

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY Cooperative

January 2026 NEWS



**Richland Electric  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**QUILTS, COMMUNITY,  
AND CREATIVITY  
BIND IN WITTENBERG**

**PICKING WINNERS AND SOLAR LOSERS**

**YOUR VOICE MATTERS**

**SHEET PAN RECIPES**



# Powering Down, Planning Ahead: Working Together to Lower Demand



**W**hen outdoor temperatures drop, electricity use naturally rises. Colder weather drives us indoors, where we rely more heavily on home heating systems, more lighting, and household appliances. Heating systems run longer and more frequently to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. Combine that with the fact that most people use electricity at the same times—typically in the mornings and early evenings—and the result is significant pressure on our electric grid.

Richland Electric Cooperative works closely with Dairyland Power Cooperative, our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, to plan for these seasonal weather patterns and changes to ensure you have reliable power every day of the year. This partnership involves detailed resource and infrastructure planning to make certain electricity is available whenever you need it. However, it's important to remember that our local system is part of a much larger regional and national electric grid.

During the winter months, when homes and businesses across the country are using more electricity simultaneously, overall demand can approach—or occasionally exceed—available supply. This is especially true during severe weather events, such as ice storms, sudden temperature drops, or equipment malfunctions that reduce generation capacity.

You can help by taking simple actions during periods of high electricity use, especially on the coldest days of winter:

- Lower your thermostat slightly. Even reducing the temperature by a few degrees can help.
- Delay using large appliances during peak hours. Run dishwashers, washing machines, and dryers during off-peak hours—typically midday or late evening.
- Adjust your water heater. Setting it to 120 degrees F and spacing out showers helps conserve both energy and hot water.
- Unplug unnecessary devices. Power used for lighting and electronics adds up and accounts for a significant portion of home energy use. Disconnect unused items to reduce energy waste.

Understanding how winter weather impacts electricity demand is key to maintaining system reliability. By practicing simple energy conservation habits at home, you not only save money on your monthly bill—you also help strengthen the resilience of the grid that powers our community. Together, through small actions and shared awareness, we can ensure that our homes remain warm, our lights stay on and our local grid continues to serve us reliably throughout the season.

## DEMAND READING ON YOUR BILLING STATEMENT

### What is a Demand Reading?

REC measures demand in kilowatts (kW) in 15 minute intervals. This means the 15 minutes your equipment is consuming or demanding the most electricity is your demand reading. For example, using your space heater, oven, and washer together creates a power rush, or "demand," that impacts the cost of power for utilities.

Electric utilities use demand as a billing determinant because it reflects the size of the wires, transformers, and generators that are needed to serve the load. Equipment must be sized to safely serve the maximum demand placed on it.

### Why include a Demand Reading on all bills?

Demand charges are the utility's way of passing a fair share of those fixed costs to users who create peaks, rather than spreading it all over total usage (which hits steady, low-peak users unfairly). However, no matter the type of account, demand for energy across our system impacts our entire membership because it impacts the wholesale rate of purchased power for the Cooperative.

Cost of power is our greatest expense, so the more we can reduce our demand, especially during peak times of usage, the better for our entire membership. Having it printed on every bill gives members a chance to monitor their demand and think through their energy usage.

Meter #	Rate	From	Days	To	Days	Readings	Meter	kWh	KW	
001 2	001 2	09/30/2025		10/31/2025	31	Previous 87082	Present 87840	Multiplier 1.0	Usage 758	Demand 5.974

\*Demand Reading can be found on page 2 of your billing statement

# 2026 Board of Director Elections

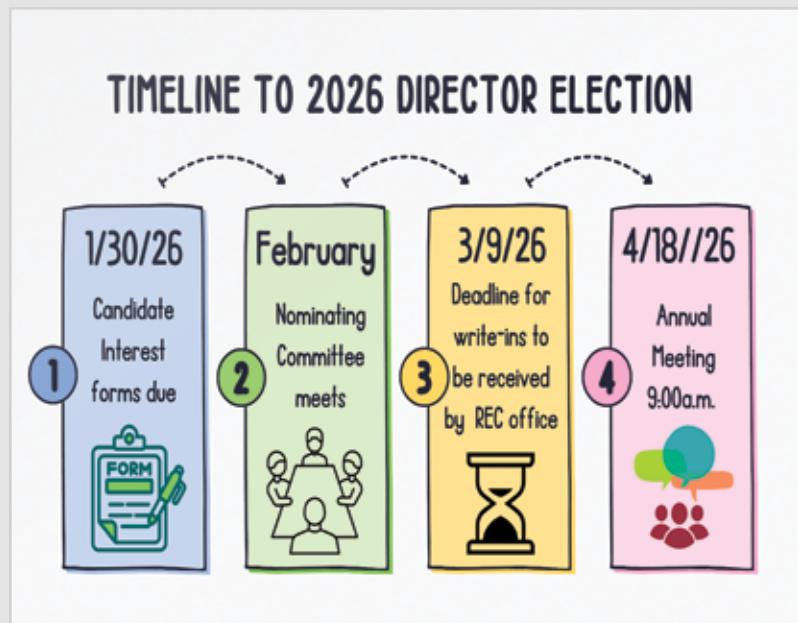
## CO-OP PRINCIPLE #2: DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

*Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.*

One of the driving principles of Cooperative membership is that members are in control of the organization through the election of a Board of Directors. To be eligible for a director seat, you must follow the election process and meet qualifications to get your name on the ballot.

Each year three directors are up for election. A candidate can run for a director position in two ways:

1. Selection during the Nominating Committee meeting — The Nominating Committee consists of five (5) people who are Richland Electric Cooperative members. This year they will meet in February at Richland Electric Cooperative headquarters.
2. Nomination by Petition— Additional nominations for a director position may be made by petition, signed by not less than ten (10) members of the Cooperative. Petitions must be submitted to the Cooperative not less than forty (40) days prior to the Annual Meeting. This year, that deadline is 3/9/26.



For additional information about the petition process or qualifications for directors, please refer to the Bylaws at [rec.coop](http://rec.coop), or contact our office at 608-647-3173.



## Districts Up For Election In 2026

### DISTRICT 3

District 3, currently occupied by incumbent Judy Murphy, encompasses parts of the townships of Kickapoo and Sylvan.

### DISTRICT 4

District 4, currently occupied by incumbent Calvin Sebranek, encompasses parts of the townships of Marshall and Rockbridge.

### DISTRICT 8

District 8, currently occupied by incumbent, Dan Hillberry, encompasses parts of the townships of Scott, Richwood, Marietta, and Marion.



# Director Qualifications

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements as specified in the Cooperative's Bylaws. Among the qualifications and responsibilities outlined in the Bylaws, nominees must be:

1. A current member receiving electric service at their primary residence, and
2. The primary residence must be in the district up for election.

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

1. Is not a member and a bona fide resident of the area served by the Cooperative whose residence, in the judgement of the Nomination and Rules Committee, satisfies the geographic diversity requirements of any policy adopted pursuant to Section 1, above; or
2. Is employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling energy or supplies to the Cooperative; or
3. Has been employed by the Cooperative at any time in the prior five (5) years; or
4. Has pursued any claim or litigation against the Cooperative or any of its employees or directors at any time in the prior five (5) years, or is delinquent on any obligation owed the Cooperative for more than 60 days; or
5. Has at any time been convicted of a felony or of any other offense involving dishonesty.

## HOW TO JOIN REC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1 Visit [rec.coop](http://rec.coop) to review Richland Electric Cooperative's Bylaws.

2 Look for an open seat in your board district.

3 Take steps to get your name on the ballot.

4 Members vote by mail in ballot.

## Responsibilities of Directors

While representing the membership, elected directors become a part of a nine-member board tasked with making decisions in the best interest of all members and the cooperative business. Directors work with the management team to provide direction and general oversight of the cooperative. Directors set policies, including retail rates.

To be effective, Directors must be able to read financial statements, forecasts, and strategic reports. Director oversight ensures the democratic functioning of the cooperative in accordance with the Cooperative's Bylaws and respects the confidentiality of information provided or discussed.

The following are items that are expected by the Director to gain background information and knowledge needed to make informed decisions on complex matters concerning Richland Electric Cooperative. Due to the commitment

of time to serve, Directors receive a per diem and travel reimbursement for attending meetings, conferences and training.

1. Attend 12 regularly scheduled monthly Board Meetings
2. Attend at national, regional, state, and/or other meetings, conferences, and/or training seminars accounting for 3-10 days per year
3. Encouraged to become an NRECA Credential Cooperative Director by attending 3-5 training courses per year
4. Spend considerable time reviewing and analyzing data and other information presented to the Board
5. Disclosure of any existing or potential conflict of interest with any Board membership, position, investment, or business
6. Must successfully pass a background check during the election process

\*For *CANDIDATE INTEREST FORM*, please continue to page 18.

## INTERESTED?

If you are a member of district 3, 4, or 8 and would like to be considered by the Nominating Committee for the 2026 Director Election, please complete the form below and return to our office no later than 1/30/2026. All inquiries will remain confidential.

**YES**, I am interested in becoming a candidate for the Richland Electric Cooperative Board of Directors 2026 election. (Please print information below)

Name:

Account Number:

District:

Street Address:

City, State, Zip:

Contact Number:

Email:

**Please return this Candidate Interest form to be received at Richland Electric Cooperative by January 30, 2026:**

Richland Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 439  
Richland Center, WI 53581-0439



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Winter weather can cause your home heating system to work overtime. Check for air leaks and drafts around doors and windows then seal them with weatherstripping or caulk. Close fireplace dampers when not in use, and consider installing insulating curtains to help keep warm air inside. You can also save energy by lowering your thermostat a few degrees. Even small adjustments like these can reduce heating costs and improve comfort during the coldest months.

## RICHLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

**Scholarship Eligibility:**

1. Applicant or applicant's parent, parents or legal guardian must be a member of Richland Electric Cooperative.
2. Any graduating high school student.
3. Student will incur costs from the post secondary institution.

APPLICATION  
DEADLINE 3/15/26  
Go to [rec.coop](http://rec.coop) to apply

**Amy Martin, Manager/CEO**

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608-647-3173

[www.rec.coop](http://www.rec.coop) • Find us on Facebook

**Trina Duffy-Brauer, Editor**



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## Board of Directors

Calvin Sebranek, President • Daniel Hillberry, Vice President • Judy Murphy, Secretary • Tim Tiller, Treasurer  
Dennis Brown, Jim Goplin, Steven Fuller, Jeff Monson, Kevin Kepler