



Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

Waverly Parade



Stefan Sporrer, Dalton Brown, Stephanie and Jeff Lancaster distributed toys and treats.

RECC equity rotation will be paid as a bill credit!

At the July 23, 2019 board meeting, Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative (RECC) directors approved the rotation/retirement of **\$387,846.10** in capital credit equity. All current and former member-owners, who received electric service and contributed to margins in **1984**, will be repaid. As an active member, you will see a "Capital Credit Refund" on your September bill, which will be mailed on or about October 7.



Capital credit equity comes from the cooperative's margins, which amounts to the difference between the money we collect during the year minus our operating expenses. Until it's repaid to members, the equity is used to finance new construction and system improvements. RECC has returned over \$4 million in member equity since 1978.

A key difference between electric cooperatives and investor-

owned utilities are capital credits. An investor-owned utility returns a portion of their profits to shareholders. But, RECC allocates 100 percent of our margins to the members, who purchase electricity during the year.

Estates of deceased members can continue receiving capital credit retirements or choose a discounted capital credit equity payout to close out a membership account. Please let us know if you have any questions about your capital credit account. Thank you for your past purchases from RECC!



Thinking about installing solar?

As interest in renewable energy grows, some members may be considering the installation of solar panels. Since these types of systems generate power, they have the capability of returning electricity back to the electric grid, which presents a safety concern for the cooperative. RECC policies are designed to address these potential hazards by requiring UL listed components, accessible disconnects, proper labeling, qualified installers and \$1 million in liability insurance.

For additional safety, interconnected solar arrays require line voltage to operate; if utility power is lost, the solar system will shut down. This feature protects line personnel doing maintenance or repairs. Solar arrays are typically not used like generators for back-up power during outages, but batteries can be integrated into the design and provide limited back-up power.

Another consideration is the size of the solar system. Solar arrays totaling 10kW or less are eligible for

quarterly net metering. Members are credited one-to-one for each kWh generated and the unused kWhs are banked as a credit for up to three months. The eligibility is per member and not per meter and limits 10kW to one parcel of land. Systems exceeding 10kW are ineligible for net metering but could be credited at MISO's real-time price for our Energy Delivery Point, which has been averaging around 3 cents per kWh.

Before buying a solar array, examine the economics and determine the potential savings. RECC offers several incentive rates that are not eligible with net metering. Increased rates should be factored in for members who have geothermal and heat pumps, if they are currently on the Dual Meter Rate. When net metering is activated, all heating, cooling and water heating use will be billed at the general rate. The same is true for farmers who benefit from the Grain Drying Rate.

There still may be an opportunity to save money with solar, but

members need to do a fair analysis. Keep in mind that solar power is not free; members are simply pre-paying, several years in advance, for the technology to produce future electricity. Borrowing money or withdrawing funds from an interest-bearing account will also alter the economics of the project. Finally, members must verify their eligibility for state and federal programs and confirm that funds are still available for their project. If everything looks good with your payback analysis and you do decide to invest in solar, contact our office as early as possible. We will be happy to guide you through the process.

Additional information is available on recc.coop. Just click the downloadable forms tab and you will find the interconnection and net metering policies. If you have any questions, contact our office at 217-438-6197 to speak with us directly as you progress with your system.

Judging 4-H projects at the Illinois State Fair



Engineering Technician Nick Hays calculates scores as Manager of Member Services Jeff Lancaster questions a 4-H participant about his project. There were over 20 contestants in Electricity 1,2, and 3 on this day alone.

Drayton Davis hired as apprentice lineman



Drayton became a full-time RECC employee on Aug. 1, 2019. He will receive his electrical line distribution/lineman certificate after completing his last night class at LLCC. Drayton has been doing an internship at the co-op since January and was recently employed as a laborer. He graduated from Athens High School and was an all-conference selection for basketball and received all-state honors in football.

RECC employees do "Rock the Block" in Carlinville

On Tuesday, July 30, Carlinville School District celebrated the 2nd annual Rock the Block event. More than 400 families prepared for the new school year by visiting Carlinville High School for fun, food and free services. Rock the Block provided 85 haircuts, 200 backpacks filled with school supplies, 150 pairs of school shoes, 350 pork burgers, and countless smiles, hugs, and "thank-yous." Kids played carnival games, interacted with a bomb-sensing robot, rode in a bucket truck and climbed on a fire truck. Lori Reiher and the organization thanked all 60 sponsors and RECC for providing bucket truck rides.



Apprentice Lineman Matt Evans and Engineering Technician Chris Bridges gave over 150 bucket truck rides during their four-hour visit.

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Board meeting reports.

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Budget Billing enrollment open

October is the time to recalculate Budget Billing for the upcoming year. Look for the new amount to appear on your November bill. For those who are interested in enrolling, contact Shelley Crocks and she can help get the process started. Any member with at least one year of billing history, and a good payment record, can start on the Budget Billing plan in November.



Picture taken in RECC territory in October 2018.