

HI-LINES

A NEWSLETTER FOR JO-CARROLL ENERGY MEMBERS

CONTENTS



Elizabeth, Illinois



800-858-5522



www.jocarroll.com

Rate increase approved for 2021

Jo-Carroll Energy is implementing a two-part rate increase effective in March. I know this is not welcome news, and I want to stress this is an action we do not take lightly.

Members will see an average increase of 5.5 percent. Making up that increase are:

- a 3 percent increase included in the 2021 budget and approved by the board of directors in December 2020. The increase is necessary to cover the increased costs from our suppliers and to maintain adequate financial ratios with our lenders.
- A 2.5 percent increase deferred in the Spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That increase was originally approved by the board in 2019 as part of the 2020 budget, also due to increased costs.

These rate changes also apply to our natural gas members, primarily due to increased costs from our natural gas transmission pipeline suppliers. Members will see the changes reflected on their billing statements in April.

As a not-for-profit member-owned cooperative, we strive every day to deliver energy to our members safely, efficiently and responsibly. Unfortunately, we must implement these changes so that we are able to continue to provide you with the reliable,

quality service you expect.

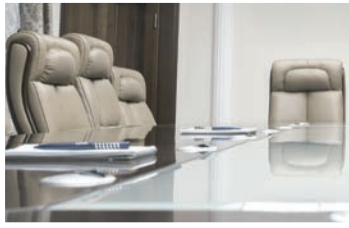
While profit is not the goal, we must recover the costs of doing business, as well as maintain sufficient margins to reinvest in the distribution system and satisfy covenants with our lenders.

Through cost cutting measures and delaying certain budgeted items, we were able to meet our debt service covenant this past year, but delayed projects must be completed to meet safety regulations and to continue to maintain reliable services.

We also must continue to meet our financial covenants so as not to jeopardize the fiber grants that we have been awarded, which will provide additional value to many of you. In our recent survey, 76 percent indicated high-speed internet is absolutely necessary to the quality of life, up 19 percent from last year's survey results.

As we move forward, we will continue to focus on operational excellence resulting in improved efficiencies and cost reductions. We anticipate revenue growth by adding more high-speed fiber internet service members. Added fiber services will also spread fixed costs across more members,

▶ Continued on 20C



20B

Board of directors

Petitions available for 2021 director nominations



20C

Sharing Success Grants

Three grants totaling \$7,500 to be awarded in 2021



20E

Electric vehicles

Electric co-ops create EV charging network

For your information

Your Board of Directors:

David Senn

Chairman

District 7

Russell Holesinger

Vice Chairman

District 8

Marcia Stanger

Secretary

District 3

Martin Werner

District 1

Joseph Mattingley

District 2

Dan Tindell

District 4

Patricia Smith

District 5

Thomas Lundy

District 6

Larry Carroll

District 9

Robert Kuhns

Treasurer

District 10

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

Elizabeth

793 U.S. Route 20 West

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Savanna

103 Chicago Ave.

7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Geneseo

1004 S. Chicago St.

7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Services and Billing Questions:

(800) 858-5522

www.jocarroll.com

For emergencies and outages call:

(800) 858-5522



Petitions available for 2021 director nominations

Nomination petitions for the 2021 Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Director election are now available for the four director posts that are up in 2021.

Director posts up for election in 2021 include:

- District 5 (now represented by Pat Smith of Galena)
- District 7 (now represented by Dave Senn of Mount Carroll)
- District 8 (now represented by Russell Holesinger of Fulton)
- District 10 (now represented by Bob Kuhns of Geneseo)

Running for the board of directors and voting in the elections are benefits of being a co-op member. Directors are democratically elected by the membership.

Any Jo-Carroll Energy member residing in a district that is up for election – including the incumbent director – may petition for nomination in that district. Members interested in seeking election to the board may find more information and the nomination petition on the cooperative's website at jocarroll.com/2021-elections. Anyone without internet access may call the cooperative at 800-858-5522 and request a petition be mailed to them.

Petitions must be signed by at least 25 Jo-Carroll Energy members residing in the district for which the director is to be elected.

Petitions must be filed at Jo-Carroll Energy's headquarters no earlier than

March 8 and no later than June 4. Petitions may be mailed to: Jo-Carroll Energy, PO Box 390, Elizabeth, IL 61028. Petitions may also be dropped in the secure drop box at the office. Candidates should provide a short biographical sketch and a digital photo to be used in candidate profiles to be published in the co-op newsletter, Hi-Lines.

In order to qualify to have their names placed on the ballot, all nominees must participate in an orientation process provided by the attorney for the cooperative, assuring that all nominees fully understand the expectations and responsibilities of directors. These include but are not limited to: time demands, education expectations and fiduciary duties.

Complete details on director qualifications and the nomination procedure can be found in Jo-Carroll Energy's bylaws posted on jocarroll.com/minutes-bylaws.

Election of directors is conducted by mail and online prior to the annual meeting of members, with results announced at the meeting. If only one candidate files for a district, election is by vote of acclamation at the meeting. The 2021 Annual Meeting of Members is set for Aug. 3.

Director candidate petitions must be received at the cooperative's Elizabeth headquarters by June 4 for the name to appear on the 2021 ballot.

Applications open for Sharing Success grants



Jo-Carroll Energy is seeking applications for the 2021 Sharing Success grants. JCE will award up to three Sharing Success grants totaling \$7,500 this year.

Deadline for application is March 30. In addition, matching funds for the three grants will be applied for through CoBank's Sharing Success matching grant program, bringing the total possible grants to \$15,000.

To qualify for the grants, an organization must be a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, school or governmental entity such as a police, fire or ambulance department and be located within the JCE service territory. Applications also must have a broad reach and impact for the community served.

Recipients of the 2020 Sharing Success grants were:

- Savanna Police Department for a Watchguard video camera system
- Chadwick Fire Department for a positive pressure fan and tools
- Antique Engine & Tractor Show (Geneseo) to create a learning center and exhibit about food and farms.

Earlier Sharing Success matching grants were made to: Savanna Fire Department, Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District, Thomson Chamber of Commerce, Fulton Police Department, Village of Chadwick/Chadwick Police Department, East Dubuque Fire Department, the Galena Arts & Recreation Center and Village of Thomson.

Organizations interested in applying for Sharing Success grants should contact Merri Sevey, JCE vice president of human resources at msevey@jocarroll.com or 800-858-5522, ext. 1216. Details and application can be found at jocarroll.com.

Monica Kraus

CoBank is a cooperative lending institution that provides loans and other financial services to vital industries throughout rural America. CoBank is headquartered outside Denver, Colo., serving customers from regional banking centers across the U.S. The Sharing Success matching grant program was launched in 2012 as a way to highlight the International Year of Cooperatives. It is designed to celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in individual communities across the country.

► Continued from 20A

which will help with overall rate stability.

We understand that many of our members have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to minimizing the impact of increasing energy costs. We continue to encourage members to reach out to us if they are concerned about being able to pay their energy

bills, working with members on a case-by-case basis regarding options and assistance that may be available to them.

Our energy advisor is available to discuss energy efficiency and steps individual members may be able to take to save energy and money. Jo-Carroll offers an extensive energy efficiency incentive program. Highlights of that

program can be found inside this issue and are detailed on our website at jocarroll.com/energy-efficiency-incentives.

Additional specifics about the 2021 increase and new rates will be communicated in future Hi-Line issues, as well as our electronic newsletter and on jocarroll.com.

Geothermal tax credit gets two-year extension

A 26 percent federal tax credit for geothermal installations is extended for two more years.

The tax credit extension is part of the federal government's \$900 million COVID relief package that was passed by Congress in December 2020.

The extension is good news for members considering

geothermal. It keeps the tax credit at 26 percent for residential geothermal for 2021 and 2022, essentially extending the previous credit two more years. The new law extends the credits for geothermal heat pump installations through 2023.

Residential credits are 26 percent through 2022, step down to 22 percent in 2023

and expire Jan. 1, 2024.

Commercial credits remain at 10 percent through 2023.

Jo-Carroll Energy offers members an energy efficiency incentive for geothermal installations. Contact energy advisor John Scott at jscott@jocarroll.com or 800-858-5522, ext. 1339 for complete information.

2021 Residential rebates summary

For our electric members

HVAC - Geothermal

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Upgrade existing ground source heat pump Interior equipment | \$500/ton |
| New Installations | \$700/ton |
| Ground source heat pump | |
| Exterior loop field | |
| Installation cost | |

HVAC – Residential air source systems

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Air source heat pump & mini-split SEER 14.0, HSPF 8.2 or EER 11 | \$200/ton |
| New furnace w/ECM motor | \$35 |

Electric Appliances

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Inductive range | \$25 |
| Heat pump clothes dryer | \$50 |
| Energy Star Electric Appliances | |
| Clothes dryer | \$25 |
| Clothes washer | \$25 |
| Dehumidifier | \$25 |
| Dishwasher | \$25 |
| Refrigerator | \$25 |
| Freezer | \$25 |
| Smart Power Strip | \$5 |

Recycling

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|----------------------------------|------|
| Freezer | \$25 |
| Refrigerator | \$25 |
| Window air conditioner | \$25 |

Lighting

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|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Occupancy Sensor | \$5/sensor |
| LED Lamp/fixture | \$1 per 1600 lumens |
| LED Exit Sign | \$5 |

Electric Water Heaters

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Heat pump water heater | \$300 |
|----------------------------------|-------|

Following require load control

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|
| Residential high efficiency water heater | |
| 75-99 gallons | \$150 |
| Residential high efficiency water heater | |
| ≥100 gallons | \$300 |
| Solar storage water heater w/electric backup | |
| 75-99 gallons | \$150 |
| ≥100 gallons | \$300 |

Touchstone Energy Home Program

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| New home must meet specific program/code requirements | \$500 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|

Conservation

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Faucet flow restrictor | \$1 |
| Shower flow restrictor | \$5 |

For our natural gas members

Natural Gas appliances

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Stove | \$50 |
| Clothes dryer | \$50 |
| Fireplace insert | \$50 |
| Other | \$50 |
| Generator | \$50 |

Natural Gas outdoor appliances

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Pool heater | 10% of equipment & material cost up to \$150 |
| Hot tub | 10% of equipment & material cost up to \$150 |
| Deck heater | 10% of equipment & material cost up to \$100 |
| Outdoor fire pit | 10% of equipment & material cost up to \$100 |
| Grill | 10% of equipment & material cost up to \$100 |

Natural Gas heating

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Natural gas furnace/boiler AFUE ≥ 95% | \$125 |
| Fuel switching incentives also available | |

Visit jocarroll.com/energy-efficiency-incentives for more information on our incentive program and all requirements.

Check out agricultural, commercial and industrial rebates online

Electric co-ops create CHARGE EV

Regional electric vehicle charging network will alleviate range anxiety, encourage EV adoption

Jo-Carroll Energy is one of 29 electric co-ops that have created a regional electric (EV) charging network across Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Named CHARGE EV, LLC., the network includes more than 30 Level 2 and Level 3 charging stations.

"We want to ensure when EV drivers leave their co-op service area they know other EV charging stations are available throughout the upper Midwest, powered by electric co-ops," said Mike Casper, Jo-Carroll Energy president and CEO.

The group of co-ops is planning for future growth in EVs and want to alleviate "range anxiety," which is the concern some people have about traveling in an EV without a place to charge their vehicle.

"Our goal is to provide EV owners peace of mind driving from Iowa to northern Wisconsin or from Minnesota to Illinois, knowing there are co-op powered chargers along



Jo-Carroll Energy's Honda Hybrid recharges at a co-op charging station at JCE's Savannah office. The charging station is now part of the regional co-op electric vehicle charging network, CHARGE EV.

their route," said Jeff Springer, manager of innovation and efficient electrification at Dairyland Power Cooperative. "That will give people confidence to consider an EV and encourage growth in the EV market."

The CHARGE EV infrastructure is just the start as the group plans for additional investments in the EV market including member education on installing home chargers and encouraging members to test drive EVs.

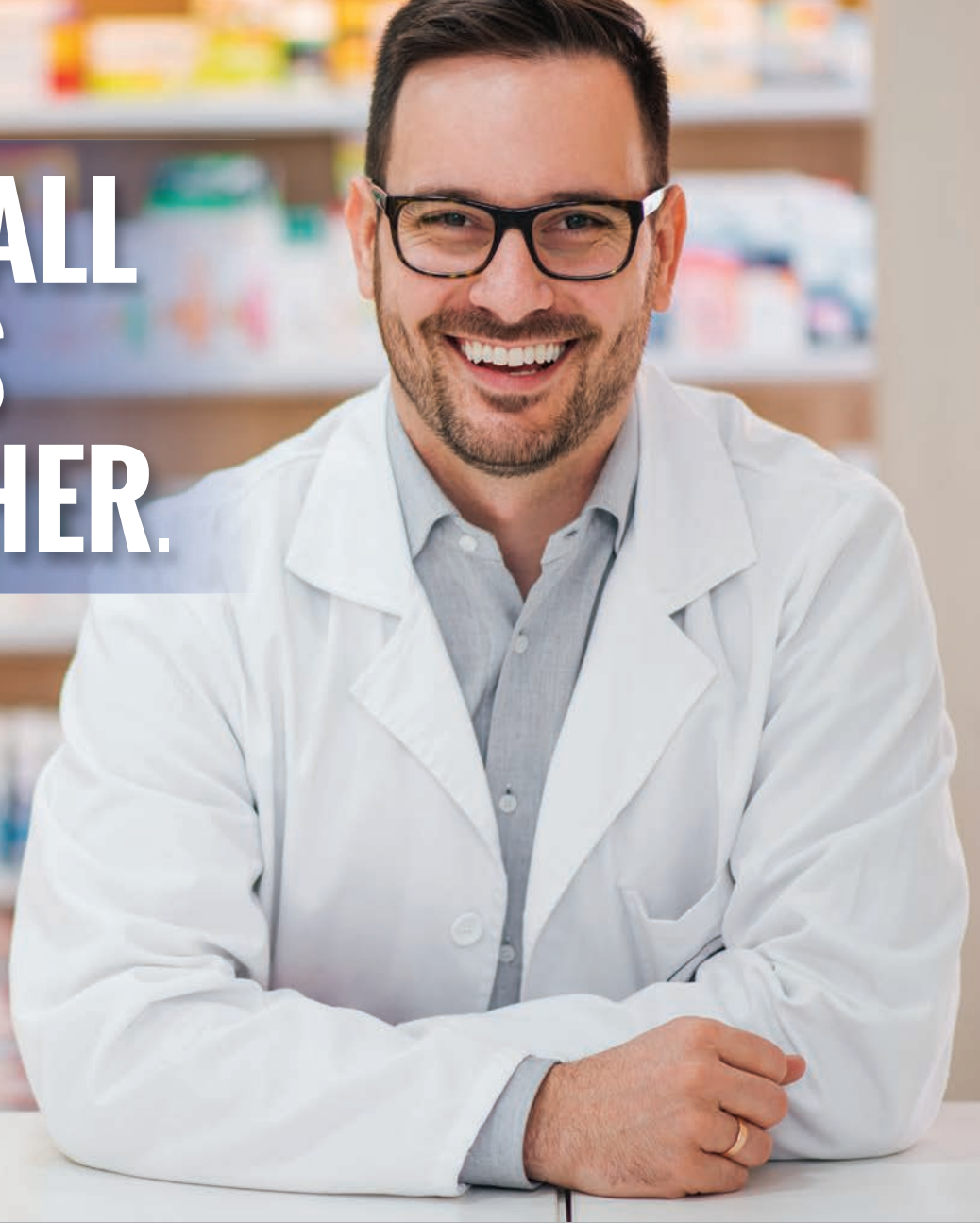
"We are proving this can be done in the upper Midwest where EV adoption has been slow, but we believe the real value will be in having other utilities join under the CHARGE EV brand," Casper said. "We hope in the near future there is a national co-op EV brand and charging network."

Charger locations and other information can be found at www.charge.coop.



Space heating and cooling account for a large portion of the average home's energy use. A programmable or smart thermostat can help you control the temperature of your home and save energy.

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.



Let's Keep Small Businesses Thriving.

It's time to power a Small Business Comeback across America.

Co-op Connections is a free member benefit program brought to you by Jo-Carroll Energy. Download the free app to find prescription discounts from your local pharmacy. Our network includes more than 20,000 independent pharmacies and 60,000+ overall. Unlock Healthy Savings benefits for your whole family with Co-op Connections!

Visit www.SmallBusinessComeback.coop for more information.

#POWERON





Benefits of Fiber-To-The-Home

Speeds you need to enjoy your online experience at home



Fiber internet provides more reliability and fewer interruptions

Nothing can alter a fiber optic network connection, except a physical cut to the fiber or the destruction of the building it's in. With fiber, you can expect a consistent, true speed, even between the "rush hours" of 7-11 p.m. So, don't worry, no dropped connections while you're binge watching your favorite show.



Fiber internet gives you the capability to connect multiple devices at once

Households now have an average of 7 devices connected to the internet at once. All of these devices have to share the available bandwidth. The higher your Mbps, the more devices you can have connected at one time. No more asking someone to stop using the connection in order for you to be able to surf or stream.



Fiber internet gives you the speeds you need

Fiber gives you speeds you need to enhance your online experience whether you are streaming the latest episode of your favorite show, sharing photos or uploading an assignment for an online class. If speeds become 1,000 times faster in 20 years, fiber connections will still be able to support them.



Fiber internet increases your home's value

Access to fiber internet may increase a home's value by up to 3.1% as stated in a study done by the Fiber to the Home Council in 2015. This is comparable to adding a half bath, fireplace or a quarter of a swimming pool to a home. Investing in fiber internet improves the economic performance of a community as well as its quality of life.

Track Our Progress

Visit connectSP.com/fiber/communities to find your neighborhood and see if service is available in your area.

Get connected or express your interest at:

connectSP.com/iwantfiber



A service of Jo-Carroll Energy



800-858-5522



connectSP.com



793 US 20 West, Elizabeth, IL 61028



Jo-Carroll Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

scholarship opportunities for

2021



Jo-Carroll Energy will award up to \$25,000 to students from its service territory through its scholarship program in 2021.

The Jo-Carroll Energy Scholarship Program

*All Jo-Carroll Energy scholarships are funded by unclaimed and donated capital credits.
Application deadline: March 1, 2021. Director's scholarship: May 1, 2021.
Applications must be submitted online at jocarroll.com.*

6 Jo-Carroll Energy Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to current high school seniors who will enroll in a college or university; students parents or guardians must be JCE members.

4 Two-year/Technical Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to current high schools seniors who will attend two-year, technical or trade schools; students' parents or guardians must be JCE members.

10 "Director's Scholarships" of \$500 each to be awarded to current high school seniors; students' parents or guardians must be JCE members.

2 Lineworker scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 each to students who plan to attend lineworker school; students' parents or guardians must be a JCE member members.

4 Adult or "non-traditional" students in the amount of \$1,500 each to cooperative members who are returning to school or will attend a post-secondary or accredited training program for the first time. The applicant must be a JCE member in good standing (this scholarship is not intended for high school seniors or students who enrolled in college directly after high school in the last four years).

jocarroll.com/scholarship-program

For more information regarding any of the Jo-Carroll, contact Peggy Francomb, Jo-Carroll Energy manager of communications and marketing, at pfrancomb@jocarroll.com.