



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



# Celebrating National Co-op Month

**W**hen you think of October, things like pumpkin patches, Halloween ghosts and goblins, and vibrant fall foliage probably come to mind. But October is notable for another reason—it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Rock Energy Cooperative, reflect on who we are and, more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. They are conveners for the common good. Thirteen Rock County farmers made history in 1936 when they laid the groundwork for rural residents to get electricity and improve the quality of their lives. The history of the Rock County Electric Cooperative Association, now Rock Energy Cooperative, is filled with milestones, significant happenings, and thousands of smaller achievements that have taken place since its inception.

Today, Rock Energy Cooperative exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. Rock Energy's leadership team and employees live right here in the communities we serve. Our board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members (you!) have a valuable perspective. That's why we are continually seeking your input. Whether through community events, email, phone, or at the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to

the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as the West Riverside Energy Center in Beloit Township.

As a Rock Energy member, you can participate in the democratic process by electing fellow members to represent you on the board of directors. You also participate financially through our capital credits program. At the end of each year, any margins that exceed actual costs are allocated to members in the form of capital credits. Since the co-op was founded, about \$31 million has been returned.

As a not-for-profit business, members know they can trust their co-op because it was created to deliver on the promise of providing safe, reliable, and affordable energy to members—not to generate money for shareholders.

The focus on community values mixed with the cooperative business model makes co-ops stronger and sets us apart from traditional power companies. That's the cooperative difference! And, as always, we encourage you to let us know if we can do anything to improve our service to you.



# Keep Big Green Boxes

**D**o you have one of those BIG GREEN BOXES in your yard? If so, you should stay away from them. We're referring to our pad-mount transformers, or what some people refer to as "electrical boxes."

These transformers play an important role in distributing electricity through underground power lines, which many people prefer to improve aesthetics in their neighborhood. While this eliminates utility poles and overhead wires, it requires installing pad-mount transformers so high-voltage electricity can safely be brought to a lower voltage to power your home.

Please don't built fences or planted flowers and shrubs around transformers, because Rock Energy line crews need easy access to the transformers so they can inspect the equipment, perform routine maintenance, and repair problems as they arise.

## KEEP THOSE BIG GREEN BOXES CLEAR OF OBSTACLES

- Keep transformers clear of ground vegetation. Overgrown vegetation can prevent lineworkers from accessing it for repairs and routine maintenance.
- Do not plant bushes too close to the transformers, and make sure to plan for a plant's future growth when landscaping.
- Workers need at least 10 feet of clearance in front of the box and 4 feet on the other sides. So, if you are going to put in a fence near an existing transformer, make sure there is proper clearance between it and the fence.
- Debris around a transformer is a safety hazard. As mentioned above, Rock Energy requires at least 10 feet of clearance in front of pad-mount transformers and 4 feet on the other sides. Members can easily identify the front of the unit by looking for the warning label. This distance allows for tool use, including hot sticks, which are 8 feet long. The hot sticks allow lineworkers to make repairs on transformers while they are energized so members don't experience an interruption in service. Workers also need the space so they can back away if problems occur.

When workers can't access a transformer for inspection or routine maintenance, they often leave a note advising that the vegetation, fence, or other obstacle needs to be removed. However, if workers are responding to a power outage that requires immediate access, they will do the work themselves. That can slow down power restoration.

Here are some other safety reminders related to pad-mount transformers:

- Never dig near them because they are surrounded by underground cables. Hitting a cable could result in electrical shock or disruption of service. Always call 8-1-1 before you dig.
- Make sure children know to never touch, climb, or play on the equipment. Tell them never to put fingers, sticks, or other objects through openings in the transformer box.
- Report any problems to Rock Energy. If you notice anything amiss, like an unlocked transformer or one that has been damaged, please call us at 866-752-4550.



Pictured here, Rock Energy crewmen install underground lines at a co-op member residence.

# Clear Of Obstacles

**A**



## Keep A Clear Path To Your Transformer!

**A.** The transformer in this image is almost entirely covered with vegetation that prevents lineworkers from accessing it for repairs and routine maintenance.

**B.** The fence pictured here was built too close to the transformer. Workers need at least 10 feet of clearance in front of the box and 4 feet on the other sides.

**C.** Debris like this around a transformer is a safety hazard.

**B**



**C**



# Budget Billing Recalculation To Take Place In October

Rock Energy Cooperative's Budget Billing Program is designed to provide members with more consistent monthly billing by leveling energy costs throughout the year. This helps simplify financial planning by reducing the impact of seasonal fluctuations.

To ensure accuracy, Budget Billing amounts are reviewed and adjusted through semi-annual recalculations conducted each April and October. During these recalculations, a member's projected energy use for the upcoming 12 months is estimated using historical consumption data and forecasted energy prices. This estimated annual cost is then divided evenly across 12 months to determine the new budget amount.

In addition to forecasting future usage, the recalculation process also includes a true-up. This step compares the member's actual usage and costs since the previous recalculation against the amount billed through the Budget Billing Program. If a member was underbilled or overbilled, the difference is incorporated into the new monthly budget amount.

This year, most members experienced higher natural gas

usage than previously projected, due to a colder-than-expected winter. In addition, the cost of purchasing natural gas exceeded earlier forecasts. As a result, many members were underbilled during the last budget period. This shortfall is reflected in the current recalculation, leading to noticeable increases in monthly budget billing amounts for many natural gas members.

As a not-for-profit distribution cooperative, Rock Energy purchases natural gas from suppliers and delivers it directly to members. The cost of natural gas is passed through without markup—the Cooperative does not set the purchase price or add profit margins to the commodity.

As always, Rock Energy remains committed to supporting our members. If you have questions, require payment assistance, or would like to discuss alternate payment arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact us. You may reach a Member Services Representative by calling 866-752-4550 or by emailing us at your convenience.

# Rock Energy Director Nominations Open

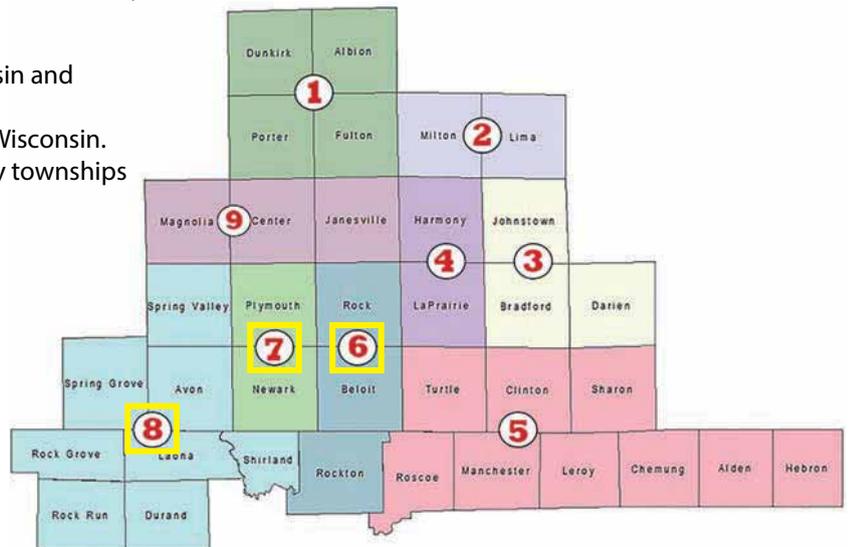
The Rock Energy Cooperative Nominating Committee will be selecting candidates to run for board of director positions that will be on the ballot at the 2026 annual meeting, which will be held Monday, April 13, 2026, at the Janesville Convention Center in Janesville, WI.

## Districts up for election are:

- **District 6:** Beloit and Rock townships in Wisconsin and Rockton Township in Illinois.
- **District 7:** Newark and Plymouth townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 8:** Avon, Spring Grove, and Spring Valley townships in Wisconsin; and Durand, Laona, Rock Grove, Rock Run, and Shirland 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.

For more information, please contact the co-op at 866-752-4550 or email [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop) **BY NOVEMBER 30.**



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**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936