



Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative



President/CEO David Stuva introduces Sean Middleton

New president/CEO announced

The RECC Board of Directors has selected Sean Middleton as the next president/CEO. He will assume the role on Jan. 19, 2023, following the retirement of current President/CEO David Stuva. Sean was informally introduced to the employees in October, and his first day of employment will be Nov. 14, 2022. Look for an official introduction and more information on Sean's career in the January 2023 edition of the Rural Highlights.



EVs and the transformation of an industry



The future of transportation is trending toward electricity, but 98% of drivers still prefer traditional automobiles with internal combustion engines. Their preferences are noted and mostly warranted since vehicles with gas engines are known for their quality, dependability and longevity. Pressured by the EPA, the auto industry has made these vehicles more efficient, too. National C.A.F.E. standards are now above 30 MPG, and hybrid technology is pushing those numbers even higher. How difficult could it be to convince millions of satisfied drivers to adopt the views held by 2% of the driving nation?



Never underestimate the familiarity factor. Consumers know what they like and what they are comfortable with. In the late '90s, members

were slow to adopt CFL bulbs because they were perceived as inferior to incandescent bulbs, even though they were more efficient, consumed less energy and decreased electric bills. Consumers remained loyal to their preferred bulb, and their concerns were warranted because the CFL revolution was premature. Early CFL models were slow to illuminate, lacked clarity and cast harsh tints throughout the home. Most were non-dimmable and struggled to produce adequate light in cold climates. All CFLs were expensive and contained small amounts of mercury. Fortunately, the development of LED technology began to flourish and ultimately provided a better alternative to CFL and incandescent bulbs. Eventually, energy standards were raised to a level that prohibited lighting manufacturers from producing many of the traditional alternatives.



Members had a similar response when water restrictions were applied to the manufacturing of new toilets. In 1994, the mandated 1.6-gallons-per-flush, or GPF, replaced the traditional toilets that required 3.5 to 5 GPF. Lots of water was saved, but many consumers were unhappy with the weak flush that resulted from the change. Stories emerged about clogging toilets and the necessity of multiple flushes. In the following years, technology improved and most of those problems were resolved. In fact, flush technology continues to improve and ultra-high-efficiency toilets now require as little as 0.8 GPF.



History has taught us that large-scale changes are not always consumer-driven. Most are mandated or implemented

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with a degree of government intervention. A notable exception is the flat-screen television. Every aspect of flat-screen technology was desirable except for the initial cost. Consumers loved them. The picture was amazing, and viewers preferred the wider screens. They were lightweight, compact and could be mounted anywhere. Within five years, the overwhelming demand for flat-screens had lowered the cost enough to make bulky TVs obsolete.



Another example of a true consumer-driven transformation would be the universal acceptance of smartphones. They too appealed to the needs and desires of

the vast public and required no government intervention. Their features and benefits spoke for themselves.

As of now, it doesn't appear that EV technology is consumer-driven. The technology has been around for many years, and higher gas prices have yet to persuade the masses. The EV transformation will undoubtedly continue but will require massive government intervention, one that incentivizes, taxes and coerces drivers into adopting EV technology. Currently, the EV arguments have not been persuasive. Americans truly believe that conventional automobiles are superior in every way, but that loyalty is perceived as a temporary obstacle to overcome.

Consumer rejection will ultimately lead to a more hostile transition, like the complete ban of all fossil fuel vehicles by 2035 which was recently enacted in California.

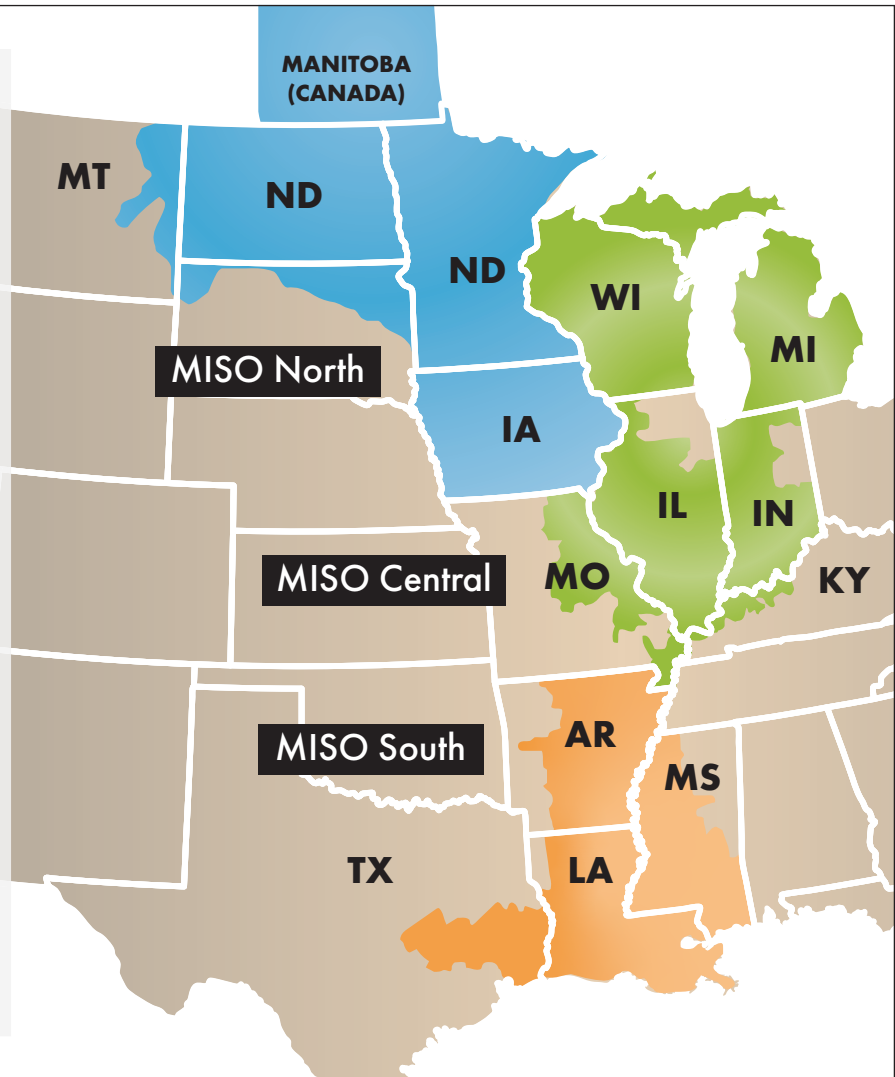


Fossil-fuel automobiles will eventually disappear. Most who remember these examples will recognize what stage of the transition we are in now. EV prices will start to decrease, and the network of charging stations will slowly improve. The production of gasoline and diesel engines will be prohibited, leaving car enthusiasts with a dwindling supply of used cars as the only alternative to electric vehicles.

Where does our power come from?

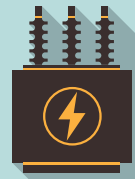
If you live in the Midwest, your power will most likely flow through the Midcontinent Independent System Operator headquartered in Carmel, Ind. MISO is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organization that focuses on the generation and transmission of high-voltage electricity across 15 U.S. states and the Manitoba province in Canada. They basically manage all aspects of the energy markets in the region.

According to their website, misoenergy.org, 42 million people depend on MISO to manage the generation and transmission of electricity every minute of every day.



Operation of the Grid

The electrical grid is an interconnected network for delivering electricity from producers to consumers. It consists of generating stations that produce electrical power, high-voltage transmission lines that deliver electricity to sub-stations, and distribution lines that deliver power to homes and businesses.



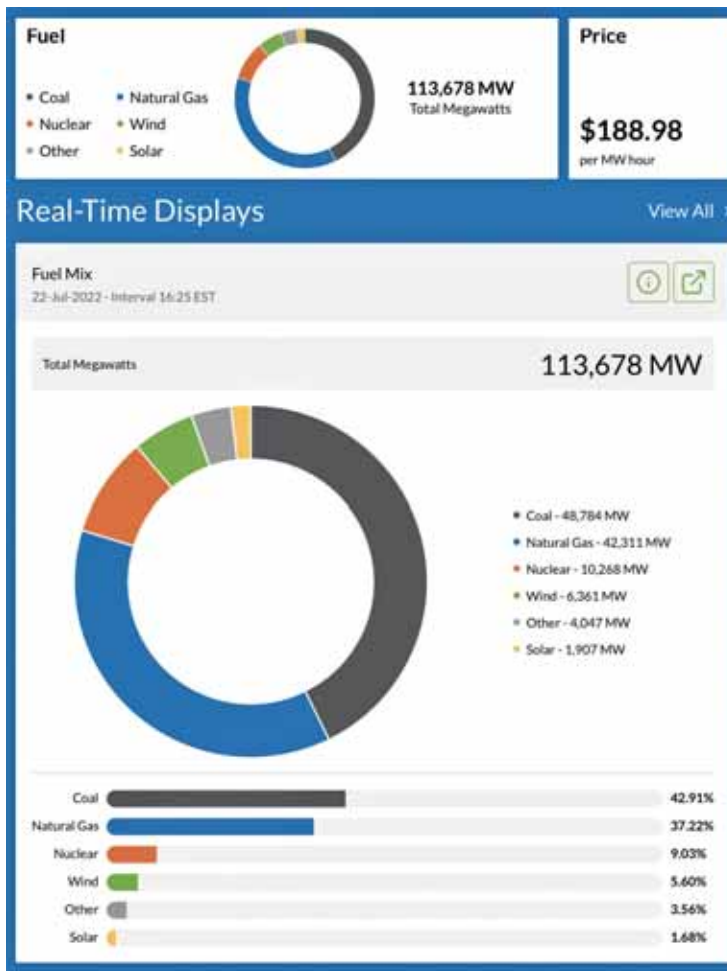
MISO - Midcontinent Independent System Operator

MISO is a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) responsible for managing the generation and transmission of electricity across high-voltage lines in **their region**. They also manage the buying and selling of electricity within **their region**. More simply, they make sure the right amount of energy is being produced and transmitted to where it is needed. They anticipate demand and plan for the future.

Their role and responsibilities can be compared to air traffic controllers, who are responsible for moving planes

from point A to point B safely. They don't own planes, runways or terminals. They simply manage the planes' movements.

If you want to see the numbers, check out their app. You can find real-time displays of prices, demand and megawatt consumption. Their graphs also show how the electricity is being produced and the percentage of coal, natural gas, nuclear, wind and solar that compose the energy mix. The light-colored image on the left was taken from an iPad and the darker one was from a cell phone.



The MISO app is free and can be downloaded to your Apple or Android device

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See our web page for monthly
Board meeting reports.



Cooperative communicators meet



Our summer CCC meeting was held at Country Bend Campground in Litchfield, Ill. Special thanks to Jeff and Kate Tuxhorn for hosting the event and letting us tour their facility, which is proudly served by our cooperative. We've included some additional information about the campground. If interested, please check it out for yourselves.



Country Bend Campground

Litchfield, Illinois

LETSCAMP@YAHOO.COM

www.countrybendcampground.com

ABOUT COUNTRY BEND:

Country Bend Campground is a beautiful and fun camping destination in Central Illinois! We are located just minutes from Exit 60 on I-55 near Litchfield, IL, right off Route 66, between Springfield and St. Louis! This family oriented campground offers a pool, four fishing ponds, pedal boating, putt-putt, a jumping pillow, a game room, lots of open space, and a variety of activities to keep the kids and kids at heart busy! We offer RV, Tent, and Luxury Cabin rental.

Country Bend is open seasonally from April 1-November 1.