



RuralHILIGHTS

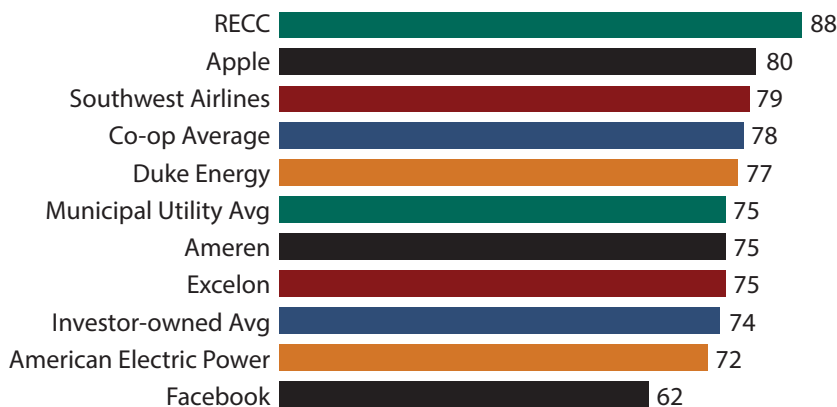
Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

Members give RECC high marks in satisfaction survey

During the summer of 2024, RECC had Inside Information conduct a co-op satisfaction survey to help determine how our members feel about their cooperative.

RECC received an ACSI score of 88, which was down a point from the cooperative's all-time high, which was reached in the 2022 survey. The score is well above the national averages for co-ops, investor-owned utilities, and municipalities throughout the country. The results were concluded from 429 randomly selected residential members.

Comparison of American Customer Satisfaction Index® Scores*



From ACSI Benchmarking by Industry Report

**Compared to publicly measured energy utilities in the ACSI® survey of customers rating their own energy utility. Results are based on data provided by RECC membership, which was collected in July 2024. ACSI did not regulate the survey administration or sample size. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. For more about the ACSI, visit www.theacsi.org.*

Trustworthiness

9.3



Truly cares about members

9.1



Well-managed organization

9.2



Summary



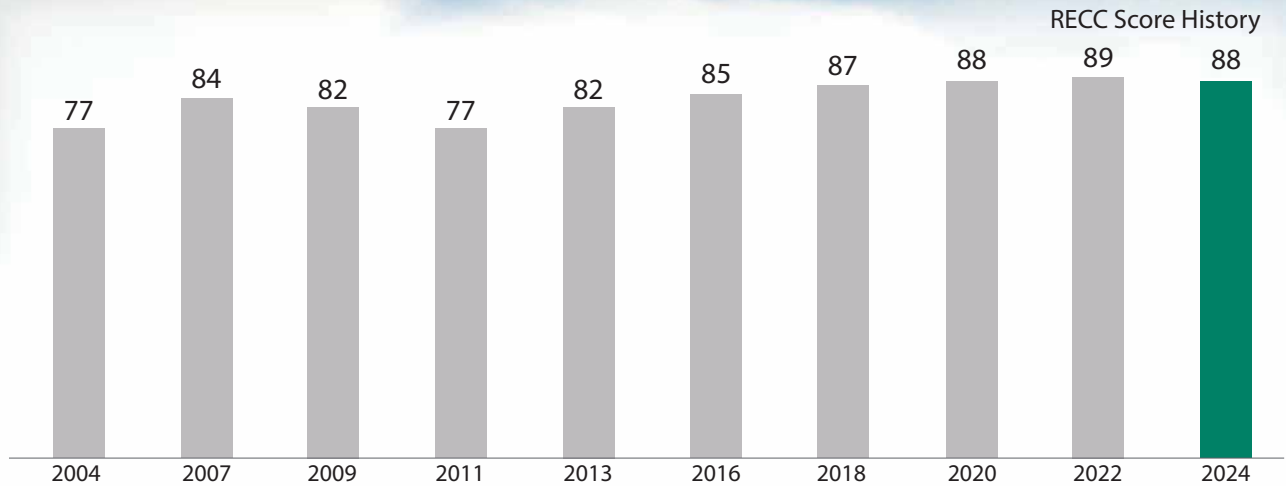
- **Exceptional ratings** - Highest marks (90%+) for reliability, outage restoration, and communications
- **Energy efficiency** - 82% will pay more only with guaranteed payback, 13% would invest without savings
- **Electrical Vehicles** - Only 2% own an EV, but 16% said they would consider purchasing in the future
- **Solar** - 5% have solar, 36% are considering a home system, and 59% do not intend to install solar
- **Co-op website** - 52% use to find RECC programs, make payments, view outages, and monitor kWh usage
- **Social media** - Over 66% use social media, but majority prefers email and text for co-op communication

Conclusion

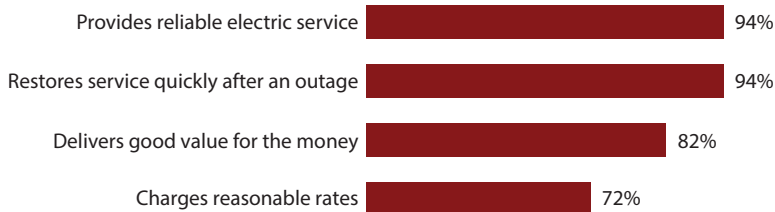
RECC has maintained its high standards achieved with its record-high 2022 survey results, scoring high in both the Cooperative Attitude and Performance. RECC increased its performance in the category of delivering good value (+ 1%), but decreased slightly in the category of charging reasonable rates (-2). Providing reliable electric service greatly affects the co-op's ACSI score, and community commitment is a very important part of the CAPS scoring. Friendly and courteous employees and being an easy organization to do business with impacts both scores and is fundamental in maintaining high member satisfaction.



Survey Results Continued



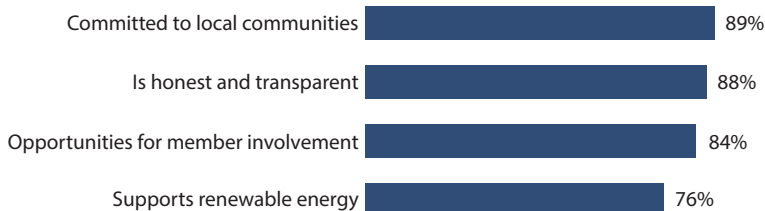
Electric Service and Rates



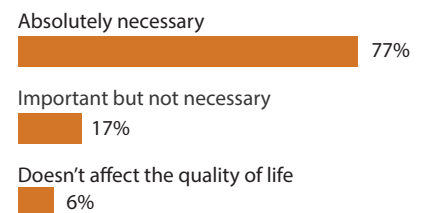
Member Service



Cooperative Culture



Importance of Having High-Speed Internet



Survey Comments

Thanks for the feedback and know that every comment is read. Most fall into the positive category: Good job, keep up the good work, and thanks for keeping the power on. Of course, everyone wants to pay less since prices are always rising, so members are always wanting us to do better and often convey that message. Typically, the statement goes like, "You guys are great, but I wish the electricity was cheaper." We also receive many questions, most general, but some specific. Listed here are some of the topics being discussed in 2024 and a sample of the questions being asked by RECC members.

Facility charges add up for multiple meters

There is a facility charge at each meter because of the cost associated with delivering power to each unique location. Some electrical services cost more than others to provide power, but facility charges reflect a portion of those expenses. The remaining costs are recouped from kilowatt sales.

How do we qualify for education grants

Co-op community grants are available for any non-profit organization with a tax ID number. By utilizing matching funds from CoBank's Sharing Success program, RECC can award up to \$20,000 per year, divided among four separate grants. In the past, nearly every school in our community has applied and received at least one grant. Other recipients have included food pantries, clothing organizations, shelters, and an ambulance service. Go to recc.coop to learn more details about the program, or email Julie Waghorn at recc.coop for more information.

Solar and wind turbines are ruining the farmland

Most of the wind and solar production in our area is owned and operated by developers and outside conglomerates. The energy produced by the Double Black Diamond Solar project in Lowder is generated and transferred to the Ameren high-voltage transmission line and sold to other entities. Since these projects are located within the cooperative's service territory, they are RECC members, but only receive station power from the cooperative.

Don't think the scholarship rules are fair

The scholarships are offered through a statewide program, operated by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. The funding is provided by Illinois electric co-ops and their partners who generously donate to the scholarship program. AIEC has a committee that selects winning candidates and they annually award several scholarships to the most qualified family members of Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives. The sons and

daughters of members from over twenty cooperatives participate and compete for the \$2,500 grants. In 2024, sixteen scholarships were awarded in December and the lineworker scholarship will be announced in late April. RECC's most recent winner was Erik Keeton of Waverly High School in 2022. He participated with 293 students that year and earned a \$2,000 IEC Memorial Scholarship.

Lower rates for seniors

Cooperatives are built on core principles, and Members' Economic Participation is one of those core beliefs. Members are treated equally and do not receive benefits nor discrimination based solely on age or other nonfinancial characteristics.

Why don't you offer energy efficiency programs or incentives like Ameren

Unlike other utilities, RECC is governed by a democratically elected board of directors and not controlled by a commission. These programs are costly and funded by consumers, which are noted as a line item on their billing statements. RECC's board has elected not to collect additional funds to redistribute to other members, but the cooperative actively promotes the use of state and federal tax incentives available each year.

Damage to appliances during outages

In most cases, an outage or interruption is no more harmful than turning power off and on repeatedly. However, some appliances are more susceptible to outages than others. Those with electronic components should be unplugged if the incoming power appears to be cycling on and off. Low voltage is rare but can cause damage to any appliance. If lights become notably dim, we recommend turning off the main breaker at the electrical panel or the service entrance disconnect. High-quality surge suppressors can help protect most equipment, but an isolated UPS or uninterruptible power supply is the only way to fully protect electronic equipment.

Had to pay for cutting a tree that fell on a power line

RECC is responsible for all of the electrical lines that feed the service entrance or meter. If the meter is on the pole, any line between the meter pole and the residence is personal wire that is maintained by the member. If the meter is on the house, the line feeding the home is the responsibility of the cooperative; however, the mast, weather-head, and anchor attached to the structure is the property of the homeowner. If the line feeding the home is damaged, the coop will disconnect power, allowing the electrical contractor to safely replace or repair the affected equipment.

Continued on 18D ►

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Survey comments (continued)

I do not get a credit for unused solar after three months

The original net-metering program allowed members to bank solar-generated kilowatts for three months before they expired. In November 2023, the policy was updated, reducing the price per kilowatt that the cooperative would pay for the member's overgeneration. Additionally, the billing cycle changed from quarterly to monthly, allowing each kilowatt of overgeneration to be paid in full at the avoided energy cost rate. Qualified members on the original net metering rate have been grandfathered until November 2028 but can voluntarily transfer to the current rate program at any time.



Apply at recc.coop by February 7, 2025.

High school juniors — now is the time to apply for great trips to the state and national capitols! The co-op is sponsoring area students again this year for the popular Rural Electric Youth Day in Springfield and a chance to win a free trip to Washington D.C. While attending Illinois Youth Day in Springfield, students can tour the Capitol, see historic sites, and meet with their state legislators. Two of those students will be selected to attend the Youth to Washington trip in June, with about 1,000 young people from around the country. RECC sponsors these trips to encourage students to learn more about our government's operation and about electric cooperatives. Any junior attending high school in RECC's service area is eligible for these expense-paid programs. Additional information will be sent to our local schools, or students can find the application on recc.coop. Applications must be completed by Feb. 7, 2025 to be eligible. Contact Julie Waghorn for more details.

To Our Friends at RECC,

Thank you SO much for taking the time to replace the power pole at our ball field. This has been a hazard for our players and their families for awhile, and we really appreciate your generosity and efficiency.



Thank you!
South County Ball Club

