



More Power to You

Record Crowd of 1,433 Enjoys Co-op's Member Appreciation Day

Shane L. Larson, Chief Executive Officer

What do you get when you combine a brisk fall morning, plenty of pancakes, an abundance of activities, and lots of smiling faces? Well, on Saturday, Sept. 13, those items joined together to create another record-breaking Member Appreciation Day for Rock Energy Cooperative.

A record crowd of 1,433 people enjoyed a delicious pancake breakfast, and our electronics recycling brought in a record 9.7 tons. Most of that—5.8 tons—was in the form of TVs. There were old console TVs, relatively new giant flat-screen TVs, and everything in between. But each of those TVs had one thing in common: They were not headed to a landfill.

Rock Energy started offering electronics recycling at Member Appreciation Day in 2012 and has collected more than 24 tons during three events. By participating in our recycling events, members help keep these used electronics out of our community landfills.

The items may not be valuable to us anymore because they're broken or obsolete, but the products contain valuable resources. The metals, plastics, and glass used in electronics require energy to mine and manufacture. By recycling electronics and reusing the materials, we are conserving our natural resources as well as reducing the energy demands from mining and manufacturing. For example, the

Environmental Protection Agency estimates that reusing the components of 1 million laptops rather than mining new resources saves enough energy to provide electricity for 3,657 homes for a year.

In addition to being good for the environment, Member Appreciation Day is a lot of fun. What I enjoy most about the event is the chance to personally visit with you—the member—and say thank you for allowing us to be your energy provider. All of us here at Rock Energy understand that without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.

After every event, we discuss changes that could be made to improve the experience for members. For next year's Member Appreciation Day, we plan to add another grill to speed up the process of getting those tasty pancakes on your plate. We also will move the prize and

information tables to another part of the warehouse so the food and prize lines are separate. If you have other suggestions, be sure to let us know.

On behalf of all the employees and directors, I want to thank everyone who attended Member Appreciation Day. If you couldn't attend this year's event, I hope you will join us next fall.

On another topic, the co-op's board of directors approved an adjustment in electric rates at its September meeting. The changes, which are effective Jan. 1, are necessary because of mandates at the state and federal levels that are forcing energy costs

(Continued on page 16d ▶)



A record 1,433 people attended this year's event, and 9.7 tons of electronics were dropped off for recycling.





Energy Assistance Available for Low-Income Households

For many Illinois households, energy costs place a severe and continuing stress on the family's budget. In some cases, families will be forced to make painful decisions about which bills to pay and which necessities to cut.

The federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households pay for winter energy services. Fortunately, Rock Energy Cooperative works with LIHEAP, which benefits about 300,000 Illinois households each year.



LIHEAP Details

LIHEAP heat and electric assistance is a one-time benefit payment per heating season that is intended to help pay a portion of a household's heat and electric costs. The benefit amount depends on household size, income, and energy costs.

In most cases, the benefit is applied as a credit directly to the household's Rock Energy account. You do not need to duplicate your efforts by applying for assistance with both your local agency and Rock Energy. We will send you a letter about one month after receiving your application that will include details on your assistance status and dollar amounts.

You are eligible for heating assistance if your household's combined income is at or below the levels shown on this chart:

Illinois LIHEAP Income Guidelines for the 2014–2015 Heating Season

Household Size	30-Day Household Income	Annual Household Income
1	\$1,459	\$17,505
2	\$1,966	\$23,595
3	\$2,474	\$29,685
4	\$2,981	\$35,775
5	\$3,489	\$41,865
6	\$3,996	\$47,955
7	\$4,504	\$54,045
8	\$5,011	\$60,135

Where to Apply

To apply for assistance, you'll need to complete a Home Energy Plus application and provide information on each household member and their income as well as records of your heating costs.

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

- Winnebago County (South Beloit, Rockton, and Roscoe residents only): (815) 389-0914 or (815) 624-7788, Rockton Township, 1315 N. Blackhawk Blvd., Rockton
- Boone County: (815) 544-3144, United Way of Boone County, 220 W. Locust St., Belvidere
- Stephenson County: (815) 232-3141 or (800) 883-1111, Northwestern Illinois Community Action Agency, 103-109 N. Chicago Ave., Freeport
- McHenry County: (815) 338-7752, McHenry County Housing Authority, 1108 N. Seminary Ave., Woodstock

Weatherization Services

When you apply for energy assistance, the local agency also will see if you qualify for the Weatherization Assistance Program, which helps fund energy efficiency home improvement projects. If you are eligible for weatherization services, an energy auditor will look at your home to see what can be done to make it more energy efficient. Weatherization services differ with each home, depending on how it was built and its condition.

For general information, call toll-free (877) 411-9276 or visit www.illinoisliheap.com. ■

Rates Will Change Jan. 1

The Rock Energy Cooperative Board of Directors voted at its September meeting to modify electric prices effective Jan. 1, 2015. The following chart indicates changes to the General Service (residential) base rate using 861 kilowatt-hours (average General Service monthly usage). Information on other rates is available at www.rock.coop. ■

	Current	New
Monthly Facility Charge	\$13.25	\$15.00
Per Kilowatt-Hour (kWh)	\$0.097	\$0.1089
*Average Monthly Bill	\$104.53	\$110.48

**Includes average \$0.00902 2014 PCA for current and anticipated \$0.002 PCA for new*

Scholarships Offered to High School Seniors

Rock Energy Cooperative again is offering scholarships of \$500 to graduating high school seniors who enroll at an accredited school. Students whose parents or guardians are active members of REC are eligible.



Our independent 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 \$82,000 in financial aid to deserving students.

An application form must be completed by the student as well as by the student's guidance counselor. Applications are available at area high schools, at our Janesville and South Beloit offices, and online at www.rock.coop. Just click on Your Benefits.

The deadline for returning completed applications is Jan. 12. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Uebelacker at (866) 752-4550 or barbu@rock.coop.

In addition, scholarships of \$1,500 will be awarded through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. These scholarships are available to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the co-op. Applications must be completed online by going to www.rock.coop and clicking on Your Benefits. The deadline is Dec. 31. ■

Schoonover Appointed to Board

The Rock Energy Cooperative Board of Directors has appointed Clark Schoonover to the District 6 position on the board, replacing Mike Duffy, who died earlier this year. Schoonover is a longtime South Beloit resident.

Director Nominations Open

The Rock Energy Cooperative Nominating Committee will be selecting candidates to run for board of director positions that will be up for election at the March 30, 2015, annual meeting. Districts up for election are:

- **District 1:** Fulton, Porter, Albion, and Dunkirk townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 3:** Bradford, Johnstown, and Darien townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 5:** Clinton, Sharon, and Turtle townships in Wisconsin; Alden, Chemung, Hebron, Leroy, Manchester, and Roscoe townships 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. Please contact REC headquarters at (608) 752-4550 or (866) 752-4550 or send an e-mail to questions@rock.coop by Dec. 1. ■

Have a Safe, Happy Thanksgiving!

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 28, in observance of Thanksgiving. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 1. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekend. 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.



Blackhawk Propane Company, 1000 Doner Drive, South Beloit – (815) 389-3522 – www.blackhawkpropane.com

A family-owned supplier for thousands of residential, farm, and industrial customers in the Wisconsin-Illinois stateline area. We pride ourselves on exceptional customer service, competitive prices, and offer superior equipment, such as our two-stage regulatory system. Try our convenient Keep-Full Service to ensure you never run out of propane, especially during the winter heating season, offered at no extra charge, or our money-saving pre-buy program, where you purchase a year's worth of propane fuel during the off-season. Customers are always treated like the friends and neighbors that they are to us, and 24-hour emergency service is always just a call away. **Every Sixth 20-Pound Tank Refill is Free**



Big Sweeties Pet Supply & Grooming Center, 203 N. Franklin St., Janesville – (608) 757-1080

Grooming services, supplies, and all-service dog wash conveniently located near you. Offering professional grooming as well as self-service washes in a quick, easy, and warm environment. Pet sitting and dog walking. Food, leashes, treats, toys for large and small pets, accessories, pet carriers, flea and tick control products, deodorizers. Pet-specific sitting: large and small—dogs, cats, reptiles, birds, fish, rodents, horses, and livestock. Feeding and watering, medicine dispensing, waste pickup and disposal, vet and groomer transportation (local), mail pickup, house lights, and shades/curtains.



\$5 Off Grooming Services; 10% Off Any Pet Supplies

For a complete listing of current deals, visit www.rock.coop and click on the Co-op Connections Card. Terms and conditions subject to change as desired by participating businesses. Printable coupons also are available online.

More Power to You

(Continued from page 16a)

to increase. See the notice on page 16c for details.

While virtually all aspects of today's cost of living continue to rise, we pride ourselves on avoiding routine price adjustments. Our base kilowatt-hour charge has remained stable since 2010. We believe that reliable energy service at a reasonable price is something that our members can count on, and we deliver it on a daily basis.

Our new rate structure also will require an adjustment to the monthly facility charge, which will increase from \$13.25 to \$15. The intent of the facility charge is to cover the costs we incur to build and maintain the system that carries energy to your home or business. Even if we never move a single kilowatt over the wires, we still have the expense of keeping the facilities in place to carry that energy.

Our monthly facility charge has been \$13.25 since 2007, when the board of directors decreased the rate from \$15. It's not often that prices go down, and we were able to maintain that lower charge for eight years. So, back to the future, starting with your January bill, the facility charge will be \$15, the same amount as in 2007.

The modification to the base kilowatt-hour charge includes rolling a majority of the Power Cost Adjustment into the base rate. While we have no control over wholesale energy prices, we are anticipating that the PCA should remain lower than recent months for a period of time because of this change. For the average residential member, the new rate structure will amount to an increase of less than \$6 a month, or about 20 cents a day.

Even in our nation's shifting energy climate, electricity remains a good value. Cost increases over the years have remained low when compared to other consumer goods such as groceries, gasoline, medical care, and education.

The co-op's board of directors and I are committed to making sure that you and your family always have safe, reliable, and affordable energy service. That's the cooperative difference. The co-op is not profit-driven to create dividends for stockholders. It was formed to meet the needs of people who were not profitable for the big companies to serve.

Cooperatives are managed with only one thought in mind: the membership. It is for you that we work so hard, and it is for you that we continue to exist. Please let us know if there's anything we can do to improve our service to you. ■



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