



A MESSAGE FROM:  
**Shane L. Larson,**  
Chief Executive Officer



# Rock Energy Assists With Hurricane Relief Effort

## Focused On Reliable Service Heading Into 2025

**A**s we embark on this new year, Rock Energy is focused on providing you, our members, with reliable service all day, every day. With that said, in late September and into October last year, Hurricane Helene reminded everyone just how vulnerable the electric grid can be to the forces of strong wind and storm surge.

The catastrophic tropical cyclone produced a wide swath of damage and loss of life that extended from northwestern Florida, where the storm made landfall on September 26, 2024, to Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina. Helene's high winds and flooding took the lives of more than 230 people. Some estimates put the economic impact of the storm, including property and infrastructure damage, as high as \$200 billion, which would make Helene the costliest storm in U.S. history.

Two Rock Energy linemen joined numerous other Wisconsin crews to assist with storm recovery after Hurricane Helene left a vast amount of damage. Crews gathered at Rock Energy in Janesville before making the trek to Aiken Electric Cooperative in Aiken, South Carolina in early October. Overall, forty-five crew members from 15 Wisconsin electric cooperatives took part in the effort. The two Rock Energy linemen who participated were Bill Wright and Devin Sieling.

Fortunately, we don't have to worry about hurricanes in this area of the country; however, severe weather has been known to wreak havoc on our electric lines.

Obviously, we have no control over the weather, and we must accept the outages caused by severe weather when they occur. With that said, if an outage should happen, I assure you that we will do everything in our power to have service back up and running as quickly as possible.

I encourage you to contact Rock Energy with any questions you may have regarding your service or the cooperative. We look forward to hearing from you. In the meantime, stay healthy and stay safe in 2025 and beyond!



Pictured here, crews from co-ops throughout Wisconsin head toward their vehicles at Rock Energy's Janesville location in preparation for a convoy to South Carolina to assist in the hurricane relief effort.

# 2025 NRECA YOUTH TOUR

June 15-21, 2025  
Washington, D.C.

Each year, cooperatives throughout the U.S. sponsor young people for participation in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.



Pictured above are the Wisconsin youth co-op members who attended the 2024 Youth Tour at the Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

In June 2024, 18 Wisconsin and 54 Illinois youth delegates joined roughly 2,000 additional youth delegates from across the nation for the annual event. The Federated Youth Foundation, a co-op sponsored, independent charitable organization, provides significant financial support for Youth Tour participation through the proceeds from investments financed by unclaimed co-op patronage credits.

Every electric co-op has the opportunity to sponsor students for this educational tour of national monuments and visits with elected officials at their Capitol offices.

For more information, go to:  
[www.rock.coop/youth-tour](http://www.rock.coop/youth-tour)

# 2025 YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (YLC)

July 15-17, 2025  
UW-Stout / Menomonie, Wis.

A key component of WECA's educational programming for young people, the three-day Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) has been held each summer since 1964. In 2024, YLC attracted more than 60 students sponsored by 16 cooperatives. Activities focus on maximizing leadership potential, understanding cooperatives, and co-op governance—the students organize and operate a functioning cooperative during the event—effective communication, and turning mistakes into stepping stones for success.

Participating students elect a six-member WECA Youth Board who will help plan the following year's Youth Leadership Conference. The elected board will also have the opportunity to attend the NRECA Youth Tour and visit the WECA offices and State Capitol legislative offices. Another feature of the youth conference is the annual WECA Essay Contest. For the essay contest, students write on co-op oriented subjects, competing for three scholarships of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250, redeemable at any accredited post-secondary educational institution in the U.S.

YLC offers a head start in understanding cooperative business principles for the upcoming generation of co-op leaders.

For more information, go to:  
[www.rock.coop/youth-leadership-conference](http://www.rock.coop/youth-leadership-conference)



Pictured above, from left to right, are Carson Welter, Ryther Gherke and Jayden Mosely (a Rock Energy youth member) at the 2024 YLC event. Pictured below, students participate in group and team-building activities at YLC.



## Rock Energy Board Member Seated at WECA Annual Meeting

**W**ECA hosted its 88th Annual Meeting at Glacier Canyon at the Wilderness Hotel in the Wisconsin Dells in November with a new president and CEO, Rob Richard, at the helm. As part of his speech, Richard honored the memory of former WECA president and CEO Steve Freese, who he called a mentor and a friend.

Richard emphasized that the “right of first refusal” (ROFR) legislation will again be the top priority of the next legislative session. Having a ROFR bill on the books will help keep members’ rates down by ensuring incumbent utilities, such as Dairyland Power Cooperative, are able to compete for new high-transmission projects deemed necessary to ensure reliability for all in the region, and are therefore eligible for cost-sharing.

Also at the meeting, Rock Energy board member and vice chair Barbara Miller was seated as a WECA board member. Miller is also the vice chairperson for the WECA board.



Pictured above are Marian Trescher (left), Rock Energy board member and board secretary; and Barbara Miller (right), Rock Energy board member and board vice chair; at the 2024 WECA Annual Meeting with Carol Blaken (center), Jackson Electric.

**HOW TO STAY WARM & SAVE ENERGY IN THE WINTER**

Stay Comfortable Without Raising Your Energy Bill

The first thing you can do is put on warm and comfortable clothing or snuggle under a blanket.

Running your ceiling fan clockwise will recirculate the warm air above you and help you feel warmer.

Open your curtains during the day to let natural light warm your home. Close them at night to improve insulation and keep warm air in.

Close off the vents in rooms that are not often used so that you don't waste energy heating them.

Simply drink some warm tea or coffee or have some soup to feel warmer in no time.

## Scholarship Application Deadline Is January 10

**R**ock Energy Cooperative (REC) again is offering scholarships of \$1,000 to graduating high school seniors who enroll at an accredited school. Students whose parents or guardians are active members of REC are eligible.

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 \$182,000 in financial aid to deserving students. The on-line application is available at [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop). Go to the Community & Youth tab and click on Scholarships. Or, you can just scan the QR code on this page. The deadline for submitting applications is **Jan. 10, 2025**. Applications must be completed on-line at [www.rock.coop](http://www.rock.coop).

If you have any questions, please contact Jonas Berberich at 866-752-4550, or [jonasb@rock.coop](mailto:jonasb@rock.coop).



Scan the QR code for 2025 Rock Energy Scholarship Information.

# Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful Opens Recycle Center in South Beloit

**K**eepp Northern Illinois Beautiful (KNIB) has opened a recycling center at 624 Eastern Ave. in South Beloit, IL.

On Rock Energy lines, the center is open the second Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. - noon. The location will only accept electronics, appliances, metals and textiles at no cost. It will also take TVs and monitors and appliances with refrigerants, but fees apply for these items.

KNIB is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, a national nonprofit organization which inspires and educates people to take action to improve and beautify their community and environment.

KNIB is an award-winning, non-governmental, nonprofit organization committed to educating and involving individuals in productive solutions that keep our community's environment clean and green. KNIB is an environmental resource center. Waste reduction and recycling are essential for protecting the environment, reducing waste and conserving resources. Finding new uses for recycled materials benefits local residents, businesses and public agencies alike.

The South Beloit location is KNIB's third recycling center in Winnebago County, IL. The organization also has recycling centers in Rockford and Machesney Park.



Location:  
**624 Eastern Ave.  
South Beloit, IL**

**KEEP  
NORTHERN  
ILLINOIS  
BEAUTIFUL**

**Education | Beautification | Recycling**

**KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE**

## South Beloit Center Drop-Off Donation Hours:

- 2nd Saturday of the Month
- 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**  
89th Annual Meeting

# APRIL 7

The Rock Energy Cooperative 2025 Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, April 7, at the Eclipse Center in Beloit, WI. Once again, we will be serving a full-service, sit-down dinner for our attending members. Look for full details about the annual meeting in future issues of the co-op magazine, the bill-stuffer newsletter and our E-Newsletter.

## Winter Storm Preparedness - VIDEO

Are you prepared for the next winter storm? Check out Rock Energy's video "Winter Storm Preparedness" and find out what you should be doing to get ready for that next BIG winter storm.

Scan the QR code here and watch the video NOW!



## Shane Larson, CEO

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## Jonas Berberich, Editor



**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936