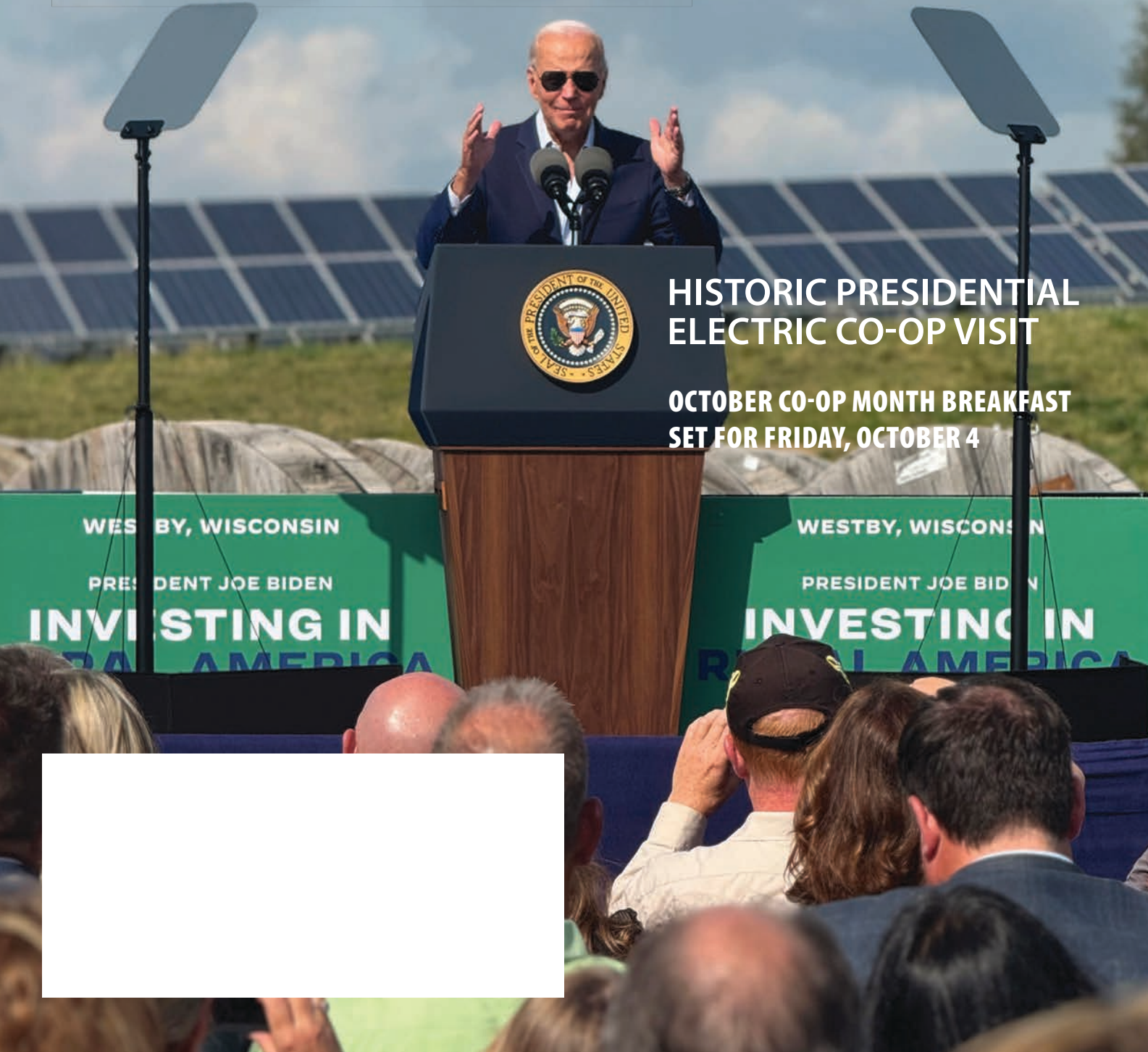


Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* October 2024 NEWS

TAYLOR ELECTRIC
Cooperative
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



**HISTORIC PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTRIC CO-OP VISIT**

**OCTOBER CO-OP MONTH BREAKFAST
SET FOR FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4**





ONE YEAR WITH AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE

By Ken Ceaglske, CEO



As you may recall, I took a road trip in an electric vehicle (EV) to Tennessee in March 2023. This was a test drive to see what life would be like with an EV. It went successfully, so I ordered a Mustang Mach-e, which was delivered in September last year. I now have 21,000 miles on the car. The experience has been mostly uneventful, other than the EV is very fun to drive. This was also an opportunity to see firsthand what an EV looks like from a utility perspective.

I've always been pulled toward vehicles that have above-average performance and that is one place where EVs excel. The instant torque of the electric motors is apparent from the first drive, and the location of the batteries gives it a low center of gravity to improve handling. This does come at a cost as EVs don't have a magic formula that exempts them from efficiency and physics. I read about many Mach-e drivers getting 3-4 miles per kwh, while I get more in the mid 2s. I never have been a driver who can get what the EPA estimated mileage is. Between a lot of short trips followed by longer runs at freeway speeds, I rarely run in the EPA "ideal conditions."

Using a Subaru Outback for comparison (4WD, 5 passenger, similar size), the annual energy spent on the Mach-e was \$1,273 vs. an estimated \$2,416 using local gas prices. EV fast chargers ranged from \$.20-.70, with home chargers and destination (slow overnight) ranging from free to \$.25. Some hotels offer charging as an included amenity, just like pool use or breakfast. At home off-peak charging is \$.06 from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., more than enough time to recharge from zero to full, which usually isn't necessary.

I charge at home about 67% of the time with the remaining 33% on the road, mixed between fast chargers and destination chargers. The estimated national average is 80% home charging, so that would drive the energy cost lower. If I commuted 40 miles/day and only used the EV for the commute (always charging at home off-peak), I could have lowered my fuel cost to about \$550.

When I made the trip to Tennessee, there were enough chargers to satisfy my needs without a problem, but it did demand some careful planning and a learning curve. The last convenient charger on the way back home was in Madison, with a long dry spell from there to here. With time come improvements—now there are adapters for both styles of chargers, making the current count 11, and there are many more slated to be built just between here and Madison.

The look and location of the charging stations are different than those of gas stations. Ideal charging stations are in loca-

tions that give drivers access to something that may occupy them for anywhere between 10 and 40 minutes, such as restaurants and stores. Most of the fast chargers that I have stopped at have been near big box stores, restaurants, or downtown areas. Once you plug in the car, you are free to go shop, buy a snack, or find a restroom.

When I first started tracking my charging stops, I was not looking at them from the perspective of inconvenience—only time. After a while, I started to plan stops around the charges and make use of these stops to meet family/friends for dinner, do some necessary shopping, or coordinate with conference calls, etc. I started to notice a trend of what I call "overfilling"—staying at the charger longer than needed. Remember that home charging is cheaper than road

charging, so that drove up my costs a bit. The longest was dinner with my sister, most of an hour, but I probably only needed 15 minutes of charge to make it home from Minnesota.

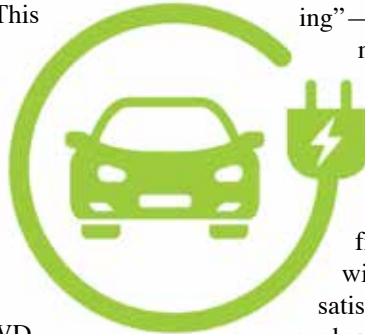
There is a charger in Tomah that is right across from a good restaurant; if I need a charge and I will be in that area for lunch or dinner, that stop satisfies both needs (and they give a \$2 discount to people using the charger).

After looking at what charges were "inconvenient" and only for the sake of the car, I came up with about 12 hours in the last year. With the Outback, filling at ¼ tank and taking about 10 minutes per stop, I may spend about 10 hours at the pump. It comes to a difference of 10 minutes more per month. Even with those stops, I still get things like email and phone calls done, or just a break from the road, so the monthly 10 minutes don't seem like much time lost. I've also gotten a handful of good cribbage games in when I had a passenger. Most of the time I charge at home while I sleep.

A surprise bonus was how quiet it was inside the EV. I spend a lot of time on the road, and I like to use some of it for phone calls, particularly to my mom. She is dependent on hearing aids and when I would call from any of my other vehicles, she would notice the background noises. In the EV, it was like I was calling her from a relatively quiet room.

Is EV ownership all sunshine and roses? What about the stories of issues? I recently stopped at a charger in Madison, and it should have been a convenient way to pick up just a bit of a charge while my wife and daughter ran into the store for college supplies. However, all the chargers were full. Fifteen minutes later we were by another charger and picked up the necessary charge; it was just wasn't as convenient as the first choice.

Road Tax – Wisconsin and other states have methods to collect road tax that would normally be collected in fuel tax.



The fuel tax in Wisconsin is \$.30/gallon. The tabs on the EV have a \$100 fee that is collected in lieu of road tax, as well as a \$.03/kWh tax on all public charging. The kWh tax is a recent change, but I applied it back to the day I got my car to make a fair comparison. I would have paid about \$185 in taxes and fees vs. \$235 for the Outback. This is a work in progress and may never be an exact balance. The base \$100 on the registration helps with my driving but hurts the low mileage driver. The public charging collects more from me than the driver who charges at home. If a person chooses to be on a metered rate like many utilities do, home charging could be measured. If they just use a wall outlet and pay full rate, it can't be measured independently from the house.

Heavy Towing and Camping –

These are all limited with EVs, and I do have my old pickup at home for those sorts of things. Like tools in the toolbox, each vehicle has good uses and bad. My pickup doesn't fit well in the metro areas

that were designed for cars. Even the company minivan was almost too tall for one of the parking ramps in Madison.

Lack of Charging Infrastructure – Yes, this is real in some areas. We looked at a trip to Duluth a while back and I hadn't gotten my adapter to use the Tesla chargers. There isn't a great fast charger location there yet. Now that I have my adapter, it looks much better. I have also wanted to drive my EV out to the Black Hills and on to Wyoming, but the spacing of the chargers makes that trip more challenging. Wyoming can have 80 miles between gas stations, much worse for EV chargers. Time will improve these routes. I have heard the point that the money saved on energy/fuel costs could be used to rent a gas vehicle for those times that the EV just doesn't fit, but part of the reason for taking the EV is to get a chance to take the curvy roads out there. (there goes my fuel economy again...)

Energy Consumption – Interestingly, I had a couple of months where my EV usage was over 700 kWh, or more than

half the consumption of the average house. Of the 8,000+ kWh that have been put into the vehicle, maybe a quarter were in the daytime, and of that, less than 100 were ever done remotely close to peak times when the grid is stressed. Most of the energy was in the middle of the night when energy was plentiful and low cost.

Cold Weather – Yes, an EV does require more energy in the cold. During the coldest days of January, I drove to La Crosse and did a lot of things that reduced my car's efficiency. I made numerous stops, letting the car cool down each time, then had to reheat it, only to stop again and repeat the cycle. All of the energy consumed to supply heat to the vehicle each time lowered my range by about one-third.

If you are considering an EV, take the time to look at what each of the models offer, look at your needs, and see if it fits. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to me. I've been enjoying my EV and look forward to many more miles.

TRICK OR TREAT

Don't Let an Electrical Mishap Be Your Halloween Trick

As you ready your yard and porch for Halloween, make sure the decorations you plug in do not become hazardous. **To avoid a Halloween scare, take these safety precautions:**

- Discard any decorations that have **cracked or frayed cords** or damaged plugs.
- **Do not** put any decorations on power poles, padmount transformers or any other electrical equipment.
- Use decorations that are endorsed by a reputable testing laboratory such as **Underwriters Laboratories (UL)**.
- If you are using extension cords outdoors, make sure they are **rated for outdoor use**.
- **Secure all cords** so they do not become tripping hazards.
- Plug all cords into circuits protected by **GFCIs** to prevent electrical shock.
- **Do not use nails or tacks** to hang lights or other electrical decor.
- Keep decorations **away from flammable items** like bales of hay, cornstalks or witch's brew.

Learn more at: [Safe Electricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org)

CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS MAILED

Economic participation is a benefit of co-op membership

What sets Taylor Electric Cooperative apart from investor-owned utilities? One of the main things is that each cooperative member is an owner of the business.

And, with being an owner comes the responsibility of operating the business, which is done through attendance at the annual meeting and electing fellow members to the board of directors, who in turn set policies and hire a CEO. The CEO then employs the staff to carry out those policies.

Each member-owner also has a responsibility to invest in the business. There is no stock to sell on Wall Street to provide financial backing for the business. Through member investments, the cooperative builds an equity reserve, which for Taylor Electric Cooperative is currently about 46 percent of the total assets of the co-op. This equity reserve is required by lenders who then share the risk by making loans to the co-op to finance power line construction and rebuilding projects that are needed to keep the electricity flowing.

Since there are no Wall Street stockholders, there are no dividends or monies paid to outside investors. When each year's finances are audited and closed out, the remaining profit or margins are allocated to the members based on the amount each member paid for electricity during the year. After a period of time, the allocations, or capital credits, are paid back to the members.

Taylor Electric Cooperative has returned more than \$9.3 million to its member-owners as of December 31, 2023. This amount represents approximately 46 percent of all of the margins earned by the cooperative since its inception.

The bylaws of Taylor Electric Cooperative delegate authority to the board of directors to determine the amount and method of capital credit retirement. With a need for large

amounts of cash to invest in new power lines, as well as to replace and repair existing lines, it becomes a tough job to balance the right mix of member investment and borrowing from outside lenders. The decision directly affects the

Taylor Electric Cooperative has returned \$9.3 million to its member-owners..

annual retirement of capital credits to past and present co-op members.

Taylor Electric Cooperative has returned \$9.3 million to its member-owners. This amount is being refunded to those members who received electric service from Taylor Electric Cooperative in 2000–2002, with Dairyland credits

from the year 1995-1997.

All capital credits under \$200 were credited to the member's electric bill. In the case of an inactive membership, a check was mailed in September.

The directors believe there's a need to continue to refund capital credits, but they also realize the need to maintain a strong, viable financial position to meet the future needs of the members and the requirements of our lenders.

The patronage of each member is greatly appreciated.

NOTE: Joint capital credit checks require both signatures when signing. Also, when using the capital credit check for paying your electric bill, please be sure to sign the back of the check.



Join us for Breakfast!

Date: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4TH
Time: 6:30 AM - 9:30 AM
Where: Centennial Community Center, Stetsonville

- Packer calendars are back!
- Register to win an electric bill credit
- Try your luck at cornhole and win a prize

HEY KIDS!

Come with mom & dad and bring us your decorated pumpkin for a chance to win a \$25 gift card!

OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH

CO-OPS POWER COMMUNITIES WITH PURPOSE

Communities come in all shapes and sizes. Some are based on geographical proximity, some are based on shared interests or hobbies, and some communities can even be found in virtual spaces like social media groups. Regardless of where or how they are formed, communities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging.

Taylor Electric is deeply committed to our consumer-members, and we're glad you are part of the electric cooperative community.

This month, more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Co-op Month. It's a time to reflect on all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses, but more importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For Taylor Electric, our mission has always been to provide you with reliable power. We care about your quality of life, and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving initiatives, and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including Taylor Electric, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

1. **Open and Voluntary Membership:** Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.
2. **Democratic Member Control:** Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.
3. **Members' Economic Participation:** Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At Taylor Electric, this happens through paying your energy bills.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL



4. **Autonomy and Independence:** Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.
5. **Education, Training and Information:** Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.
6. **Cooperation Among Cooperatives:** Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.
7. **Concern for Community:** All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

This October, as we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is reliable power. Our purpose is people—the local communities we're proud to serve.

EMPLOYEE CHANGES AT TEC

Good luck to Sophie Petrie, whose last day at Taylor Electric was September 27. Sophie is pursuing a new career in the medical field. We wish her the best in her new endeavors.



Sophie Petrie

Welcome to Dawn Kaiser! Dawn was hired to replace Sophie and will work in billing and customer service.



Dawn Kaiser

Dawn and her husband, Mike, live in Medford. She has a son and daughter as well as a stepdaughter and stepson and 11 grandchildren. In her spare time Dawn enjoys fishing, kayaking, UTV riding, and planting flowers. She also enjoys watching Badger and Packer football.

Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO

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Lainie Kellnhofer, Editor



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