



More Power to You

# It's National Co-op Month – Let's Celebrate!

Shane L. Larson,  
Chief Executive Officer

October is National Co-op Month!

This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Rock Energy Cooperative, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve. Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When big investor-owned utilities wouldn't provide service to rural Americans 80 years ago, electric cooperatives came to the rescue. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to you, the members of the cooperative. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are led and governed by your neighbors. Our leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines.

We know our members also have a valuable perspective, and that's why we seek input from our members at community events and our annual meeting.

Ultimately, our entire area benefits from these programs because of our community, which empowers the co-op through membership and through participation in programs like Co-op Connections, the Back-to-School Supplies Drive, the Rock Energy Scholarship, and other programs.

We hope you think of Rock Energy as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for our area. We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you—because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.



## October is National Co-op Month!





# Rock Energy Cooperative Upcoming Director Elections

The Rock Energy Cooperative Nominating Committee will be selecting candidates to run for board of director positions that will be on the ballot at next year's annual meeting, which will be held in **MARCH 2021**.

## Districts up for election are:

### DISTRICT 1

Dunkirk, Albion, Porter, and Fulton in Wisconsin

### DISTRICT 3


Johnstown, Bradford, and Darien in Wisconsin

### DISTRICT 5

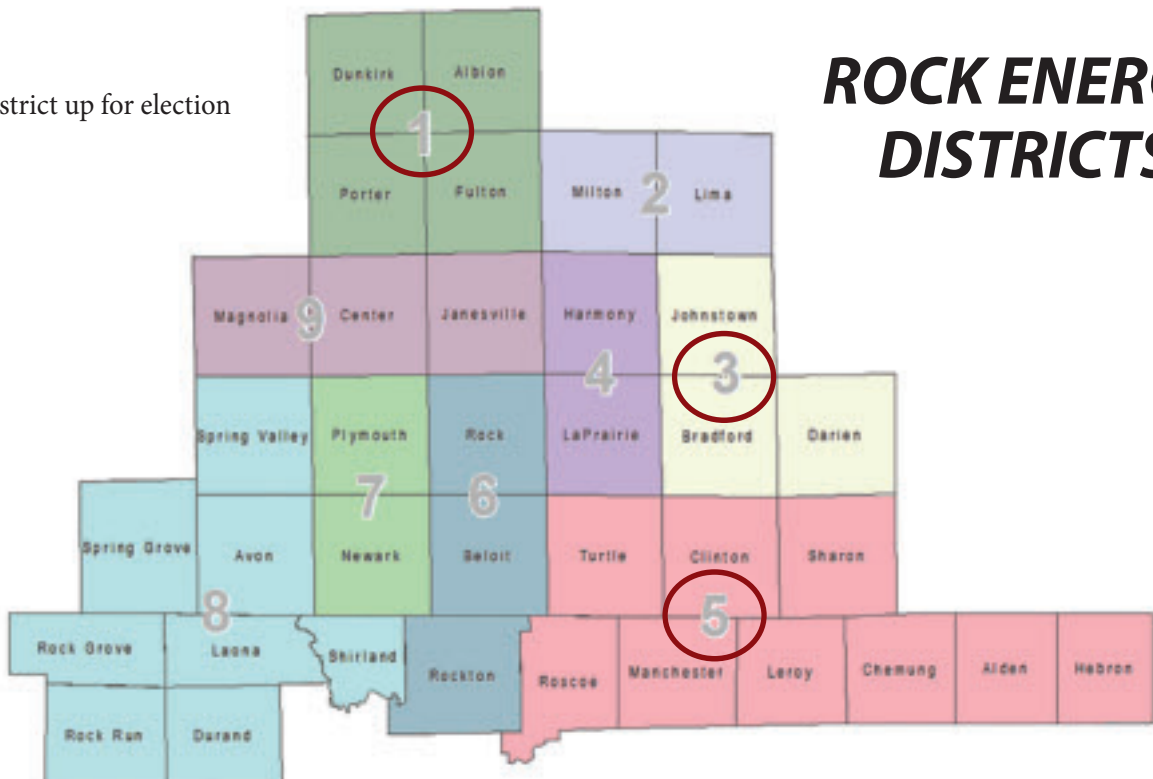
Turtle, Clinton, and Sharon in Wisconsin

Roscoe, Manchester, Leroy, Chemung, Alden, and Hebron in Illinois

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 co-op at 866-752-4550, or send an email to [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop) **BY NOV. 27**.

 = District up for election

## ROCK ENERGY DISTRICTS





# Be Safe Before Digging, Call 811 First

Calling 811 sounds simple, right? It does until you realize that about half of all homeowners don't call 811 before digging and that an underground utility line is damaged about every six minutes because of it, according to the Common Ground Alliance.

With more than 200 million miles of underground utilities in the country, calling 811 before any digging project to have underground utility lines marked for free is the safest and only way to go—whether you're planting a shrub or installing a fence—to prevent the outages, property damage, injuries, and even death that can occur when underground utilities are hit.

To prepare for the free markings, homeowners, or any contractors hired by them, should pre-mark the area where the digging will be done with white paint, stakes with white flags, chalk or any other material, including flour or sugar. Then, at least two to three days before the project, 811 should always be called to have any underground utility lines marked.

## Here are some additional safety tips to homeowners and others working on digging projects, including:

- Give yourself enough time by calling 811 on Monday or Tuesday for weekend digging projects.
- If a contractor is doing the digging, confirm that they have called 811. No work should begin unless the utility lines are marked.
- Consider moving your project's location if it is too close to utility line markings.
- Hand tools should be used when digging within 18-24 inches of the outside edge of underground utilities, and utility flags, stake, or paint should be left in place until the project is finished.
- If the utility line is visible, dig in parallel with the utility line and use all precautions when removing the soil from around the utility line.

**Call 911 or 1-800-611-1911 immediately if a utility line is hit.**



## COLOR CODES FOR MARKING UNDERGROUND UTILITY LINES

<b>RED</b> Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables	<b>YELLOW</b> Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials	<b>ORANGE</b> Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit	<b>BLUE</b> Potable Water
<b>GREEN</b> Sewers and Drain Lines	<b>PURPLE</b> Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines	<b>PINK</b> Temporary Survey Markings	<b>WHITE</b> Proposed Excavation



# 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. With that, we'd like to remind you of some important things you can do to help protect your data:

- **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.** 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. Be aware of odd emails, phone numbers, messages!
- **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. Visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org) to see them all.

## Budget Payments Recalculated This Month

Avoid winter surprises by enrolling now! Members on Rock Energy's Budget Billing plan will see their monthly payment amounts change this month.

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. We'll 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 in October 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.

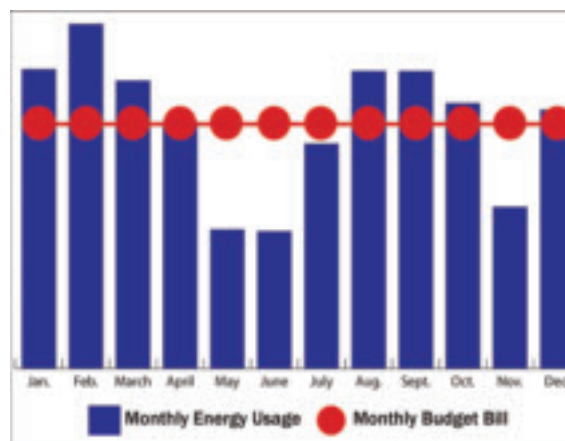
About 1,300 members are currently enrolled in Budget Billing. If you'd like

to join them, Stephanie Cammelot, consumer accounting supervisor, 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, 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 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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**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936