



More Power to You

Electronics Recycling, Document Shredding Attract 1,200 to Member Appreciation Day

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

A total of 6.7 tons of electronics had been dropped off for recycling and 2.5 tons of paper had been shredded in less than three hours during the cop's Member Appreciation Day on Sept. 15.

We decided to add these two services to this year's event as a way to provide extra value to our members. Because it was something new, we had no idea what to expect. Both of the companies we worked with warned us that first-time events usually weren't too successful. Well, it didn't take long to realize that our event was going to be an exception to that rule. A record crowd of more than 1,200 visited our Janesville warehouse on that beautiful Saturday morning.

Fifteen minutes before the event started, vehicles started lining up in our circle driveway, where both the shredding truck and empty pallets were lined up awaiting used electronics. The stream of traffic continued throughout the morning.

We had workers assigned to help members carry their bags and boxes of documents to the shredding truck and unload heavy electronics from vehicles. Every time I took a short break from my duties inside the warehouse and looked outside, I would see another huge TV being hauled from a vehicle. Thank goodness we had some strong guys assisting.

At the end of the event, there were 33 pallets filled with various types of electronics. The final report we received from Universal Recycling Technologies contained astonishing figures. A total of 6.7 tons of electronics had been collected. The bulk of that—4.5 tons—were TVs of various shapes and sizes. The rest were computer towers and monitors, printers, scanners, fax machines,

calculators, phones, radios, stereos, DVD and CD players, VCRs, and other miscellaneous gadgets.

By participating in our recycling event, members helped 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.

The document shredding service provided at the event not only helped with recycling, but it also gave members the security of knowing that their personal information would not fall into the wrong hands. The Federal Trade Commission estimates that as many as 9 million Americans become identity theft victims each year. Research shows that most identity thieves obtain information through traditional paper-based sources rather than electronic channels.

Members who brought their documents to the event



don't have to worry about becoming the next victim. As documents were brought to the Shred-it truck, a company employee fed the paper into an industrial-sized shredder and the information was immediately destroyed. The shredded paper then is bundled and recycled into other paper products.

The EPA estimates that by recycling 1 ton of paper, we save 17 trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 463 gallons of oil, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, and enough energy to heat an average home for six months. All that, and we protected our identities.

Because electronics recycling and document shredding proved to be so popular, we plan to offer both services again next year.

But Member Appreciation Day was about more than just old electronics and documents. The annual event gives the employees and directors an opportunity to express their gratitude to our great members and allows us all to have some fun together. The kids enjoy jumping in the bounce house and shaking CFL Charlie's hand, while people of all ages like watching the amazing jugglers and riding high up in the sky in a bucket truck.

And we can't forget the pancakes. The chefs from Chris Cakes did another great job of preparing the meal and entertaining the crowd as they flipped pancakes right onto members' plates. Their system for dispensing the batter onto the long grills allows them to make thousands of pancakes in short order.

On behalf of all the employees and directors, I want to thank the people who attended Member Appreciation Day. I personally always appreciate the opportunity to walk from table to table and visit with our members.

I especially enjoyed chatting with Don Russell and

his wife, Mary, who live off Highway 51 north of Janesville and have been on our lines since the beginning. Don dug deep into his closet to find an old Rock County Electric Cooperative cap with the Willie Wiredhand mascot on it. Our crews tell me the Russells would always bring them something to eat whenever they had a service call at their place.



Don't forget to vote!

It's impossible to turn on the TV, open a newspaper, or drive down a street these days without being bombarded by political ads. The campaigning will come to an end after Tuesday, Nov. 6, when voters across the nation will cast their ballots for president and vice president, Congress, state legislators, and a variety of other offices.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, of which Rock Energy is a member, has launched a Get Out the Vote campaign to encourage voter participation. Glenn English, NRECA's chief executive officer, issued a reminder that every vote can make a difference.

"Less than one vote per precinct in Florida elected George W. Bush president in 2000," he said. "One vote per precinct elected John F. Kennedy president in 1960. One vote per California precinct re-elected Woodrow Wilson president in 1916, and large numbers of other federal, state, and local elections have had a similar experience."

Information about voter registration and the election process is available by visiting www.ourenergy.coop and clicking on Vote 2012.

Thanks again to everyone who attended Member Appreciation Day. We have the event just once a year, but we strive to deliver quality service to our members every day. If there's anything we can do improve, please let us know. We truly are grateful to be your energy provider! ■



Have a Safe and Wonderful Thanksgiving!

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on **Thursday, Nov. 22, and Friday, Nov. 23**, in observance of Thanksgiving. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 26. 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 us at (608) 752-4550 or toll-free (866) 752-4550.



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 2012–2013 Heating Season

Household Size	30-Day Household Income	Annual Household Income
1	\$1,396	\$16,755
2	\$1,891	\$22,695
3	\$2,386	\$28,635
4	\$2,881	\$34,575
5	\$3,376	\$40,515
6	\$3,871	\$46,455
7	\$4,366	\$52,395
8	\$4,861	\$58,335

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity



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 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)

Stephenson County

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

Boone County

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

McHenry County

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

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. ■

Get Connected

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



House of Carpets, 1410 Cranston Road, Beloit – (608) 362-7113 – www.houseofcarpetsofbeloit.com
Beloit's Carpet Superstore servicing the entire stateline area for over 43 years, offering quality merchandise, honest, and dependable craftsmanship, and always prompt and courteous service. Find a comprehensive selection of brands and products for builder/residential; educational; multifamily housing, and office/tenant needs. Opened in 1966 as Carpet Seconds on Park Avenue; in 1977 became House of Carpets. One of Wisconsin's largest carpet stores featuring over 400 rolls of carpet in stock as well as vinyl flooring, tile, and laminate.
10% Off All Remnants

Tollway Inn, 1710 Gardner St., South Beloit – (815) 389-2281 – www.tollwayinn.com
Inn has 37 newly renovated rooms, all ground floor; free parking at your door, exterior corridors; four HBO channels; free lobby coffee; near restaurants and shopping; small pets allowed; AM/FM alarm clock; no smoking rooms; RV/bus/truck parking; guest laundry facilities with free detergent.
10% Off Rack Rate

Introducing New Healthy Savings Discounts!

The same program that offers discounts at local merchants and has saved Rock Energy members \$46,000 on prescriptions now offers significant savings on dental, vision, hearing, lab and imaging services, and chiropractic work. To locate providers that participate in the Healthy Savings program, call (800) 800-7616 or visit HealthySavings.coop. Be sure to have your Co-op Connections Card handy.



Add Up Your Savings!

Tell us how much you have saved by using your Co-op Connections Card. If you have a story you'd like to share, e-mail Barbara Uebelacker at BarbU@rock.coop or call her at (866) 752-4550.



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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 April 1, 2013, annual meeting. Districts up for election are:

- **District 2:** Lima and Milton townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 4:** city of Janesville, Harmony, and LaPrairie townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 9:** Center, Janesville, and Magnolia townships in Wisconsin.

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. ■

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.

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 \$72,000 in financial aid to deserving students. Past scholarship winners have received up to \$400 to help with college expenses.

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 Member Benefits.

The deadline for returning completed applications is Jan. 14. 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 are available at area high schools, our co-op offices, and online. The deadline is Dec. 31. ■