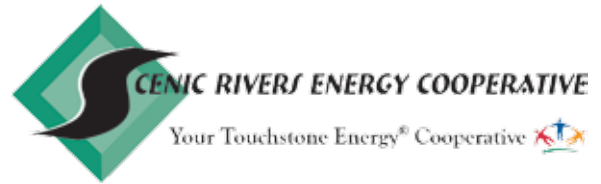




Steve Lucas, CEO

GET TO KNOW YOUR CO-OP NETWORK



Every day, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is hard at work to make sure all of our members have the electric power they need at the best possible price. And behind the scenes, we are working with a network of cooperatives to make that happen.

SREC is a part of Dairyland Power Cooperative, which generates the power we distribute to our members. Our cooperative, as well as 16 other electric cooperatives and 17 municipal utilities in the Upper Midwest, helped to create this second-tier co-op so that we have more control over power supply and pricing.

It also takes a lot of money to run an electric co-op, so when we need to borrow capital, we turn to either the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) or CoBank. Both of these organizations are also cooperatives. CFC is owned by electric co-ops throughout the country, and CoBank is owned by electric and agricultural co-ops nationwide. We have also turned to CoBank to help us provide funds for electricity-related projects that improve the quality of life within the communities we serve.

As you know, every month we generate an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail. We use National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), which develops and supports software and hardware solutions for its member-owners. By utilizing NISC's services, we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs, and send timely, accurate bills to you.

No business can operate without several different types of insurance, such as general liability, auto, and workmen's compensation. So we, along with other electric cooperatives across the country, are members of Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange. This allows us to maintain reliable coverage at an affordable price.

It also takes a whole lot of "stuff" to operate an electric co-op, such as poles, wires, transformers, and many other items that you may not see. This is why we partnered with other co-ops to create Rural Electric Supply Cooperative (RESOCO), one of the largest full-line distributors of high-voltage electric products in the Midwest. RESOCO allows us to have quick access to all the materials we need at the best price.

SREC is also a member of Touchstone Energy, a nationwide alliance of 750 local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives. Our participation allows us access to a wealth of informational materials. It also allows us to benchmark our performance in comparison with other co-ops so that we can learn from others as we constantly strive to serve you better.

SREC also uses the Cooperative Response Center (CRC), which provides a professional call center with customer care and crew dispatch representatives. We use CRC's services during the evenings, on weekends, and on major holidays. It allows us to answer your calls 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

So, while you are a member of one electric co-op, you are actually connected to many other co-ops. And being connected to this cooperative network ensures your needs are met in the most efficient and cooperative way possible.—*Source: Adam Schwartz, founder of The Cooperative Way, a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed*

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2016, we will feature the winning photos from SREC's first-ever Member Photo Contest in the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*. The winning photo for February was taken by James Ballie of Delavan. He took this picture in late December with the sun low in the sky over the Kickapoo River.

Each of the winning photos is included in our 2016 member calendar. We still have some calendars available; stop in at any of SREC's offices to pick one up.

Our 2016 Member Photo Contest is already underway; turn to page 17 for contest details.





SAVING UP FOR SOMETHING BIG?

SREC's energy rebate program can help

When you rang in the new year last month, did you resolve to stick to a stricter household budget, or save up some money for something special like a vacation or maybe a new car?

Whether it's a New Year's resolution or not, saving money is something we're guessing most everyone would like to do, and we can help with our energy rebates. SREC recently rolled out its energy efficiency rebate program for 2016, which offers rebates for members who upgrade their homes with Energy Star-qualified lighting, appliances, and energy efficient electric heating systems.

Energy-efficient models may cost a little more upfront, but they'll save energy during the life of the units, and that saves you money in the long run. For example, if your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new Energy Star model.

The same goes for lighting. CFL and LED lights cost more to purchase than old-fashioned incandescent lighting, but the newer lights pay for themselves quickly. According to the Energy Information Administration, replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs can save you \$75 per year.

We'll help you get started on these upgrades with rebates for the purchase and installation of qualified energy efficient models. We've even got rebates to help you with the cost of safely recycling some of your old appliances. Then the savings will continue as these new systems keep your household energy costs down all year long.

To qualify for a rebate, items must be purchased, installed, and/or recycled in 2016, and the rebate form must be



submitted within six months of purchase. Rebates are in place through December 31, 2016, or until funds, by incentive or in total, are depleted.

Rebate application forms and copies of receipts must be submitted by December 31, 2016; however, we encourage you to submit these items as soon as possible after your equipment is purchased and installed.

Rebate forms can be found on our website, www.sre.coop, under Programs and Services. If you have any questions, please call us at 800-236-2141.

THE GIFT OF POWER

A great way to show you care

A gift certificate from Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is great for Valentine's Day, birthdays, weddings, and any other time you want to show someone you care.



Contact SREC, 800-236-2141, to learn how you can brighten someone's life with the gift of power.



It's Easy2Pay!

FAST • SAFE • CONVENIENT • FREE

Make your life easier by switching to Easy2Pay! This online bill-paying system enables you to pay your power bills without checks, stamps, or trips to the mailbox.

To get started, visit our website at www.sre.coop under Billing. Just be sure to have a recent energy bill handy—you will need your account number and corresponding meter number to log in for the first time. Once you have your user name and password set up, you can view your current energy bill(s), choose your payment option, and pay the amount due.

You can also set up an automatic transfer fund to come out of your checking or savings account on the 10th or 20th of each month. Look for a form on the back of your bill.

2016 SREC MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is holding its second annual Member Photo Contest. Winning photos will appear in SREC's 2017 calendar. Photos may also be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications.

Photo Contest Criteria:

- Photos must be taken within the Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative service area.
- Photos should capture scenic life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, etc.).
- Photos must be horizontal (landscape).
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Photos must be at least 300 dpi and 8"x10".

Photo Contest Rules and Details:

- Contest will run through August 21, 2016; however, submitted photos can be taken outside of this date range.
- Three (3) photos per member will be accepted.
- All SREC members 18 years old and over are eligible to submit photos.
- An SREC member under the age of 18 years old is eligible to participate, but must submit a parent/guardian form with entry.
- A completed entry form must accompany each photo.
- Member must own rights to photo.
- SREC employees will choose winning photos.



Entry forms can be downloaded from www.sre.coop, picked up at a SREC office, or emailed to you.

Please email all photos to hpierce@SREC.net.

NOTE: To be of sufficient quality for publication in the calendar, photos MUST be at least 300 dpi.



SREC RECOGNIZED FOR 100 PERCENT PARTICIPATION IN ACRE

Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative was recognized for its 2014–2015 participation in the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) at the recent WECA annual meeting.

ACRE is a nationwide effort by electric co-op member-owners, co-op managers, directors, and employees to secure a strong future for rural electric cooperatives. As a nonpartisan political action committee of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, ACRE raises funds for use in state and national election campaigns, supporting candidates who share public policy goals that are consistent with the mission of member-owned electric cooperatives. ACRE does not contribute to presidential campaigns.

Co-op directors and staff contribute to ACRE annually.

SREC was recognized for achieving 100 percent board and spouse participation in ACRE for 2014–15.



SREC Board Chairman Chuck Simmons, right, accepts a certificate for 100 percent board and spouse participation in ACRE from Robert Kretzschmar (l), National ACRE chairman.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

SREC's 2016 annual meeting will be held

**Saturday,
April 9**



Watch next month's *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* for meeting details.

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