

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* August 2019 NEWS



Co-op *Pollinator* POWER



BACK TO SCHOOL

Electric co-ops are continually learning to improve service for members

A new school year is right around the corner, and kids of all ages are getting ready for a fresh year of learning! From kindergarten through college, students attend school to gain knowledge about a broad variety of subjects and learn new skills that will prepare them for the future. In a similar vein, Taylor Electric Cooperative is continually learning in order to

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advance technology that improves electric service, reliability, safety, and in turn, enhances quality of life for the members we serve in our local communities.

Taylor Electric keeps abreast of industry trends because the energy sector is rapidly changing. Innovations in technology and energy types are fueling demand

for more options. On the consumer front, people are looking for more ways to manage their energy use with smart technologies. Consumers expect more convenient payment methods—whether through automatic bill pay, pre-pay, online through SmartHub, or in person.

We're working to help sift through the options for our members in ways that benefit the greater community. At the same time, we never lose sight of the top priority—providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity.

Technology improves operational efficiency.

For example, automated meter reading (AMR) is the technology of automatically collecting energy consumption data and transferring it from the electric meter to the co-op. Because this information can be collected remotely, it enhances our system's efficiency, helps control costs, and improves work processes.

Similar to AMR, there is another technology called advanced metering infrastructure (AMI). This is an integrated system of smart meters, communications networks, and data management systems that enables two-way communication between utilities and consumers. In the event of an outage, AMI helps to distinguish between events that impact a single home or multiple outages. This is critical because resolving either issue is a very different process. The two-way communication is integral to AMI because it provides a means to verify that power has been restored after an outage. However, one of the biggest benefits from improved technologies, especially for outages caused by extreme weather, is pinpointing the outage location, which helps to reduce risk for crews out on the road during severe weather events.

In addition to providing essential information during major outages, Taylor Electric analyzes AMI data for anomalies including faults, damaged meters, or energy theft. Detecting these problems early helps our cooperative save money and improve reliability for the whole community.

Energy for the future.

Consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high. Nationally, the increasing use of solar energy is paving the way for new methods of generating and using electricity. In our region, community solar programs, like Taylor Electric's Bright Horizons, allow co-op members to share in a remote solar array that generates electricity from the sun. U.S. energy experts say we will not be able to meet national energy goals unless we increase our solar energy capacity. That's why Taylor Electric continues to research how best to adjust our energy mix.

Whether it's examining green energy options or exploring how emerging technologies can better serve our members, for Taylor Electric Cooperative, our "school year" is never over. We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities for the future, and we will continue to study and research the issues so that we can better serve you, now and in the future.

Taylor Electric Cooperative

BRIGHT HORIZONS

Get it while it's HOT!

Purchase a unit of solar for only \$800.00 and begin enjoying the benefits of the sun on your electric bill.

Payments available through December 31, 2019

Call us today at 715-678-2411



IS A POWER LINE INSULATED?

(and Other Myths Debunked)

Have you ever wondered why a bird can sit on a live wire or what you should do if a power line is on the ground? Here are some Q-and-As to clear up some common misconceptions concerning power lines, birds on a wire, and other conundrums:

What do I do if I see a downed power line?

Vacate the area. Call 9-1-1 to report. Do not return to the area until you are given the go-ahead by authorities.

Can I tell from looking (or listening) if a downed power line is still live?

Absolutely not. A live wire may not spark or arc and it may not make any noise at all (although it could).

Where might downed power lines be?

A downed power line might be in the street or ditch or field after a bad storm or car accident. It could also be lurking in flood waters or under debris, trees, or other objects after a severe storm.

If a line is on the ground, is it dead?

Once a line is on the ground, it is not automatically dead, even if the power is off in your area. There's a good chance the line is still energized, which not only means you should not touch it, it also means the surrounding ground and any metal objects nearby could be energized and extremely dangerous, even deadly.

Why might a power line be down or damaged?

A car accident may cause a line to be hanging down or on the ground; severe weather could damage a pole or line; or in some cases it's caused by another unforeseeable reason, such as a storm-damaged tree or a hungry squirrel.

Why can a bird sit on a power line and not be hurt? Doesn't that mean the line is insulated?

No. Lines are sometimes coated for protection against the elements but still deadly upon contact. A bird or other critter can sit on a power line all day happy as a lark because there is no path to ground. If the animal were to come in contact with the utility pole or other grounded source, it will be electrocuted, just as a person would be under the same circumstances.

Do different kinds of utility lines look different?

Perhaps, but for the most part, the non-utility professional cannot know what kind of line it is and what it carries (electricity, phone service, cable TV, and so on) just by looking. You also can't tell how much voltage it is carrying by its appearance.

What if my car comes in contact with a downed power line?

Do not get out. Do not try to drive over it. Call 9-1-1 and wait for utility personnel to de-energize the line. If you smell gas or if there is a fire, exit your car with a solid jump landing on both feet (but don't touch the car at the same time) and DO NOT WALK, but hop away.

Can I help someone who has been in an accident involving a downed power line?

No. Do not go near the scene and warn others not to do so. Although our first instinct is often to help, a person running near an energized area could get electrocuted.

Contact us at Taylor Electric Cooperative, 715-678-2411 with any questions about downed lines.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

MORE SAVINGS. MORE ADVENTURE.



The one card that does it all.
Connections.coop

Your Co-op Connections Card is a free member benefit for Touchstone Energy® cooperatives like Taylor Electric Cooperative. It offers valuable discounts at participating local and national businesses. Participating local business are listed below.

Advance Auto Parts, Medford

10% discount on purchases up to \$200.

Broadway Theater, Medford

Purchase any size popcorn and get a matching size soda for free.

C&D Lumber, Rib Lake

5% off single purchase over \$500, not good in conjunction with other coupons or other offers.

Computer TR, Abbotsford

10% off on labor.

Glass to Go, Inc., Medford

5% off in-shop windshield replacement. Buy 1 Rain-X Wiper Blade, get second blade ½ off.

Heartland Cooperative Services

Athens, Dorchester, Greenwood, Hamburg, Owen
10% discount on all dog and cat food.

Jack's Auto Repair LLC, Stetsonville

10% off exhaust repairs over \$50, 10% off any brake-related parts and labor.

Life's High Points Photography, Medford

15% discount.

Medford Health Mart Pharmacy, Medford

20% off any Health Mart label.

Meyer Auto Body, Medford

5% discount on any body repair over \$500. Up to a \$100 value.

Meyer Lumber, Dorchester

5% discount on discountable items, excluding all sale and clearance items (cash sales only). Cannot be used in conjunction with any other discounts/promotions. Card must be presented at each purchase.

Meyer Tire and Service, Medford

\$5 off any passenger or light truck tire—not good in conjunction with any other coupons or offers.

Napa Auto Parts, Medford

10% discount on cash and carry items (excludes engines, engine kits, transmissions, oil labor, and sale items).

Northwoods Embroidery, Medford

Free digitizing on embroidery. Free setup on first color of screen printing.

Ron's Auto Body Repair, Medford

10% off for anyone over 55 or older on labor.

Schierl Tire & Service Center, Medford

\$5 off an oil change. \$10 off parts for service repairs.

Stetsonville Lumber, Stetsonville

5% off single purchase over \$500—not good in conjunction with other coupons or offers.

Stetsonville Oil Company, Stetsonville

\$5 off oil lube filter service.

Strama's Self-Serve, Medford

Buy one ice cream (cone or dish) and get the second ½ price.

Subway, Medford & Colby

50¢ off any sub or salad.

Taylor Credit Union, Medford and Abbotsford

Free rental for one year on 3"x5"x22-1/2" safe deposit box – new rentals only. Requires existing savings account or initial savings account with \$5 balance. Limit one per family.

Wanke Builders, Medford

Free foundation water proofing on your new home purchase.

Willow Cottage Pet Grooming, Medford

\$5 off full groom service.

Going the Extra Mile

Electric cooperatives maintain more miles of power lines per consumer than other types of electric utilities. Even though they serve fewer consumers and acquire less revenue, electric co-ops always go the extra mile to power the communities they serve.



Electric Co-ops



Consumers served per mile: **8**
Revenue: **\$19,000**

Taylor Electric Co-op



Consumers served per mile: **5** *2018 statistics*
Revenue: **\$4,756** *2018 statistics*

Other Electric Utilities



Consumers served per mile: **32**
Revenue: **\$79,000**

Sources: EIA, 2017 data. Includes revenue and consumer averages per mile of line.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Routinely replace or clean your air conditioner's filter. Replacing a dirty, clogged filter can reduce your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5 to 15 percent.—Source: *energy.gov*



CALL FIRST!



Call Diggers Hotline at 811 at least three working days before you start digging. It's a free, one-stop source for locating underground utilities.



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