

# WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE  
LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

## Look Up and Look Out to Keep Your Harvest Season Safe

When the crops are ready to be harvested, farmers have only a window of time—between weather events, equipment breakdowns, and life events—to get the best quality crop out of the field. To make the most of this time, farm workers trying to get as much work done as possible. Safe Electricity offers safety tips for farm and ranch workers across the nation to help keep them safe during this time.



One of the biggest hazards for farmers is posed by power lines. To stay safe around overhead power lines, Safe Electricity urges farm operators and workers to:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call the local utility immediately.

If contact is made with a power line, remember, it is almost always safest to stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away, and call the local utility provider immediately. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, “bunny hop” away.

*continued on page 3 . . .*

## Member Appreciation Celebrations

**October 14th: Lancaster**  
231 North Sheridan Street

**October 15th: Gays Mills**  
15985 State Hwy 131

**October 16th: Darlington**  
300 Barth Drive

**Each celebration will be held from 4 to 7 p.m.**

### Celebrations will feature:

- A dinner of BBQ Pork Sandwiches, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Chips, Relishes, Cheese Curds and Frosted Brownies.
- Check out our bucket truck and take a ride!
- Displays offering information on the services we provide, including billing options, member services programs and services provided by the operations department.
- Focus on Energy will be present for ways to help you manage your energy costs.
- Free Blood-pressure checks. Also available are flu & tetanus shots at member's cost.



## Draft dodgers: Weather stripping your home

There is no doubt about it; the cold weather is on its way. Not only is it important to make sure that your heating unit is working properly, but you should check your home to make sure that none of that heat is escaping.

When the weather turns colder, drafts around windows and doors are constantly letting in cool air. Most people will immediately want to raise their thermostat even higher; however, that will cause you to use more energy when you don't necessarily need to. The best solution is to weather strip your home. This is typically an easy fix that will eliminate energy waste and help you save on your monthly electric bill.

Sometimes drafts are obvious, and other times the openings are much smaller. Here are two quick ways to find out if heat is escaping from your home. For doors, look for daylight between the door and its frame, if you see even a hint of light in between the two, you need to weather strip that area. For windows, place a piece of paper between the sash and the seal then close it. If you can remove the piece of paper from the window without ripping it, you need to weather strip that area as well.

The great thing about all of this is that weather stripping is easy! There is an assortment of materials available to you (like rubber, foam, metal, etc.) and they are all inexpensive. Once you have purchased what you need, keep the following in mind before you begin weather stripping: be sure the surface is dry and clean, measure the area more than once for best accuracy, and apply so that strips compress both sides of the window or door.

### To weather strip windows:

- Place the stripping between the frame and the sash.

- Be sure that it compresses the window when shut.
- Check to make sure that the stripping does not interfere with the moving of the window.

### To weather strip doors:

- Choose the proper sweeps and thresholds for your door.
- Weather-strip the entire door jamb.
- Make sure the stripping meets tightly at both corners.
- Use a thickness that allows for a tight press between the door and the ground, but one that does not make the door difficult to shut.

Roughly half of the energy that your home uses comes from heating and cooling. So the next time you feel an uncomfortable draft in your home, do not immediately crank up the heat. Check to find out where the draft is coming from and properly weather strip the area. This will ultimately save you more energy and more money in the end.

*Amber Bentley writes on energy efficiency issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.* ■

### WHAT WILL I NEED TO WEATHER STRIP DOORS AND WINDOWS?

There are a variety of materials available to weather strip your home. Here are a few options to help you choose:

\*Apply weather stripping around the door frame and stop. At the bottom of a door, install a door sweep, door shoe or threshold; or apply reinforced-foam weather stripping. Apply weather stripping at the top and bottom of window sash.

#### FELT

Reinforced with a flexible metal strip.  
Should be stapled, glued or tacked into place.

Cost: Low

Advantages: Easy to install and inexpensive.

Disadvantages: Low durability. Do not use where exposed to a great deal of moisture. All-wool felt is more durable but very visible.

#### ROLLED OR REINFORCED VINYL

Pliable or rigid strip gasket (attached to wood or metal strips).

Cost: Low to moderate.

Advantages: Easy installation, various colors to help with visibility and some types of rigid strip gaskets provide slot holes for height adjustment.

Disadvantages: Very visible.

#### REINFORCED FOAM

Closed-cell foam attached to wood or metal strips.

Cost: Moderately low

Advantages: Effective sealer, rigid, proven to work well.

Disadvantages: Very visible.



Source: Department of Energy

\*For more weather stripping options, visit <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/weatherstripping>

## ***Safety for all***

**S**cenic Rivers Energy Cooperative has always been dedicated to providing safe, reliable and affordable utility service to you, our member-owners. The lengths we go to keep you, your family and our linemen safe are a point of pride for us and are never taken lightly.

From acquiring new equipment and implementing new procedures – including installation of new breaker systems that react more quickly in case of a disruption – to increasing awareness of back-up generator systems within the cooperative community and supporting the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP), America’s electric cooperatives strive to promote the highest standard of safety.

A lot has changed for the electric utility industry in the United States over the last 130 years. In the 1880s, power came to New York City through the direct current (DC) supply method. Direct current supply required generation stations to be within a mile of a consumer’s home, which was great for city residents – but not so great for those living in the suburbs or rural areas.

Because of its inability to travel long distances – and the higher cost – the DC system eventually lost out to the more economical alternating current (AC) system. The AC system allowed power to travel across greater distances through the use of transformers located at power stations. These transformers required higher voltage to pass through stations in order to bring power to homes at the end of the wire. This increase in voltage spurred the need for increased electrical safety procedures.

High voltage is considered in the U.S. to be a voltage above 35,000 volts. Designations of high voltage also include the possibility of causing a spark in the air or causing electric shock by proximity or contact.

High voltage wires and equipment are a constant danger for cooperative lineworkers, but they can also pose a danger to cooperative members. That is why electric cooperatives are proud to be at the forefront of electrical safety equipment development, as well as electrical safety education.

“Our line crews participate in monthly training sessions,” said Troy Dahl, SREC Director of Operations. “These courses ensure that our employees are constantly reminded of the safety aspect of the job and the importance of using equipment in the safest manner possible.”

In addition to safety training for employees, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is continuously raising awareness of electrical safety in our communities by performing demonstrations at local schools and community events. There, we show members just how easy it is for an accident to occur when working with electricity and how to prevent these dangerous, and sometimes deadly, mishaps. We also increase awareness of electrical safety by engaging with volunteer fire departments, emergency medical teams and sheriff’s departments on a regular basis, offering education courses and demonstrations. These programs keep service men and women, as well as members of the community, safe.

At Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, we understand that the more people we have in our communities who are knowledgeable about electrical safety, the safer we all will be. That’s why we strive, every day, to raise awareness of, and encourage development in, electrical safety.

*Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.* ■

## ***continued from cover. . . Look Up and Look Out to Keep Your Harvest Season Safe***

### **Additional safety tips from Safe Electricity include:**

- Do not use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins.
- Always hire qualified electricians for any electrical issues.
- Do not use equipment with frayed cables.
- Make sure outdoor outlets are equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

- When operating a portable generator, make sure nothing is plugged into it when turning it on, and never operate a generator in a confined area. Generators can produce toxic and deadly gasses like carbon monoxide.
- Always use caution when operating heavy machinery.

For more farm and electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Recipes

Here is a new favorite recipe that is in my (Heidi Pierce) recipe box.

### Caramel Apple Cheesecake Bars

#### **Crust:**

- 2 c. Flour
- 1/2 c. Brown Sugar
- 1 c. Butter, soft

Mix together and press in a foil lined 9x13 pan. Bake at 350 for 15 minutes.

#### **Filling:**

- 3 (8oz) pkg Cream Cheese, soft
- 3/4 c. Sugar
- 3 Eggs
- 1-1/2 tsp. Vanilla Extract

Beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add eggs one at a time and then add vanilla. Beat well. Pour over warm crust.

#### **Apple topping:**

- 3 Apples, peeled, cored and finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. Sugar
- 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. Nutmeg

Mix all together until well combined and then spoon over filling.

#### **Streusel:**

- 1 c. Brown Sugar
- 1 c. Flour
- 1/2 c. Oatmeal
- 1/2 c. Butter, soft

Mix all together well and then sprinkle over the apple topping. Bake at 350 for 40-45 minutes or until set. Then drizzle with a caramel topping and let cool. Refrigerate thoroughly until serving.



Energy Efficiency

*Tip of the Month*

Fall is here, and that means colder months will be here before we know it. Is your home prepared for the drafts that may enter? Tight-fitting insulating drapes or shades are a perfect way to keep the heat in and the cold out.

- Source: U.S. Department of Energy

## Vegetation Management

Zielies Tree Service, Inc. will be working on the east circuit of the Prairie du Chien substation in Crawford County.

**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. We appreciate your cooperation. If you have questions, please contact Jay at [jgardner@srec.net](mailto:jgardner@srec.net) or call 800-236-2141, ext. 566.

## WATT'S HAPPENING

*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*, c/o Heidi Pierce, Editor, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, 231 North Sheridan, Lancaster, WI 53813 or telephone (608) 723-2121 or toll free Lancaster 800-236-2141, Darlington 800-236-6656, and Gays Mills 888-735-4314.

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