

RECIPES

EVENTS

SYMBOL SEARCH

Since 1940

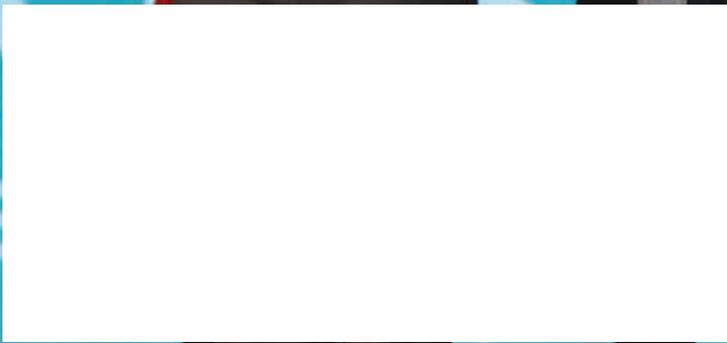
WISCONSIN ENERGY

Cooperative

August 2021 NEWS

WILL Power

River Falls youth receives highest co-op honor



Richland Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



A BALANCED FUEL MIX PROMOTES POWER RELIABILITY

As we've noted before, the energy industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation as consumer demand for more renewable energy sources grows, and innovation and technology continue to advance exponentially. You're likely witnessing this energy evolution first-hand.

In driving across the region, you may have noticed fields of solar panels owned Richland Electric Cooperative (REC) and other utilities, along with an increase in solar panels on your neighbors' roofs. Maybe you've heard about the impending changes in the transportation sector with most major vehicle companies announcing plans to offer more electric vehicles at more affordable prices.

Consumer interest in renewable energy is strong and growing. In addition, national studies indicate that consumers have an expectation that companies operate in an ethical and responsible manner—including when it comes to the environment.

At REC, we have always put the good of our community first. While our primary function is to provide reliable and affordable energy to our members, we are more than an electricity provider. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and to serve the long-term interests of our community. We feel we're doing both by investing in renewable energy sources.

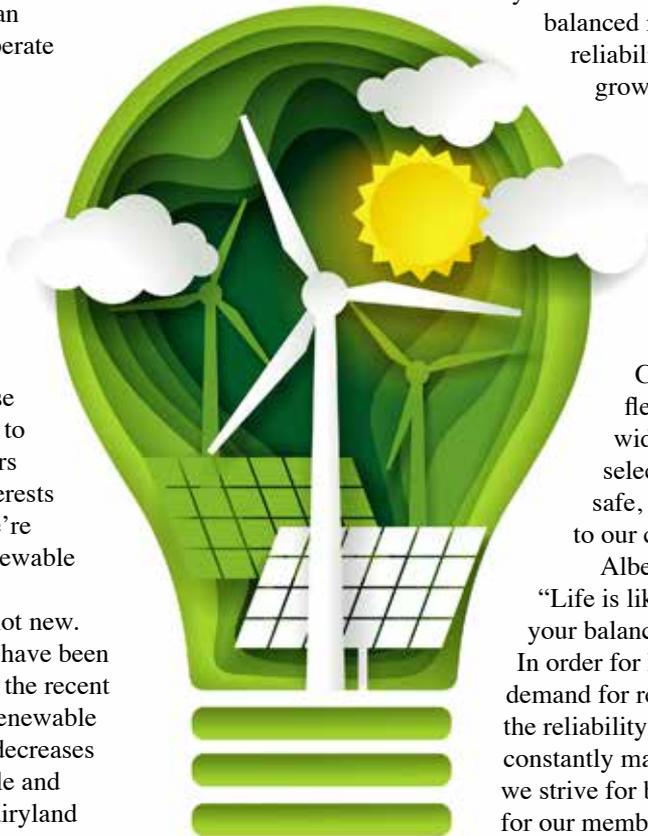
Green energy is certainly not new. Solar, wind, and hydro power have been around for decades. However, the recent innovations and advances in renewable technology have led to sharp decreases in cost, making it more feasible and accessible. In recent years, Dairyland

Power Cooperatives has been able to adjust our fuel mix by utilizing more renewables. Today, 24% of our fuel mix is comprised of renewable energy sources, the majority of which is solar/wind. By 2030 that number is expected to be 30%.

However, to borrow a nautical analogy, it takes a long time to turn the direction of a large ship—and changing the energy mix we use to power homes and businesses doesn't happen overnight. While renewable energy use is increasing, we will still depend on traditional forms of energy to keep power flowing reliably to your home. After all, solar and wind energy are referred to as “intermittent” power since the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow. This fact, coupled with the growing demand for renewables, creates its own challenges. That's why there is real value in maintaining a balanced mixture of fuel types to ensure reliability, resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

As the energy industry continues to evolve, REC is striving to take advantage of technology advances and market opportunities as they become available. This means Dairyland Power Cooperative can leverage the flexibility of the grid to offer a wider range of renewable power selections as we continue to bring safe, reliable, and affordable power to our community.

Albert Einstein once observed that, “Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” In order for REC to meet the growing demand for renewable energy and ensure the reliability of our power supply, we must constantly make operational adjustments as we strive for balance and a brighter future for our members.





CONGRATULATIONS

to our scholarship winners!



Riverdale High School

Jackson Kinney – \$250
UW-Platteville – Richland
Associates of Arts and Science

Madison Couey –\$500
Carroll University
Exercise Science

Kickapoo High School

Logan Turgasen – \$750
South Dakota State University
Agricultural Systems

Rachel Durst – \$500
UW-Platteville
Agriculture Education

Ithaca High School

Ryan Lee – \$750
University of Iowa
Astronomy

Sara Jones – \$250
UW-Platteville – Richland
Animal Science

La Farge High School

Natalie Nordmann – \$500
UW-River Falls • Animal Science

TRANSITION ENERGY SOLAR SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE!

It's easier than ever to participate in Transition Energy Solar! Participating members offset their own energy usage with solar-generated energy without the the need for solar panels at their home or business.

Interested?

Just visit rec.coop and click on Transition Energy under Renewables in the menu bar for a subscription agreement and eligibility worksheet.

Questions?

Please call us at 608-647-3173.

**Subscription cost
reduced to \$639!**



WE HAVE UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

Can you help us find the rightful recipients?

We've got some capital credit funds that we're trying to return to their rightful owners, and we could use your help! Please see our website, rec.coop/capital-credits, for a list of members and former members whose capital credits remain unclaimed. If you can help us find any of these people, or their rightful heirs, please call our office at 608-647-3173. If the funds are not claimed by September 1, they will be forfeited

For a list of members with unclaimed capital credits, visit our website: rec.coop/capital-credits

to Richland Electric Cooperative and used for educational purposes through the Federated Youth Foundation. Read on to learn more about how capital credits work.

Richland Electric's ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative's strength and financial stability.

What happens to my capital credits if I move?

Your capital credits remain on our books until they are retired. That's why it's important to let us know of any address changes. Each year we have capital credit checks returned to us because the recipients are no longer living at the addresses we have on file for them. We publish these names on our website, rec.coop/capital-credits. Please check this list; if you recognize anyone there and know their whereabouts—or those of their rightful heirs—please call our office, 608-647-3173, and let us know.

What happens to the capital credits of a member who dies?

A deceased member's capital credits may be paid at a discount without waiting for a general retirement. A representative of the estate must contact us.

What happens to unclaimed capital credits?

We do everything we can to ensure that former members get their retired capital credits. However, any money that isn't claimed is placed in the Wisconsin Electric Cooperatives' Federated Youth Foundation and used for educational purposes, including scholarships and youth programs.

What are capital credits?

Capital credits are one of the many benefits of co-op membership. As a cost-of-service energy provider, Richland Electric doesn't earn profits. Instead, co-ops use the term margins, which is revenue remaining at the end of the year after all bills are paid. Capital credits reflect each member's equity in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative. This differs from dividends that investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not receive service from the utility.

Where does the money come from?

Co-ops set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on any loans, and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, we subtract operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating margin.

What's the difference between allocation and retirement?

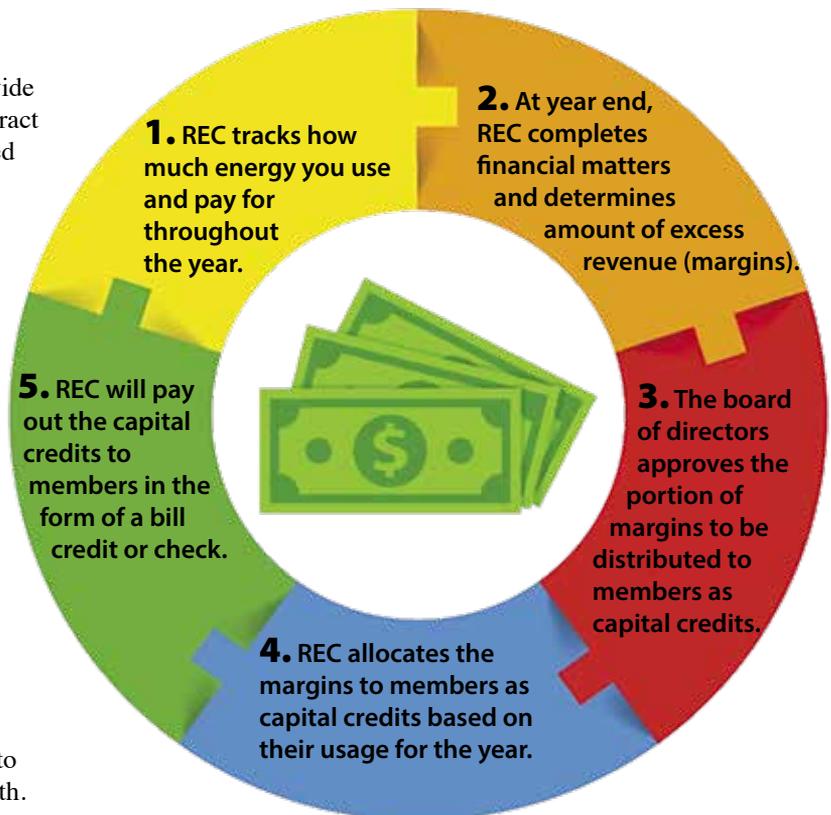
An allocation is your share of the margins. We set this money aside to use as operating capital for improvements and maintenance. A retirement is the amount you receive as a credit on your statement. It is a percentage of your allocations accumulated over the years. Typically, after utilizing capital for 20 to 30 years, it is retired.

Why does the co-op need to accumulate equity?

Your equity in the co-op reduces the need for us to raise rates or borrow money to meet expenses.

Are capital credits retired every year?

Each year, your board of directors decides whether to retire capital credits based on the co-op's financial health.





HAY IN THE BARN; IMAGES IN THE NIGHT

By Al Cornell

Dad harnessed Pat and Bill and backed one to each side of the hay wagon tongue and hitched them to it. They were a dandy team of Percheron draft horses, and he had work to do. The forecast called for rain. He needed to get the hay in the barn as soon as it was baled.

Four days earlier, the black team sweating under the July sun had pulled the sickle-bar mower back and forth across the ridge field cutting five-foot swaths of alfalfa and timothy. Under Dad's control, Pat and Bill had just finished raking the hay with a side-delivery rake when Richard Vanourek from Yuba arrived with his wire-tie baler to custom bale the hay.

With his boys still too young to help with those heavy bales, it was up to Dad and the horses to get the job done.

He slung bales onto the hayrack forming two layers of 16 bales with a row of eight on top. With that load, the horses could make it down the steep part of the ridge road to where it tied to the town road and then proceed

to the barn. The mow floor of the old barn had been removed, and the whole open interior was used for hay storage. Dad heaved the bales in without stacking them and continued to haul more loads. After milking, he again headed the horses up the road to the ridge. As he returned with a load, the shrill squawking of the steel wagon wheels rolling over gravel echoed in the hollow until the horses stopped in front of the haybarn. Dad unloaded that last load just before dark.

In the night it rained. That summer rainstorm flashed bright streaks in the sky and rattled the windows with loud booms. Mom went downstairs and turned on the yard light.

Silt-laden water began flowing down the normally dry ditch 50 feet in front of the house. It rose to the banks and rushed under the log-streamer bridge.

The head of my roll-away bed was pushed up next to the window with a view of the front yard. I raised up with my elbows on my pillow and watched. I was mesmerized by the flowing water that showed up well under the yard light and even better in the lightning flashes.

At some point my eyelids drooped and my arms relaxed. I slowly dropped down onto the pillow. The flowing water transitioned from reality into a hallucinatory dream world.

Nothing changed. The ditch stream still flowed like it had before.

Then the dream world began to add elements. On top of the water, a series of three-foot-long silhouette whales floated rapidly downstream. Perhaps I had seen a childhood Moby Dick book. They were silhouettes of typical cartoon character

whales. The whales would be followed by a series of fish silhouettes riding on the rapidly flowing stream. Next, and most impressive, were a series of water dragons. I do not know where I had seen those dragons, but they came riding on the current in a series of three. Those repeating silhouettes came until the sandman let me tail off into deep sleep.

Those images are so indelibly recorded in my memory, that though I forget 10 million things, there will still be whales and fish and dragons riding on those floodwaters from childhood.

Dad, worn out from the day's work and satisfied that the hay was in the barn, slept soundly.



Shannon Clark, Manager/CEO
1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581
608-647-3173
www.rec.coop
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