



## More Power to You

# LIFE-CHANGING STORIES REVEAL DANGERS OF ELECTRICITY



Shane L. Larson,  
Chief Executive  
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**S**afety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. Each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted because of electrical accidents.

Many of these accidents are preventable. We use electricity every day for so many things that we forget it can be deadly. Its invisible force is so commonplace that it's easy to overlook electrical hazards, even if they're right in front of you.

Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange, which provides insurance coverage to Rock Energy and many other energy co-ops, reports that claims of public contact with energized equipment increased significantly in May. A total of 18 claims were reported, compared with the six-year average of 11 for May.

Three of those accidents resulted in death. In one instance, a co-op member died while working on an irrigation pump. The other two fatalities involved a contractor who hit underground lines while installing an anchor and an irrigation contractor who made contact on the member's side of the meter.

Accidents involving overhead lines easily can be avoided because the lines are in plain sight. The safety slogan "Look Up and Live" reminds everyone that they should look for overhead power lines whenever they're working or playing outside.

Some of Federated's public contact claims in May involved overhead lines:

- A sailboat mast snagged a communications line, bringing down three electric poles.
- A member hit overhead lines with a metal pole.
- A member trying to remove a tree limb made contact with overhead lines.

- A contractor's backhoe hit a telecommunications line, breaking a pole and bringing down electric lines.

Fortunately, no one died in these accidents, but they could have.

Underground lines are trickier because we can't see them. That's why it's so important to call 811 before every digging project. The call and service are absolutely free. Professional locators are sent to your planned digging site and mark underground lines with flags or spray paint, so you know where not to dig.

Safety—your safety, our workers' safety, the public's safety—is a priority for Rock Energy. Over time, we have created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above everything. That's why many of the articles in this magazine and on the [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop) website focus on safety.

I'd also like to call your attention to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org). The website is the public awareness program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization whose members include hundreds of energy providers, including Rock

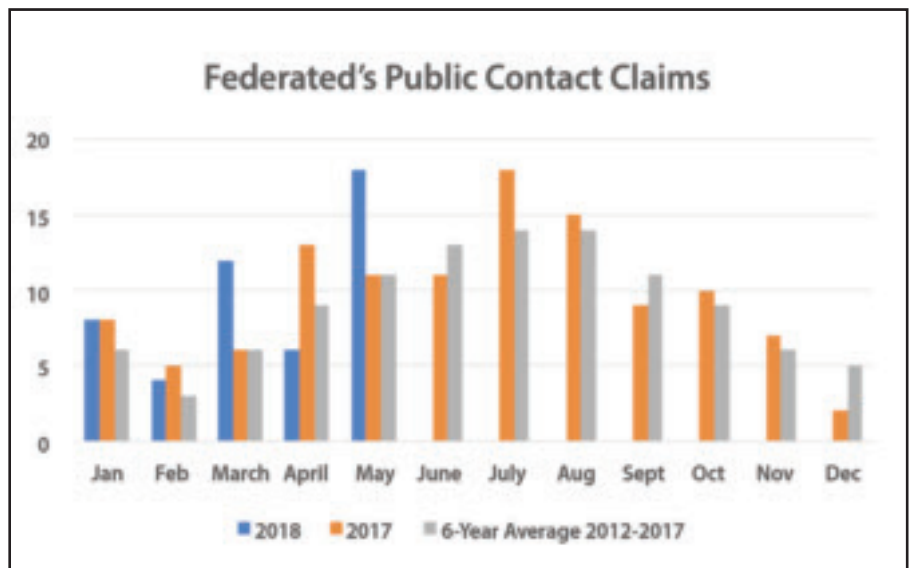
Energy. The council's mission is to create a safer, smarter world by providing life-saving, energy-saving, and cost-saving information and resources.

One of the group's programs is called "Teach Learn Care." The TLC campaign shares stories of people whose lives have changed because of electrical accidents. It encourages people to teach what you know, learn what you need to, and care enough to share it with others.

Go to the [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) website and click on "Public Education" to find a wealth of safety information you can use and share. In the videos section, you can learn about a former lineman who was seriously injured in an accident involving overhead power lines. Told by the lineman and his family, the story helps professionals and do-it-yourselfers understand the importance of planning projects to avoid contact with overhead lines.

The life-changing impacts of power line accidents are detailed in another video that features an accident survivor and his family. He lost his left hand and sternum and suffered numerous burns and injuries because of his accident with an overhead power line.

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# HOW TO BEAT THE HEAT?



# STAY HYDRATED!

When the temperature soars past 90 degrees and the heat index hits 105, just being outside causes a person to sweat. Imagine working in those conditions!

Rock Energy Cooperative linemen, tree crews, and natural gas technicians don't have to imagine what it's like. They know because they're out in the heat making sure electricity is flowing to your air conditioner and natural gas is keeping your appliances running.

The key to working in hot, humid weather is staying hydrated, workers say. They drink at least a gallon of water during their 8-hour shifts and then usually another gallon after work.

Before crews head out for the day, they can be seen at the ice machines in the co-op warehouses filling up their coolers and water jugs. That's standard practice during the summer and especially important when the mercury creeps toward 100 degrees.

It's impossible not to sweat in those weather conditions. Sweating plays an important health role because it helps maintain body temperature. When we're hot and we sweat, that moisture evaporates and cools us off—a bit. Some workers have an extra shirt in their truck, so they can change halfway through the day.

The weather is part of their job, and they take it in stride. Whether it's hot or cold, raining or snowing, they work outdoors to make sure you have the energy you need. Most wouldn't even think about trading it for an inside job.

But here's the million-dollar question: Would they rather work when the heat index is 105 or when the wind chill is 20 below zero? Most say they prefer the cold weather because you can always wear more layers of clothes. But when you're hot, there's not a lot you can do. You just stay hot.

A lineman works along Rockton Road under the blazing sun. The temperature was 91 with a heat index of 105.

## MEMBER SURVEY COMING SOON

Your opinion matters to us!

Rock Energy Cooperative is participating in a member survey project through the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

You may be randomly selected to participate in the project. Members who complete the survey will be entered into a drawing for the chance to win a \$250 bill credit.

Neither the AIEC nor the survey vendor, Inside Information, will ask for credit card information or sell or share your private information.

Rock Energy will receive the anonymous

survey results and evaluate the information to help improve our service to you. The more completed survey questionnaires we receive, the more accurate the information will be. If you're selected to participate, please take the time to answer the short survey.

We anticipate that survey questionnaires will be mailed in August or September.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact Barbara Uebelacker, communications director, at 866-752-4550 or [barbu@rock.coop](mailto:barbu@rock.coop). We appreciate your help!



# GREAT NIGHT AT THE BALLPARK

Rock Energy Cooperative members filled the stands at Beloit's Telfer Park on Saturday, June 16, for the annual Rock Energy Night at the Ballpark.

Rock Energy members can still buy discounted tickets for Beloit Snappers home games at the Janesville and South Beloit co-op offices. They are \$2 each and can be used during any 2018 regular season game.

While you're at the office, pick up a Snappers schedule so you can plan your trip to the ballpark.

Right: Beloit Snappers right-fielder Mickey McDonald takes a swing during the game against the Clinton LumberKings. Clinton won the game 9-4.

Below: Denny Svehla (front right), also known as Denny Diamond, filled the stadium with Neil Diamond hits before the game. Performing with him are his sons Lucas (left) and Spenser.



Left: Lukas Kelly (left) and Anthony Taylor spin around and then try to race to the finish line during one of the kid games between innings. Right: Cayden Stewart (left) and Emmett Carpenter tried to throw rubber chickens in a basket during another game.



## VISIT WEBSITE BEFORE INSTALLING SOLAR

If you're thinking about installing a solar generation system on your property, make sure to learn all the facts before signing a contract.

To get started, go to [www.rock.coop/distributed-generation](http://www.rock.coop/distributed-generation). There you will find a list of frequently asked questions, guidelines for technical requirements, our interconnection agreement, and details about our Small Distributed Generation Rate. This information can be provided to potential vendors so they are aware of the cooperative's technical requirements.

If you have any questions after reviewing the information, please call us at 866-752-4550 or email [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop).

*Mark your calendar!*

### MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY 2018 PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**Saturday,  
Sept. 15  
8 to 10:30 a.m.**

**REC Headquarters,  
2815 Kennedy Road,  
Janesville, Wis.**



*Watch for  
Details!*



Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3, in observance of Labor Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 4. 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 866-752-4550.

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Other videos share the story of two teenagers who survived an auto accident involving power lines because they had learned the right steps to take to stay safe, a feature about the importance of taking the proper steps to ensure safe digging, a story about the dangers of operating large equipment near overhead power lines, and the tragic account of a 12-year-old girl who lost her life to household current through a faulty outdoor lamp.

A 30-minute live power line demonstration also can be seen on the site. It illustrates indoor and outdoor safety considerations related to home, work, and play. The need for electrical safety is important for everyone, young or old. Information and awareness creates life-saving attitudes and actions.

Our goal is to educate people so they can avoid tragic accidents, injuries, and death. Please stay safe as you enjoy the rest of the summer. And, as always, let us know if there's anything we can do to improve our service to you. We truly are grateful to be your energy provider.

### Shane Larson, CEO

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### Barbara Uebelacker, Editor



**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936