

# WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

## Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Just last month, several area members were targeted through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, Scenic Rivers Energy will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle. Another trending scam is smishing. Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. Scenic Rivers Energy will not send text messages which would demand payments on your account. These are just

a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 1-800-236-2141 to verify the situation.

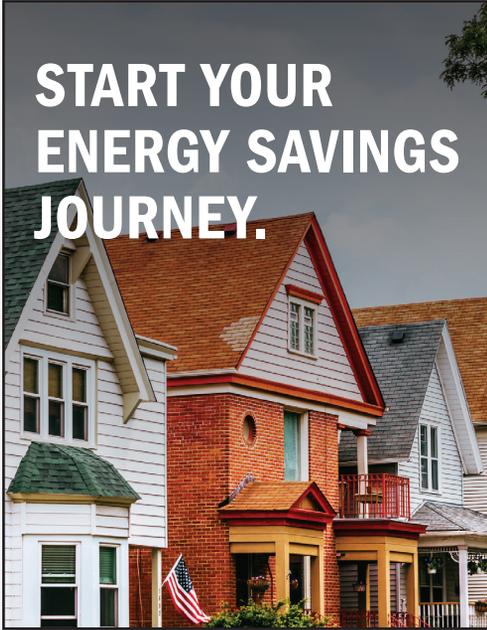
Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to us immediately or to the proper authorities so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized. ■



# Focus on Energy 2021 Incentives

For 20 years Focus on Energy has helped members save energy with efficient products; and save money with a large variety of incentives and rebates. Visit them at [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com) or call 1-800-762-7077 for more information.

## START YOUR ENERGY SAVINGS JOURNEY.



FREE energy-saving packs from FOCUS ON ENERGY® are shipped directly to you and include a variety of products designed to reduce energy waste. Our packs include high-efficiency LEDs, efficient showerheads and more!

### Are you in?

Order your free pack now at [focusonenergymarketplace.com/free](http://focusonenergymarketplace.com/free) or give us a call at **800.762.7077**. Before ordering your pack, please have your electric and gas (if applicable) utility account numbers handy. Limit of one pack per eligible household every three years. Pack contents may vary.



ENERGY STAR® LEDs



Efficient Showerhead



Water Faucet Aerator



Pipe Insulation Wrap

#### REDUCING ENERGY WASTE ACROSS WISCONSIN

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, helps eligible residents and businesses save energy and money while protecting the environment. Focus on Energy information, resources and financial incentives help to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that otherwise would not be completed. © 2021 Focus on Energy



## SREC 2021 Incentives

2021 incentive forms are available at the SREC office and online. Incentives issued while funds are available.

**Additional terms & conditions on incentive forms; please read thoroughly before submitting.**



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# LED: A rising star in energy savings

Many of us might recall that way back in 2007, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) passed the Energy and Independence Act. Well, actually, you probably don't remember that at all. What you probably remember is watching the news a few years later and realizing the future of incandescent light bulbs was quite dim.

While this legislation included a wide range of recommendations for the energy industry, the main and probably most memorable requirement was that new light bulbs use 25% less energy.

As a result, there was a huge push between 2012 and 2014 to replace older incandescent light bulbs with newer, more energy-efficient versions.

Oftentimes, regulations come and go without much fanfare. However, when incandescent light bulbs were phased out, it directly impacted light bulb choices and left many of us wondering what all the fuss was about.

Traditional incandescent bulbs produce light by heating a wire filament to a temperature that results in the generation of light. Incandescent bulbs were popular because they were inexpensive and available in a wide range of colors. However, much of their energy went into heat production and very little toward emitting light.

Incandescent light bulbs also have a very short lifespan, lasting only about one year on average. Although they are no longer available in U.S. stores, the energy costs associated with the once-popular bulb, along with its stunted lifespan, far outweigh the initial savings at the cash register. Since incandescent bulbs produce a lot of heat, they may cause burn injuries and pose a fire risk.

Nowadays, the three most popular light bulbs are the light-emitting diode (LED), the halogen incandescent and the compact fluorescent light (CFL). According to the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, in the third quarter of 2018, light bulb orders were broken down as

follows: LEDs accounted for 65%, halogens made up 28% and CFLs were 7%.

What makes LEDs different? LED light bulbs work when an electrical current passes through a microchip, which illuminates the tiny light sources we call LEDs, and the result is visible light. LED light bulbs produce light up to 90% more efficiently than traditional incandescent light bulbs. They also include features that keep the bulb cooler to the touch, which avoids potential injuries and fire risks.

LEDs are also safer than their closest

competitors, CFL and halogen bulbs. CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, which is dangerous if ingested. In addition, this type of bulb should not be thrown in the trash. Halogen bulbs operate at very high temperatures, which means they can cause burns to the skin if touched. They can also, in some cases, cause a fire: when they are knocked over or come in contact with something flammable, for example.

Moreover, many LEDs

are rated with a lifespan of 50,000 hours. That means if one is used 8 hours a day, it is projected to last 17 years! Residential LEDs, especially those that are designated with the ENERGY STAR logo, use at least 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting, according to the DOE.

In comparison, halogen light bulbs last about a year and CFL bulbs about 3 years (both based on 8-hour-a-day usage).

LEDs help the environment while reducing energy costs. According to the DOE, their widespread use is on track to save the equivalent annual electrical output of 44 large electric power plants, with a total savings of more than \$30 billion, by the year 2027!

For more information about electrical safety and energy efficiency, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org). ■



## MAKE THE SWITCH

**SAVE MONEY and REDUCE ENERGY USE** by replacing outdated lightbulbs with newer, more efficient LED lights.

# Reminder

## 2021 Photo Contest

For those avid photographers among our membership, we hope you will participate and send us your work. We especially encourage first timers and our younger members to submit your work.



High-resolution photos can be submitted via email to [jmims@srec.net](mailto:jmims@srec.net). For a complete list of rules and criteria, as well as the entry forms, visit our website at [www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop). Entry forms can also be picked up at our office, or we can email you a copy. Please call us if you have questions.



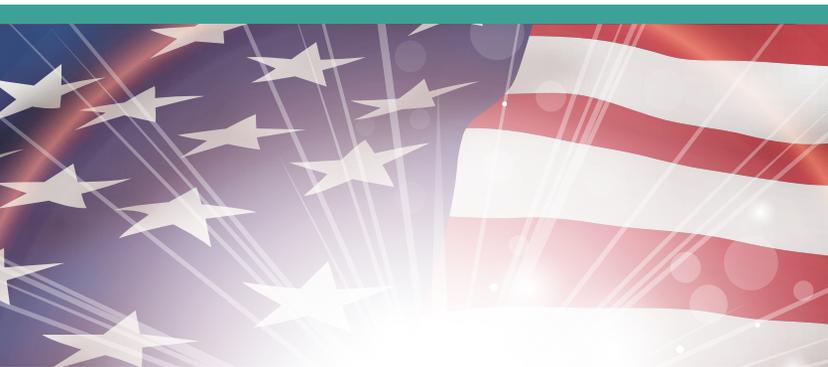
# Vegetation Management

Zielie's Tree Service will be finishing up the tree trimming on the Platteville Substation west circuit and starting to trim on the Castle Rock Substation in Grant County the month of July.

It is important for SREC to maintain its rights-of-way for the following reasons:

- Accessibility for field crews, vehicles and equipment
- Fire prevention
- Reliable electric service
- Quality service with the reduction of outages and blinks
- Safety for workers and the public
- Meeting state and federal code requirements

On a daily basis, SREC employees and contractors are working throughout the area, at times on your property, to operate and maintain the electric system and our rights-of-ways. During this time, we especially appreciate your cooperation as we maintain social distancing between our essential staff and our members. **If you have questions, please contact Jay at [jgardner@srec.net](mailto:jgardner@srec.net) or call 800-236-2141 ext. 566.**



# HAPPY 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY



# INDEPENDENCE DAY

**OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 5TH**



Watt's Happening is published monthly as an information service to the member-owners of Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative.

Any questions or comments can be directed to Watt's Happening, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, 231 North Sheridan, Lancaster, WI 53813 or telephone (608) 723-2121 or toll free 800-236-2141.

[www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop)

Steve Lucas ..... CEO

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