



# October is National Co-op Month



**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936

*Investing in the  
Community Since  
1936!*



A MESSAGE FROM:

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

October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on the first three co-op principles (see all seven principles to the right). These three principles specifically include the word "Member" in the titles. The members are the most important part of a cooperative. Without dedicated and participating members, no co-op can succeed. To gain such a group of individuals, all co-ops need to remain voluntary organizations with membership opportunities for all. These principles have not only stood the test of time, but they also provide a solid framework for a bright future.

## SEVEN CO-OP PRINCIPLES:

1. Voluntary and Open **Membership**
2. Democratic **Member** Control
3. **Members'** Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training, and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

### #1: Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Rock Energy Cooperative was created out of necessity – to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So in 1936, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit.

For a modest membership fee, any farmer could get electricity brought to their farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

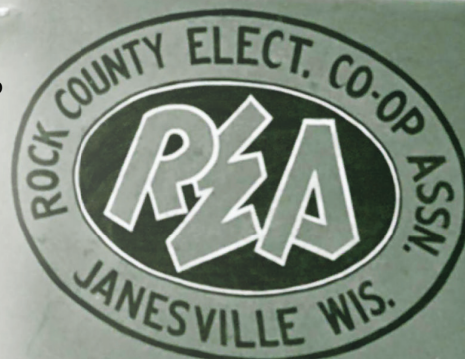
### #2: Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Rock Energy's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who help set longterm priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by you – the members.

We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

### #3: Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we're also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Rock Energy. Part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative which funds co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supports other activities in the community.



PHONE 1203



# Rock Energy Members Elected to Youth Leadership Congress Board

**M**ore than 60 electric cooperative teens attended the three-day Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) at UW-Stout July 12–14. This was the first in-person event since 2019, and the first time YLC has been held at UW-Stout. At the event, YLC members participated in activities aimed at building leadership skills, including a session on “breakthrough leadership” by motivational speaker and author Craig Hillier, and an appearance by Will Tuchtenhagen, former YLC board member and recipient of the 2021 Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation’s \$10,000 Scholarship.

Also taking place at this year's YLC event was the 2023 Youth Board election. We are very happy to report that two Rock Energy Cooperative youth members were selected to be on the 2023 board—Samantha Hopkins and Emma Steinke. See details about the election in the blue box to the right.

## 2023 YLC MVPs

The following YLC attendees were recognized as 2022 MVPs at this year's YLC event:

- **District 1** – Cicely Kiecker, Chippewa Valley Electric
- **District 2** – Dayne Beaudette, Chippewa Valley Electric
- **District 3** – Jayden Mosley, Rock Energy
- **District 4** – Theodore Robish, Taylor Electric
- **District 5** – Emma Steinke, Rock Energy

This year’s group winner for best attitude and participation was district 4, which was represented by co-ops from Adams-Columbia, Central Wisconsin, Oakdale, Pierce Pepin, Richland, Rock, Scenic Rivers, Taylor, St. Croix, and Barron.

Pictured below are the 2022 YLC attendees. More than 60 teens attended this year's event.

## 2023 Youth Board Elected

Attendees of Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) have the opportunity to run for the YLC Youth Board, which includes gathering signatures, conducting interviews, and delivering a speech before the group-wide vote at the conclusion of the event.

**The 2023 Youth Board members are:**

- **Samantha Hopkins, Rock Energy**
- **Emma Steinke, Rock Energy (Alternate)**
- Constance Clark-Bailey, Scenic Rivers
- Kc Rose, Chippewa Valley Electric
- Molly Damm, Adams-Columbia Electric
- Theodore Robisch, Taylor Electric
- Daniel Deutsch, Pierce Pepin Cooperative

Youth Board members are invited to attend the 2023 NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., next summer, and they will return to YLC in 2023 as team leaders.



# Q&A



## Catching up with the Rock Energy YLC Board Members



**SAMANTHA HOPKINS**

-17 years old  
-Senior, Hononegah HS



**EMMA STEINKE**

-15 years old  
-Sophomore, Milton HS

**Q: Overall, how do you feel about being selected as a YLC Board Member for next year?**

**SAMANTHA:** "I am very excited! I feel that at this time in my life it's important for me to consider what I can do for the community that has given so much to me. I hope to contribute just as much by being a member of the YLC Board."

**EMMA:** "As an alternate, I'm excited about the opportunities offered. The other members elected are fun and responsible people, and I look forward to getting to know them. I was honored that the previous board members, adult volunteers, and fellow YLC attendees thought I was the right person to represent them. The educational trip to D.C. the board takes sounds very exciting!"

**Q: Overall, how was your experience and what was the best part of the Youth Leadership Congress this summer at UW-Stout?**

**SAMANTHA:** "I really enjoyed attending YLC because I got to meet a lot of new people who I would have never interacted with otherwise. It was a great experience to meet a bunch of people who at first were strangers, but then by the end of the day you're laughing together like old friends."

**EMMA:** "I had a blast! I learned so much about cooperatives and their impact on the world around me. The best part was meeting amazing people from around the state that I never would have met if I hadn't attended the youth conference! Being recognized as a district MVP and a Youth Leadership Board alternate was a very close second."

**Q: Do you feel that the experience you had at the YLC event will help you as you move forward in high school and eventually after high school as you transition into college or a full-time job? If so, how?**

**SAMANTHA:** "For sure, many people just like me, have come from the same school system with the same people, and exposing yourself a little to a completely new environment will definitely help prepare you for life at a new job or college. Attending this camp is a nice way to open yourself up to new people and collaborative ideas."

**EMMA:** "I think this experience will open a lot of doors for me, and it will help me in my future. The experience provided me with opportunities to show and grow my leadership skills. I participated in many extracurricular activities, and I learned a lot about how to be a confident role model. The conference also showed me a wide variety of job opportunities that co-ops provide and widened my eyes to the types of college majors that are available."

**Q: If someone at your school was thinking of attending a future YLC event, would you recommend that they go, and why?**

**SAMANTHA:** "Absolutely, I was definitely a little on the fence about attending because I was worried I wouldn't know anyone or that I would be too confused to truly enjoy the whole experience. Fortunately, those same worries are what made the time I spent there really enjoyable. I, in fact, did not know anybody there, but that just encouraged me to talk to more people, and since I really didn't know a lot about what I was getting into, it seemed like each day was exciting and eventful. My advice is to just hop off the fence and go experience something new."

**EMMA:** "I would definitely recommend attending the event! You meet wonderful people, learn new things, eat good food, and have a lot of fun!"



Source: SafeElectricity.org

# Don't Become Electricity's **PATH TO GROUND**



When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, **the ground and objects can become energized.**

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire or padmount transformer (green box), **know what to do to save your life and the lives of others:**

## **CAR ACCIDENT**

**Stay inside your vehicle** or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.



**Call 9-1-1** and report that there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.

**Wait for the utility crew** to arrive to de-energize the power.

**Do not exit** until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

## **ONLY EXIT IF THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE**

Cross your arms over your chest and **make a clean jump out.**

**Do not** touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Make solid hops with your **feet together** as far away as you can.

**Do not** return to the vehicle.



## **IF YOU ARE A BYSTANDER**

**Do not approach the scene** to try and help.

**Stay at least 50 feet away** and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.



## BUDGET PAYMENTS RECALCULATION TO TAKE PLACE IN OCTOBER

**M**embers 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. Rock Energy will 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.

### **BUDGET BILLING VIDEO**

To learn more, check out Rock Energy's BUDGET BILLING video on our web site. To view the video, scan the QR code here.



About 1,300 members are currently enrolled in Budget Billing. If you'd like to join them, our energy services manager suggests that now would be a good time as we approach the winter heating season.

You will pay the 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, or 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).

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