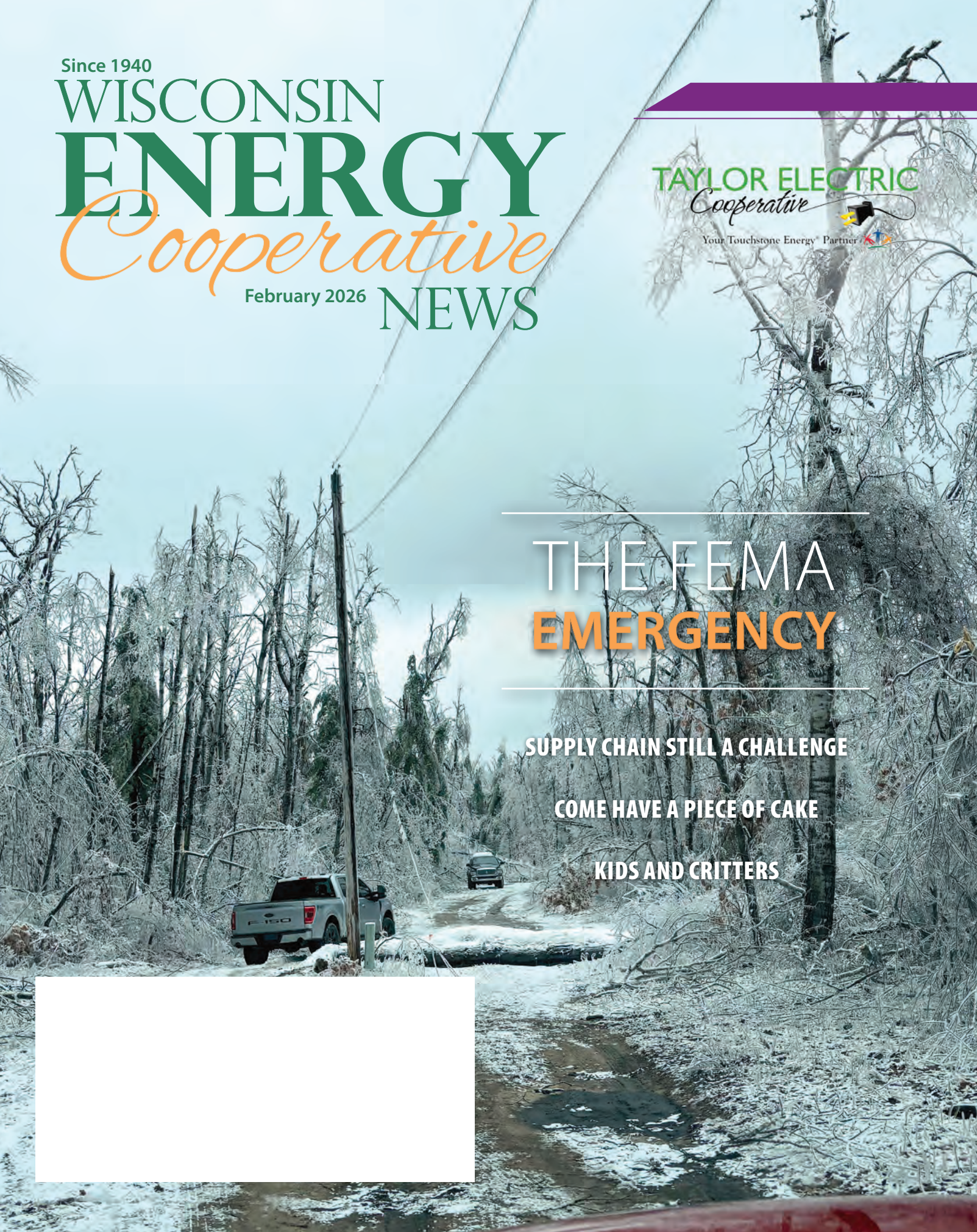
Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY Cooperative NEWS

February 2026

TAYLOR ELECTRIC Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



THE FEMA EMERGENCY

SUPPLY CHAIN STILL A CHALLENGE

COME HAVE A PIECE OF CAKE

KIDS AND CRITTERS

UNDERSTANDING FACTORS THAT IMPACT YOUR ENERGY BILLS

TAYLOR ELECTRIC Cooperative
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

By Ken Ceaglske, CEO

February brings some of the coldest weather of the year, and as our home heating systems work harder and longer to keep us warm, we typically see higher energy bills. There are a few key factors that affect electricity prices, as well as a few ways you can make a meaningful impact on home energy savings.

When you receive your monthly bill from Taylor Electric, you're provided with a summary of how much electricity you used during the billing cycle through SmartHub. You can even see how electricity use may have spiked on days when you used more electricity, such as a particularly chilly day or when relatives were staying with you.

But you might be surprised to learn that beyond your monthly energy consumption, there are external factors that can impact the cost of electricity.

Fuel Prices

Taylor Electric purchases electricity from our power generation partner, Dairyland Power Cooperative, at a wholesale cost, then we deliver that power to our local communities. The cost of generating and transmitting electricity from our generation partner accounts for a significant portion of the cost to provide electric service to local homes and businesses—and the cost of fuels that are used to generate that electricity, such as natural gas and coal, fluctuate based on supply and demand. While these fluctuations can impact the cost of electricity, we work closely with Dairyland Power to plan ahead and help stabilize electricity prices for our members.

Extreme Weather

While we can't control the weather, we can review weather patterns and forecasts to prepare for times of extreme cold or heat, when we know the demand for electricity will increase. But when temperatures become extremely cold and the demand for electricity spikes, the price of electricity can also increase.

Infrastructure and Equipment

To cover the costs associated with providing electricity to your home or business, Taylor Electric members pay a monthly service charge. This flat monthly fee ensures the cost of equipment, materials, labor, and daily operations are covered for all members in Taylor's service territory. To ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local grid, including power lines, substations, and other essential equipment.

Energy Policy and Regulations

Federal energy policies and regulations can have a profound impact on electricity costs. As energy generation shifts to the use of more renewable sources and stricter regulations for traditional, always-available fuel sources, such as natural gas and coal plants, costly upgrades and technologies must be constructed and deployed. These additional costs are ultimately passed to consumers.

U.S. power consumption is expected to double by 2050. Across the country, electric cooperatives are working with members of Congress to advocate for smart energy policies that reliably power our local communities.

You Have Control

While many of these external factors that impact electricity costs are out of our control, we all have the power to manage our energy use at home. The most effective way to lower use is thermostat management. Since heating and cooling account for a major portion of home energy use, adjusting the thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting can help you save energy and money. Remember to service your heating and cooling system annually and replace dirty filters as needed.

You can also reduce energy use by taking advantage of off-peak periods, when the demand for electricity is lower. Reserve energy-intensive chores for off-peak times, such as early in the morning or later in the evening, to save energy. Be sure to seal air leaks around windows, doors, and other areas where gaps are possible. This will help your heating and cooling system work less and improve the overall comfort of your home.

Taylor Electric is your local energy partner, and we're here to help. As always, we will continue working diligently to provide you with reliable power at an affordable cost.

TAYLOR ELECTRIC LINEMEN ASSIST MICHIGAN CO-OP AFTER SNOWSTORM

Taylor Electric linemen, Geoff Mueller and Tim Habermeyer, traveled north to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to assist Alger Delta Electric Cooperative Association in late December to restore power following a severe snowstorm. The storm brought heavy snowfall and strong winds, causing widespread power outages. Downed trees and damaged power lines left approximately 5,000 cooperative members without electricity, prompting Alger Delta to request mutual aid through the regional network of electric cooperatives.

Mueller and Habermeyer departed early Monday, December 29. Treacherous road conditions significantly slowed their journey, turning what is normally a four-hour drive into an eight-hour trek. Once on site, the two worked long, demanding days—often into the early morning hours—helping restore power amid deep snow, frigid temperatures, and persistent winds that complicated repair efforts.

As power was steadily restored across Alger Delta's system, Mueller and Habermeyer wrapped up their assignment and returned to Wisconsin late Thursday evening, January 1.

Sending crews to assist fellow cooperatives is a core part of Taylor Electric's commitment to the cooperative principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives—working together to support members and communities when they need it most, no matter the distance or conditions.

ROPE: COOPERATION BEYOND THE STORM

The assistance provided by Taylor Electric linemen in Michigan is part of a much larger cooperative effort known as ROPE—Restoration of Power in an Emergency. Through ROPE, electric cooperatives stand ready to help one another when major storms overwhelm local resources.

That commitment was recently recognized in a letter from Aiken Electric Cooperative in South Carolina following Hurricane Helene in September of 2024. In the letter, CEO Gary Stooksbury thanked visiting crews and their cooperatives for their professionalism, long hours, and unwavering focus on safety, noting that mutual aid support helped restore power to 92% of the system and complete a full rebuild in just 15 days.

Whether responding to a snowstorm in Michigan or a hurricane in the Southeast, ROPE reflects the cooperative principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives—neighbors helping neighbors, no matter the distance.

Letter from Gary Stooksbury, Aiken Electric Cooperative CEO

There are no words to adequately express our appreciation for the crews you sent to assist Aiken Electric Cooperative restore power to our members following Hurricane Helene.

At the peak of the storm, we had over 49,000 members without power, representing 92% of our system. The hurricane destroyed critical transmission lines in addition to snapping over 1,623 distribution poles, a record-breaking number for AEC. With 27 of our 29 substations without power, no office communications, and trees and debris impacting our ability to even get to parts of our service territory, it took over 900 individuals to restore power to our members. Your crews, alongside AEC employees, worked tirelessly to complete the restoration and rebuild. This hurricane was powerful and deadly, leaving some areas in our service territory completely destroyed! However, with the help of your crews, our sister cooperatives, contractors, Santee Cooper, and AEC's employees, we were able to accomplish a complete restoration and rebuild of our electric system in 15 days.

The hours worked were long and exhausting, but everyone worked efficiently, professionally, and most important of all, safely! Your employees were here for us and our membership during our time of need and for that we are extremely grateful! Please accept these commemorative Hurricane Helene hats as a token of our appreciation.

Again, thank you!


Aiken Electric Cooperative, Inc.

December 22, 2025

Taylor Electric Cooperative
c/o Kenneth Coughlin
N3371 State Highway 13
Medford, WI 54451

There are no words to adequately express our appreciation for the crews you sent to assist Aiken Electric Cooperative restore power to our members following Hurricane Helene.

At the peak of the storm, we had over 49,000 members without power, representing 92% of our system. The hurricane destroyed critical transmission lines in addition to snapping over 1,623 distribution poles, a record-breaking number for AEC. With 27 of our 29 substations without power, no office communications, and trees and debris impacting our ability to even get to parts of our service territory, it took over 900 individuals to restore power to our members. Your crews, alongside AEC employees, worked tirelessly to complete the restoration and rebuild. This hurricane was powerful and deadly, leaving some areas in our service territory completely destroyed! However, with the help of your crews, our sister cooperatives, contractors, Santee Cooper, and AEC's employees, we were able to accomplish a complete restoration and rebuild of our electric system in 15 days.

The hours worked were long and exhausting, but everyone worked efficiently, professionally, and most important of all, safely! Your employees were here for us and our membership during our time of need and for that we are extremely grateful! Please accept these commemorative Hurricane Helene hats as a token of our appreciation.

Again, thank you!

Sincerely,

Gary Stooksbury
Chief Executive Officer

CAROLINACONNECT

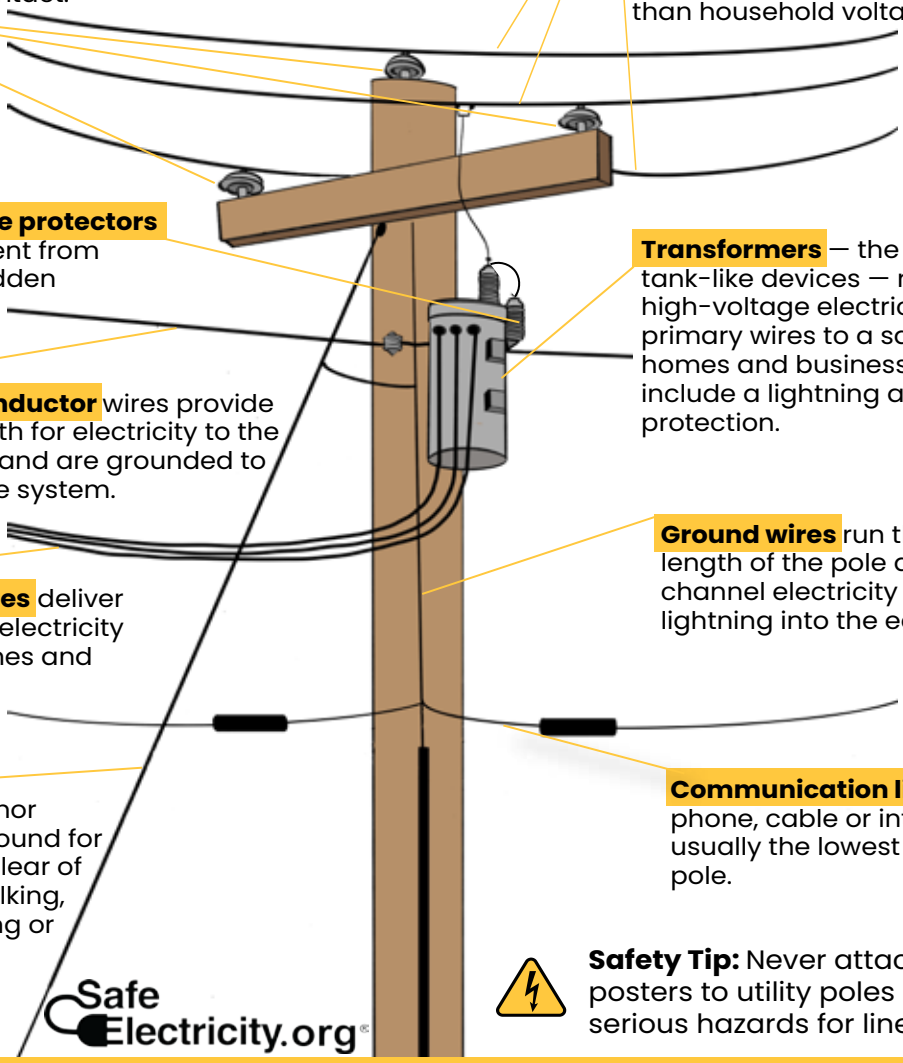
Mueller and Habermeyer worked overnight in Michigan's Upper Peninsula to restore power following a severe snowstorm that brought heavy snowfall, high winds, and widespread outages. Freezing temperatures and limited visibility added to the challenges crews faced while assisting with power restoration efforts.

You've heard these words —
But what do they mean?

The parts of a **POWER POLE**

Ever wonder what's on a power pole and how it delivers electricity to your home? Learning about each part can help you and your family stay informed — and safe.

Here are some common parts found on power poles. Equipment can vary depending on location and service needs.



Insulators keep energized wires from touching the pole or other wires, preventing dangerous contact.

Primary wires are the main series of wires that carry high-voltage electricity (often 7,200 volts) from substations through the distribution system — about 60 times higher than household voltage.

Lightning surge protectors shield equipment from lightning or sudden voltage spikes.

Transformers — the round, metal tank-like devices — reduce high-voltage electricity from primary wires to a safer level for homes and businesses. Many include a lightning arrestor for protection.

Neutral conductor wires provide a return path for electricity to the substation and are grounded to balance the system.

Ground wires run the entire length of the pole and safely channel electricity and lightning into the earth.

Secondary wires deliver lower-voltage electricity directly to homes and businesses.

Communication lines — for phone, cable or internet — are usually the lowest wires on the pole.

Guy wires anchor poles to the ground for stability. Stay clear of them when walking, playing, mowing or driving nearby.

Safe Electricity.org

Safety Tip: Never attach signs or posters to utility poles — it creates serious hazards for lineworkers.

Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO
N1831 State Highway 13, Medford, WI 54451
715-678-2411 • 800-862-2407
email: taylrec@taylorelectric.org
website: www.taylorelectric.org
Lainie Kellnhofer, Editor

TAYLOR ELECTRIC Cooperative
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner