



More Power to You

Donations to Project Lift Up Top My Holiday Wish List

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

The following are real examples of situations we hear from co-op members requesting assistance through Rock Cooperative Care. Their stories can be heart-wrenching, especially during the holiday season. The family's major bread winner was laid off more than a year ago and now the unemployment checks have stopped coming. Despite continual efforts, a job that will support a family is nowhere in sight. In another scenario, a child's illness resulted not only in high medical bills but also caused the main caregiver to take an unpaid leave of absence. The family now is devastated, both emotionally and financially.

Your co-op's board of directors created Rock Co-

operative Care in 2009 to help supplement other energy assistance programs and benefit members who otherwise might fall through the cracks because their incomes are too high to qualify for federal programs but too low to make ends meet.

Rock Cooperative Care is partially funded by Project Lift Up, a voluntary member donation program that allows members to round up their monthly energy bill to the nearest dollar, add a set monthly contribution, or make a one-time donation.



As you count your blessings this holiday season and are planning your holiday giving, please consider making a donation to Project Lift Up. Just as the name implies, Project Lift Up helps give people a financial lift. In the process of giving, your spirit also will be lifted.

More than 200 co-op members have donated \$6,700 to Project Lift Up in the past four years. If you'd like to join them, just choose one of the following options on the form on this page and return it to Rock Energy.

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.)
- I already am enrolled in Project Lift Up but want to 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: _____

- Round your energy bill up to the nearest whole dollar amount. If your bill is \$83.23, you would pay \$84 and the extra 77 cents would go to Rock Cooperative Care. The most you could donate in a year is \$11.88.
- Add \$1 each month to your budget billing plan, which already is a whole dollar amount. The annual donation would be \$12.
- Add a set monthly contribution—as little as \$1—each month.
- Make a one-time donation. The amount you select will be added to your next bill.

If you already participate in Project Lift Up, you can help make the holidays even brighter for others by adding a one-time donation to your generous contribution. Whether you're new to the program or increasing your donation, we'll give you three free CFLs to help you save money on your energy bill.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all the folks who are donating to this program. Your act of kind-



ness shows the true cooperative spirit of Rock Energy members, who are always willing to lend a hand to help a neighbor facing difficult times. Since the program started, about 300 co-op members have received more than \$73,000 in benefits through the Rock Cooperative Care program. If you think you might qualify for assistance, you can find the income guidelines listed on page 16c.

LED Holiday Lights

Most of us have gone through the frustration of trying to find the one light in a string of incandescent holiday lights that is either burned out or loose in its socket? When one light went out, they all went out. You won't have that problem if you switch to LED holiday lights.

LED stands for light-emitting diodes, which last longer and use significantly less energy than traditional lights. Operating LEDs on a 6-foot Christmas tree for 12 hours per day for 40 days is estimated to save 90 percent or more energy when compared to incandescent lights.

In addition to saving energy and money, LEDs also

save you the time and frustration of trying to find that one burned-out light. The lights don't have glass or filaments, which makes them durable and resistant to breaking. And because LED bulbs are so strong, one individual outage generally doesn't darken the whole strand.

Although LEDs cost more than incandescent bulbs, they'll pay for themselves over the long run. Because of their durability, they have an operational life span of about 20,000 hours, enough to last for 40 holiday seasons.

Happy Holidays

During our annual Member Appreciation Day in September, we gathered employees, directors, and their families outside the Janesville warehouse for a group picture, which serves as our holiday greeting to members. I hope you enjoy seeing the smiling faces of the people here at Rock Energy who believe it's a privilege to serve your energy needs. If we can do anything to improve, please let us know.

From all of us at Rock Energy Cooperative, we wish you Happy Holidays! ■



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 2010, more than \$78,000 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 following chart to see if your household qualifies for assistance. For example, a four-person household would be eligible if the total annual income is \$69,150 or less.

The Salvation Army office administers the Rock Cooperative Care program. If you meet the eligibility

requirements, call either of these offices during regular business hours to schedule an appointment: Janesville, (608) 757-8300, extension 26; Beloit, (608) 365-6572; or Rockford, (815)

972-1135. Be sure to point out that you would like to schedule an appointment to apply for the Rock Cooperative Care program. ■

| Rock Cooperative Care Income Guidelines for the 2012-2013 Heating Season* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|---|---------------|---|---------------|
| | 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) | |
| Family Size | 30-Day Income | Annual Income | 30-Day Income | Annual Income | 30-Day Income | Annual Income |
| 1 | \$1,396 | \$16,755 | \$1,861 | \$22,340 | \$2,792 | \$33,510 |
| 2 | \$1,891 | \$22,695 | \$2,521 | \$30,260 | \$3,782 | \$45,390 |
| 3 | \$2,386 | \$28,635 | \$3,181 | \$38,180 | \$4,772 | \$57,270 |
| 4 | \$2,881 | \$34,575 | \$3,841 | \$46,100 | \$5,762 | \$69,150 |
| 5 | \$3,376 | \$40,515 | \$4,501 | \$54,020 | \$6,752 | \$81,030 |
| 6 | \$3,871 | \$46,455 | \$5,161 | \$61,940 | \$7,742 | \$92,910 |
| 7 | \$4,366 | \$52,395 | \$5,821 | \$69,860 | \$8,732 | \$104,790 |
| 8 | \$4,861 | \$58,335 | \$6,481 | \$77,780 | \$9,722 | \$116,670 |

*These figures are based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2012-2013.

Help Also Available Through State, Federal Programs

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) also helps eligible low-income households pay for winter energy services. The program's heat and electric assistance is a one-time benefit payment per heating season. The amount depends on household size, income, and energy costs.

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

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:

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 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 |

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 LP 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**



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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Janesville, WI 53547

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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. ■

Coming Soon: SmartHub

Rock Energy Cooperative is revamping its online bill payment web page to provide members with more access to information about their energy usage.

The new user-friendly technology is called SmartHub and also will be available for use on smart phones.

Watch this magazine for more details as the project nears completion. ■

Happy Holidays!

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, Dec. 24, and Tuesday, Dec. 25, for Christmas and Monday, Dec. 31, and Tuesday, Jan. 1, for the New Year's holiday. Even though our offices are closed, standby crews are available 24 hours a day. To report a power outage, please call (608) 752-4550 or toll-free (866) 752-4550.