

# WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

## Youth Leadership Congress

### UW- River Falls · July 25-27, 2018

The WECA Youth Leadership Congress is a dynamic three-day event for youth leaders across Wisconsin to develop their leadership skills and to learn about the purpose, operation and scope of cooperative business.

**Who should apply?**

Students that will be going into 10th, 11th or 12th grade next fall and have parents or grandparents that are members of Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative.

*Yes, I would like to attend the  
2018 Youth Leadership Congress  
July 25-27 at UW- River Falls.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Highschool: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Next Fall: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this form to  
SREC, 231 N. Sheridan St., Lancaster, WI 53813 or hpierce@srec.net  
SREC must receive information by June 15th*



## The power behind your power

“Safety” is a universal word that is mentioned often and used loosely. Communities large and small as well as companies across all industries are committed to safety. Sports leagues, at every level, take safety seriously. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

However, safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. For, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, it's the number one priority. This is not empty talk. Over time, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. At its essence, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative's mission is to provide safe, affordable and reliable electricity to its member-owners. At the end of the day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our member-owners, but equally important, we want to return our workers home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

### **Following leading national safety standards**

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative has a safety team whose focus is keeping employees and the community safe around electricity. We established and follow safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with electricity. Our safety team has regular meetings where they discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share “lessons learned” and improve in the future.

As importantly, we encourage all of our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety, rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the

information and data gleaned from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. As appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

### **Keeping the community safe**

Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative conducts electrical safety demonstrations in schools and for community events.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. There is much you can do to keep yourself and your community safe around electricity.

Don't attempt electrical DIY projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines, unlocked substations or padmount transformers that look amiss. Contact Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative for additional electrical safety tips. If you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school or community event, please contact our office by calling 1-800-236-2141. Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug into safety.

*Anne Prince 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.* ■



# Geothermal Tax Credit Reinstated

## Credit applies to systems installed in 2017 through 2021

### Geothermal heat pump tax credits are back.

In an extra bit of good news for members who installed a geothermal system last year, the 30 percent federal tax credit for geothermal heat pumps is retroactive to include systems installed on or after Jan. 1, 2017, and extends through 2021.

“Reinstating the geothermal federal tax credit is a big win for consumers. A geothermal heat pump is reliable, low maintenance and more efficient than a traditional HVAC system,” said Jeff Springer, manager of energy efficiency and technology services at Dairyland Power Cooperative. Dairyland is the wholesale power provider for 24 electric cooperatives in a four-state area, including Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative.

The tax credit begins to phase-out after two years with a 26 percent tax credit in 2020, and 22 percent credit in 2021. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative members who installed a geothermal heat pump in 2017 and believe they might be eligible for a renewable energy tax credit, should contact their accountant or tax preparer.

The tax credit was part of the Continuing Resolution spending bill approved by Congress. Since the end of 2016, when geothermal heat pump tax credits expired, groups such as the Geothermal Exchange Organization (GEO) and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) have been advocating for the reinstatement.

“With the extension of the geothermal tax credit, geothermal heat pumps can become a more financially attainable option for homeowners, whether they are building a new home or making energy efficiency improvements to an existing home,” Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative CEO Lucas said, “While geothermal systems are initially more expensive to install than a traditional HVAC system, they are dramatically more efficient, resulting in a typical payback of seven years or less.”

From 2009 through the end of 2016, property owners installing geothermal heat pumps

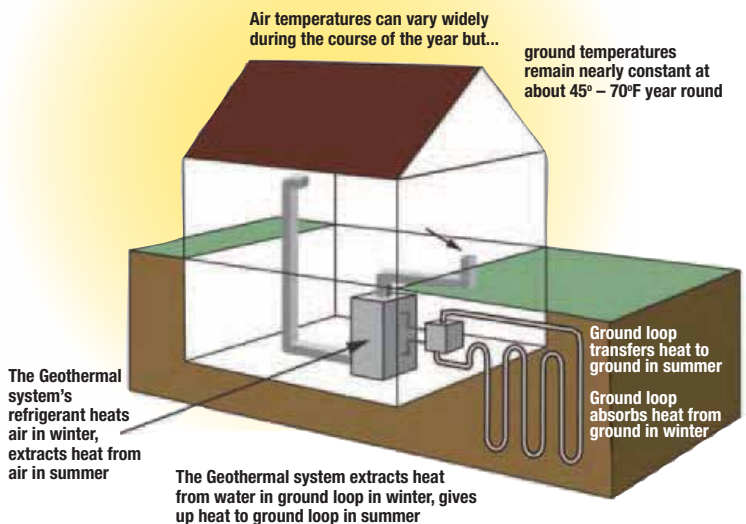
were eligible for a 30 percent tax credit. According to NRECA, in 2015, Congress extended and provided a phase down of tax credits for wind and solar technologies beyond Dec. 31, 2016, but not geothermal heat pumps. Supporters of the tax credit said geothermal heat pumps need to be treated similar to wind and solar technologies because geothermal systems utilize naturally occurring heat from the Earth’s soil.

Incentives are available for members installing a geothermal system on Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative’s lines in 2018. Contact Ron Jentz at 1-800-236-2141 ext. 563 for more information. ■



### How Does Geothermal Heating and Cooling Work?

Geothermal heat pumps tap into the earth’s ability to maintain nearly constant temperature, moving heat inside to warm you in the winter and back into the ground to cool you in the summer.



Depending on your building site, the loops can be installed either vertically (as shown) or in a horizontal orientation. With the majority of the heating and cooling capacity coming from the earth and pumped through these loops, the outside air temperature does not affect performance. So even in the cold of winter and peak summer heat, you can expect both comfort and savings on your energy bill.

## Recipes

Cathy Skaife (Platteville) tried this Very Berry Rhubarb Jam recipe that was in the WEC News magazine and said it was really good!

### Very Berry Rhubarb Jam

- 9 c. Rhubarb
- 5 c. Sugar
- 1 can Blueberry pie filling
- 2 small boxes Raspberry Jello

Cook rhubarb and sugar until tender. Add pie filling and jello. Bring to a boil and boil for one minute. Put in jars or storage containers. Freeze until use.



Rita Kruser (Cuba City) shares her favorite recipe called Bacon Bark!

### Bacon Bark

- 24 Saltine Crackers
- 6 Tbsp Butter
- ¾ c. Light Brown Sugar, packed
- 8 oz Semisweet Chocolate Chips
- 8 Slices bacon (cooked and broken into small pieces)



Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line 9 x 13" with non-stick foil. Arrange crackers on top. In a sauce pan, melt butter and sugar on low, increase heat to medium and then bring to a boil. Remove from heat and pour sugar mixture evenly over crackers, spreading if necessary. Bake until deep golden brown (about 12-15 minutes). Immediately scatter chocolate chips on top and let sit for 3 minutes and then spread over the caramel topping. While chocolate is warm, scatter bacon over top and let set. Break into pieces when ready to serve.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for an easy way to make your home cozier? Try using an area rug to increase the insulation levels of your floors. Area rugs are stylish and can keep cool air from entering through your floors. Your toes will thank you!



## Vegetation Management

Zielie's Tree Service, Inc crews will be trimming on the Jerrett Substation North circuit in Grant County. A representative of their will continue to permit on the Jerrett Substation east circuit.

Mi-Tech Services Inc will be testing poles in Lima, Platteville, Ellenboro and Harrison Substations in Grant County. **The contractor will have their own vehicles including 4-wheelers that may have their logo and our logo on the side of the vehicles. They may also be testing poles on weekends.**

**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 800-236-2141.

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

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