



More Power to You

Rock Cooperative Care Helps Members Pay Their Energy Bills

By Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

Concern for Community is a guiding principle of co-ops throughout the nation and one that Rock Energy directors and employees consider fundamental to the cooperative way of doing business.

First and foremost, we strengthen our communities by doing what we do best: providing safe and reliable electricity at an affordable cost. But beyond that, our concern for community reaches to every member. What's good for the member is good for the community, and that, in turn, is good for the co-op.

With that in mind, we launched Rock Cooperative Care in 2009. It supplements the federally funded energy assistance program and benefits members who otherwise might fall through the cracks—those whose incomes are too high to qualify for federal programs but too low to make ends meet.

I'm proud to report that 129 members have received a total of \$27,000 in assistance through the program. These are your friends, neighbors, and relatives who are facing difficult times because they've lost their job, are dealing with rising household expenses on a fixed income, or are struggling with the cost of health care.

Many people are having trouble paying their energy bills for the first time, and Rock Cooperative Care is available to help them. If you think you qualify, please consider applying for assistance. An article on page 16c of this magazine contains all the details.

You might be thinking to yourself: "Where does this money come from?" That's a good question because we all know money doesn't grow on trees. If it did, raking every fall wouldn't be such a chore. Instead, we'd collect whatever fell and take it to the bank.

Rock Energy's board of directors created this reserve fund to supplement other energy assistance programs. At the time, the account was funded entirely by the cooperative and did not increase individual members' bills.

Then in September 2009, we unveiled Project Lift Up, an opportunity for members to voluntarily add spare change to the amount they pay on their monthly energy bills. That small amount of money can make a big difference in people's lives. About 150 generous members have signed up for the program, donating more than \$2,000. This amount is a wonderful start; I know we have many more members who would like to participate in this very worthwhile program.

If you'd like to help, you have four options:

- Round your energy bill up to the nearest whole dollar amount. If your bill is \$83.23, you would pay \$84

Yes, I want to make a holiday gift to Project Lift Up and receive 3 free CFLs!

(Choose only one option.)

- Round up my monthly energy bill to the nearest whole dollar.
- Add \$1 each month to my budget billing plan.
- Add a monthly donation of \$_____ to my energy bill. (Please enter dollar amount.)
- Add a one-time donation of \$_____ to my next energy bill. (Please enter dollar amount; minimum of \$10 donation required for light bulb offer.)



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature: _____

Account Number: _____

Date: _____





and the extra 77 cents would go to Rock Cooperative Care. The most you could donate would be \$11.88 per year.

PROJECT LIFT Up

- Add \$1 each month to your budget billing plan. If you are on the budget plan, your bill already is a whole dollar amount so \$1 will be added to your statement and your annual donation would be \$12.
- Add a set monthly contribution each month. This is the option for you if you want to make a larger regular donation. For example, \$5 could be added to your monthly statement for an annual contribution of \$60.
- Make a one-time only donation. The amount you select will be added to your next bill.

If you already are participating in Project Lift Up,

I want to thank you for your generosity. If not, please consider signing up because the holiday season is the perfect time to count your blessings and help a neighbor in need. Just fill out the form on page 16a and return it to us. As appreciation for your generosity, you'll receive three free CFLs, which will help you save money on your energy bill.

Happy Holidays!

All of us at Rock Energy sincerely hope that you and your family have a wonderful and safe holiday season. As you decorate your home, please keep safety in mind. Make sure your holiday lights are in good working order, don't overload circuits, and never use frayed or worn extension cords. It truly is a privilege to serve your energy needs during the holidays and throughout the year. ■



Rock Cooperative Care Offers Energy Assistance

Some Rock Energy Cooperative members need a little help paying their energy bills. They might earn too much to qualify for state and federal energy assistance, or they might need some extra money to supplement the other programs.

Either way, Rock Cooperative Care is available to help. Since the program started in 2009, a total of \$27,000 has been distributed to help members pay their energy bills.

A one-time grant of up to \$500 is available to help residential members who are struggling to pay their energy bills but do not meet more stringent state and federal requirements.

Check the accompanying chart to see if your household qualifies for assistance. For example, a four-person household would be eligible if the total annual income is \$63,600 or less.

The Salvation Army office in Rockford is administering the Rock

Rock Cooperative Care Income Guidelines for the 2010-2011 Heating Season*						
Family Size	150% of Poverty Level (eligible for up to a \$500 grant)		200% of Poverty Level (eligible for up to a \$350 grant)		300% of Poverty Level (eligible for up to a \$250 grant)	
	30-Day Income	Annual Income	30-Day Income	Annual Income	30-Day Income	Annual Income
1	\$1,300	\$15,600	\$1,700	\$20,800	\$2,600	\$31,200
2	\$1,750	\$21,000	\$2,428	\$28,000	\$3,500	\$42,000
3	\$2,200	\$26,400	\$2,933	\$35,200	\$4,400	\$52,800
4	\$2,650	\$31,800	\$3,533	\$42,400	\$5,300	\$63,600
5	\$3,100	\$37,200	\$4,133	\$49,600	\$6,200	\$74,400
6	\$3,550	\$42,600	\$4,733	\$56,800	\$7,100	\$85,200
7	\$4,000	\$48,000	\$5,333	\$64,000	\$8,000	\$96,000
8	\$4,450	\$53,400	\$5,933	\$71,200	\$8,900	\$106,800

*These figures are based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2010-2011.

Cooperative Care program this year. If you meet the eligibility requirements, call (815) 972-1135 during regular business hours. Be sure to point out that you would like to schedule an

appointment to apply for the Rock Cooperative Care program. You will be assigned a time to visit the Rockford Salvation Army office on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon. ■

Help Also Available Through State, Federal Programs

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) also helps eligible low-income house-

holds pay for winter energy services. LIHEAP heat and electric assistance is a one-time benefit payment per heating season. The amount depends on household size, income, and energy costs.

You are eligible for heating assistance through LIHEAP if your household's combined income is at or below the levels shown on the accompanying chart.

For more information and application details, please contact your local office:

Winnebago County

Rockton Township
1315 N. Blackhawk Blvd.
Rockton, IL 61072
(815) 389-0914 • (815) 624-7788
(South Beloit, Rockton, Roscoe residents only)

Boone County

United Way of Boone County
220 W. Locust St.
Belvidere, IL 61008
(815) 544-3144

Stephenson County

Northwestern Illinois Community Action Agency
103-109 N. Chicago Ave.
Freeport, IL 61032
(815) 232-3141 or (800) 883-1111

McHenry County

McHenry County Housing Authority
1108 N. Seminary Ave.
Woodstock, IL 60098
(815) 338-7752 ■

Illinois LIHEAP Income Guidelines for the 2010-2011 Heating Season		
Household Size	30-Day Household Income	Annual Household Income
1	\$1,354	\$16,245
2	\$1,821	\$21,855
3	\$2,289	\$27,465
4	\$2,756	\$33,075
5	\$3,224	\$38,685
6	\$3,691	\$44,295
7	\$4,159	\$49,905
8	\$4,626	\$55,515

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity



Happy Holidays

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Thursday, Dec. 23, and Friday, Dec. 24, in observance of Christmas and Thursday, Dec. 30, and Friday, Dec. 31, for the New Year's holiday. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekends. 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 (608) 752-4550 or toll-free (866) 752-4550.

Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card



Video Corner – Beloit, WI – (608) 365-0966

Sales and service. Car stereos, remote car starters, heated seats, cruise control, car alarm systems, window tints for home and auto.

20% Off Cruise Control Purchase and Installation

The Captain's Galley – South Beloit, IL – (815) 389-4592

One-of-a-kind subs, chili, Polish sausage, brats, Vienna hot dogs, Italian beef, and soup.



One Free Medium Drink (with purchase of any sub)

Blackhawk Auto Sales – South Beloit, IL – (815) 389-3266

Auto repair. New/used tires and exhaust.

10% Off Labor

For a complete listing of current deals, visit www.rock.coop. Terms and conditions subject to change as desired by participating businesses. You also can use your Co-op Connections Card to receive a discount on prescription drugs and to print online coupons.

Scholarships Offered to High School Seniors

Rock Energy Cooperative again is offering scholarships to graduating high school seniors who enroll at an accredited school. Students whose parents or guardians are active members of REC are eligible.

In 2010, Rock Energy awarded 10 scholarships, each worth \$400, to graduating seniors from high schools in Brodhead, Clinton, Edgerton, Evansville, Milton, Orfordville, Rockton, and South Beloit.

Our scholarship committee will judge applicants based on general merit, cooperation, leadership abilities, financial need, and class ranking. Since 1989, Rock Energy has awarded more than \$64,000 in financial aid to deserving students.

Applications are available at area high schools, online at www.rock.coop, and at our Janesville and South Beloit offices. The deadline for returning completed applications is Jan. 7. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Uebelacker at (866) 752-4550 or barbu@rock.coop.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

When decorating, remember that outdoor "icicle" lights use more energy because they have more bulbs per linear foot than regular light strands. Consider using regular strands of energy-saving LED (Light Emitting Diode) lights. They use less electricity and last up to 100,000 hours. (Alliance to Save Energy)

Source: Alliance to Save Energy



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