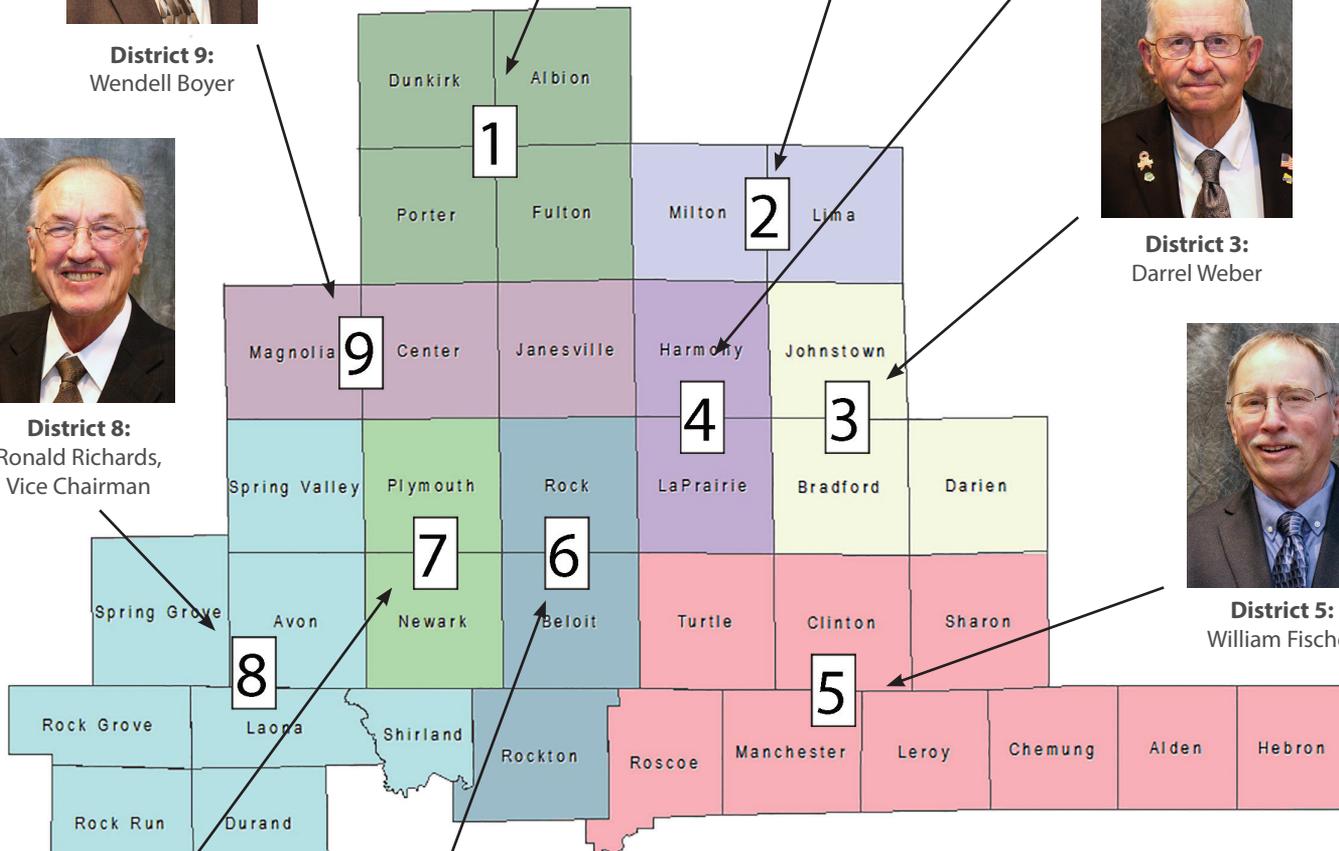
**District 3:**  
Darrel Weber



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



**District 5:**  
William Fischer



**District 7:**  
William Dietsch,  
Chairman



**District 6:**  
Clark Schoonover

## DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS OPEN

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 25, 2019, annual meeting.

Districts up for election are:

- District 2: Lima and Milton townships in Wisconsin.
- District 4: Harmony and LaPrairie townships and city of Janesville in Wisconsin.
- District 9: Center, Janesville, and Magnolia townships in Wisconsin.

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 cop at 866-752-4550 or send an e-mail to [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop) by Nov. 30.

# CYBERSECURITY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Technology breaches have become more commonplace, ushering in a new reality of increased security measures and constant monitoring of personal data to ensure our identities, credit card numbers, or bank accounts have not been compromised.

This new reality has made many realize that it's incumbent on everyone to make sure personal and business data is safe from potential breaches.

This October, Rock Energy Cooperative is recognizing National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The special designation began in 2004 under leadership from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance. Since then, it has grown exponentially, reaching consumers, small- and medium-sized businesses, corporations, educational institutions, and young people across the nation.

It can seem a little overwhelming at times, and the idea that the next threat is always lurking around the corner can be stressful. But there are things you can do to protect your data.

## Keep your defenses up!

- Make sure all your computer software—including your web browser—are updated with the latest software. Keeping software up-to-date ensures that security threats can be blocked.

- Create a strong password and keep it private—it could take up to two centuries to crack a password consisting of 12 characters or more!
- Treat all Wi-Fi networks as a potential security risk. Encrypt sensitive data when using a public Wi-Fi network. And never check financial or other sensitive accounts when using public Wi-Fi.

## Don't fall for a phish!

- Be on the lookout for emails, phone calls, and other messages that try to get to secure data. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If something seems off, trust your instinct.
- Don't click on links or attached files in emails or text messages from senders you don't know. Even if you

do know the sender, hover over the link before you click as they may have been hacked or someone could be spoofing them! There are many ways to spot a phish. See them all at [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

## Co-ops are working together!

Energy co-ops—with the Department of Energy and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association—are working together to better protect us from security threats. From the smallest co-op with limited access to technology staff to the largest co-op with greater resources, NRECA and America's energy cooperatives are creating a co-op network that fosters a culture of cybersecurity.

When keeping your data safe, remember that you are the first line of defense against cybersecurity threats!

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH**  
YOU are our organization's first line of defense!

### Red Flags to Identify Potential Phish Attacks

- Email is unexpected
- Sense of urgency conveyed
- Offer that seems too good to be true
- Typos and misspellings



Barb Uebelacker, communications director at Rock Energy, received the award from WECN Editor Dana Kelroy, right, and WECN Associate Editor Mary Erickson, left.

## ROCK ENERGY WINS PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

Rock Energy Cooperative recently won an award for presentation of local news in the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*, the voice of the state's rural electric cooperatives.

Barb Uebelacker, communications director at Rock Energy and editor of the co-op's local pages, accepted the award Aug. 23 at the 2018 Electric Communicator's Conference in Tomah.

Rock Energy's magazine pages earned an Honorable Mention in the category of Photography.

Founded in 1940, the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* focuses on statewide issues that affect energy cooperatives, promoting the general welfare of Wisconsin's energy cooperatives, their members, and the areas they serve.

Eighteen co-ops throughout the state are responsible for their own local sections within the magazine, which reaches 171,000 mailboxes each month.



## More Power to You

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Cooperatives.” That teamwork was demonstrated on Aug. 29 when Rock Energy linemen Matt Meichtry and Bill Wright helped restore power to Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative members after high winds and heavy rains caused widespread damage in that area.

We’ve had our share of outages due to storms this summer, but we’ve fared better than areas to our north. Most of our storm-related outages have one thing in common—trees.

High winds topple trees, which then fall onto power poles and lines. I’ve said many times in this column that trees and power lines shouldn’t be near each other. To reduce potential tree-related problems, Rock Energy operates a vigilant tree-trimming program. It’s a job that’s never finished. By the time we finish trimming along our 1,265 miles of distribution lines, vegetation has started to grow back and the cycle continues.

**The best tree maintenance program is... careful planning.**

Members can help us keep a safe, reliable, and affordable supply of power flowing by letting us know if you notice trees or branches that might pose a risk to our power lines. We will do minor branch trimming near secondary lines,

which carry low-voltage electricity from pole-top transformers to members’ houses, barns, and businesses.

If you need more extensive trimming or tree removal, you can hire a contractor to do the work. To help with the process, we will de-energize and drop the line so you can have the tree safely removed. Then we’ll reconnect power when the work is finished. This is done without charge during our regular operating hours if scheduled in advance.

The best tree maintenance program, however, is careful planning. Before planting trees in your yard, think about how tall they may grow and how wide their branches may spread. Generally, 25 feet of ground-to-sky clearance is needed around utility poles.

Remember to give us a call if you notice that any of your trees have dead branches near our power lines. Also, let us know if there’s anything we can do to improve our service to you. We are truly proud to be your energy provider.

## INSURANCE POLICIES COVER LOSSES FROM POWER OUTAGES

Rock Energy Cooperative works diligently to make sure your electricity and natural gas are there when you need them. 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 homeowner’s 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.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cooler temps are just around the corner! Is your home’s heating system ready? Remember to replace furnace filters once a month as recommended. If you heat your home with warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, or radiators, remember to clean them regularly to increase efficiency.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



**Shane Larson, CEO**

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**Barbara Uebelacker, Editor**



**ROCK ENERGY COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936