



Watt's Going On

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It's the end of February and I'm writing the April column. By the time you receive this magazine, I'm hoping spring will be here and warmer temperatures are in the forecast.

Tax day is April 15. If you purchased a geothermal heat pump in 2013, don't forget to take advantage of the 30 percent federal tax credit. If you're planning to install a geothermal heat pump in the near future, this credit is available through December 31, 2016. For more information on this tax credit, forms, and qualified systems, go to energystar.gov.

The Polar Vortex caused heating and budget grief for many of you. Not only were temperatures frigid, but they influenced fossil fuel prices, which skyrocketed. The market for fossil fuels is very volatile, unlike electric rates. Electric rates remain competitively priced and consistent no matter what type of weather we're experiencing. The price for LP soared because the demand was high. Some of you paid upward of \$5 per gallon, or possibly more, for your LP. Your electric system generated enough electricity to keep your home and business powered, and warm, at one price.

Energy Assistance Available to Qualified Members

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. administers Jackson Electric Cooperative's Commitment to Community Funds for electric low-income bill assistance and home weatherization. Contact 800-782-1063 ext. 231 for more information on this program.

Other agencies that may provide assistance:

Jackson County Health & Human Services.....	715-284-4301
Clark County Social Services	715-743-5233
La Crosse County Human Services	608-785-6050
Monroe County Human Services.....	608-372-8900
Monroe Community Action Program	608-269-5021
Trempealeau County Social Services	715-538-2311
Consumer Credit Counseling.....	888-771-4673
Energy Help Hotline	800-522-3014

Plan your budget for the next heating season, or even the upcoming cooling season. Consider installing a heat pump that will heat and cool your home. Add your electric heating system on our dual fuel rate, and you'll see consistent savings and keep your budget on track.

Work Plans

Once the road bans are lifted, our crew will begin to replace overhead line in the northern part of our service territory. Approximately five miles of overhead line will be replaced with new cable beginning at the Garden Valley Town Hall, concluding north of the Humbird Substation.

Our crews will continue to perform general maintenance on our lines so you can receive reliable power. Keep a watchful eye out for our contractors and line crew working in your area. Safety is a high priority for you and our crews.

Earth Day – April 22

Earth Day will celebrate its 44th birthday on April 22. Founded by then U.S. Senator from Wisconsin Gaylord Nelson, the thought behind the conception of Earth Day was to force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. With support from both sides of the aisle, Earth Day was recognized and eventually led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. (Source: www.earthday.org)

Jackson Electric celebrates Earth Day with an Electronics and White Goods Recycling Drive that is open to the public. More information on that event can be found on the facing page. We hope that you'll do your part in recycling old, unused electronic and white goods rather than placing them in a landfill or a roadside ditch.

Lastly, thank you to all members who attended your 77th annual meeting in March. Members are the roots of Jackson Electric Cooperative, and your support will keep us on track for several years to come.

Safety always. ■

Winter Moratorium Ends April 15

Please contact Jackson Electric Cooperative **BEFORE** April 15 to make payment arrangements for past due electric accounts. All past due accounts need to be reconciled before April 15 in order to avoid any disconnection of your service. Failure to contact us about your past due account could result in service fees along with disconnection of your electric service.

Make the Call Before You Start Digging

From planting shrubs to building a fence, many outdoor projects require digging. Before the shoveling begins, make sure to call 811 before you dig. It could prevent serious injury or even save your life.



According to its website, the 811 “Call Before You Dig” number is a national line that was created to help prevent people from coming into contact with underground utility lines during digging projects. A professional will then be sent to your digging location to mark the areas where the public utility lines are buried free of charge. Private lines will not be located.

When you call, make sure to tell the operator where you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your utilities with flags or spray-paint. So make sure to call in advance. If you are in a rush to complete a project, a few days might seem like a long wait. However, a small waiting period can spare you an injury that could take years of recovery.

Electricity is not the only utility that can be located underground. Gas, water, cable, and telephone lines can also be buried beneath the earth. Not only are these utilities dangerous to make contact with, but other people and businesses rely on these services.

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground. If you accidentally come in contact with an underground utility, do not bury the problem. Your first priority should be evacuating the area for safety. It can be difficult to locate exactly where a problem is after the damage occurred and was buried. Damage to some underground utilities can cause dangers and inconveniences miles away from the actual site of the damage.

Small nicks in underground wires can be expensive, but necessary, to fix. If you nick an underground utility, notify your utility provider. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

Please remember that Wisconsin law requires you to call Diggers Hotline at least three days prior to beginning your digging project.—Source: safeelectricity.org ■

Electronics and White Goods Recycling Drive

Tuesday, April 22
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Jackson Electric Cooperative
N6868 County Road F, Black River Falls

Jackson Electric Cooperative, along with 5R Processors, is once again sponsoring the Electronics and White Goods Recycling Drive in celebration of Earth Day. For more information regarding the Electronics and White Goods Recycling Drive, please contact Dana Duzy at 5R Processors at 715-532-2078 or dduzy@5rltd.com.

NO CHARGE for the following ITEMS:

Scanners	Copy machines
Phones	Wire/cabling
Printer cartridges	Computer hard drives
Fax machines	Typewriters
Cash registers	Laptops
Printers	Calculators
Keyboards/mice	Docking stations
VCR/DVD players	Circuit boards
Stereo equipment	Uninterrupted power supplies
Audio visual equipment (cameras, video recorders, etc.)	

Charges (per unit):

Broken glass on monitors or TVs	\$10
CRT tubes.....	\$10
Wooden console TVs	\$10
Projection TVs.....	\$10
Computer monitors	\$5
Microwaves.....	\$5
Plastic TVs	\$10
Wood speakers (pair).....	\$10
Destruction of data/hard drive cleansing	\$10

White goods include ovens, washers, dryers, refrigerators and freezers.

There will be a \$5 charge per unit for white goods. Those units with Freon will be charged \$15 per unit.

In effort to handle all recyclables, we ask that you please bring them to the recycling area before 3 p.m.

You Commented. We're Responding.

Member Comment: "The power goes out for no reason at all."

Our Response: We know that power outages are inconvenient and can be costly for some. Most people relate power outages to severe weather, but the reality is, severe weather is one of the many causes of outages.

Jackson Electric Cooperative is a rural power supplier that covers more than 1,400 miles of overhead and underground line spanning through a diverse range of terrain. Because of the amount of area we cover, there is the potential for problems to occur. Many of the outages experienced by our members are caused by animal contact. When a bird lands on the power line in the wrong place or a curious squirrel wanders too close to the overhead line equipment, there is the potential for a power outage. To minimize animal contact, Jackson Electric installs Critter Guards on power poles to prevent animals from climbing the poles and eventually reaching the electrical components. This is the black wrap on some of the power poles. Even though

this is a preventative measure, animals sometimes manage to get to where they can cause outages.

Trees or branches, out of our right-of-way, that fall on the line cause outages. Jackson Electric has an aggressive right-of-way clearing program that clears trees and shrubs in our right-of-way corridor. Power lines fed from each of our substations are maintained on a seven-year rotation. Last year you may have seen crews clearing trees and shrubs in the Shantytown and Humbird Substation areas. Unfortunately, trees outside of our right-of-way may not be cleared and have the potential to fall into the line, caused either by nature or man, thus causing an outage.

Anytime there is human activity near power lines, the potential for an outage exists. We caution people endlessly to look up before engaging in activity near our lines or call Diggers Hotline before they dig, but we still get numerous outages caused by trees



dropped through our lines or equipment digging up our lines.

Vehicles coming in contact with power lines or electrical equipment can also cause outages. Whether a vehicle contacts a pole, large equipment snags a power line, or a vehicle backs into a padmount transformer, the potential for an outage is there and it may affect you.

We do live in Wisconsin and the weather is always a topic for conversation. Severe weather accounts for a large percentage of our outages. We continue to stress the importance of having an outage plan in place for your household and business in the event that you are without power for a lengthy period.

Jackson Electric strives to minimize the amount of outages our members experience and provide reliable power when you need it. If you experience an outage, please call our toll-free outage number at (855) 222-DARK (3275). This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ■

Heat Pumps - Energy Efficiency Tips - New Line Build Information

Stop by and see us at the WWIS Home Show



Saturday, April 12
8 a.m.—3 p.m.

Milt Lunda Ice Arena,
Black River Falls

Ask Your Cooperative

Steve Meyer, Member Services Director



Q: How much could I have saved by heating my home with an electric heating system this past winter? The fossil fuels prices are so volatile.

A: Jackson Electric provides a special low rate for electric heat through our Dual Fuel Program. This rate is competitive with propane and fuel oil even in years when fossil fuel prices are low. Take a year of high fuel prices like this one and it's safe to say that everyone participating in the Dual Fuel Program saved a tremendous amount of money compared to the fossil fuel alternatives.

Your actual savings depends upon the type of electric heating system you choose. A geothermal heat pump is the most efficient heating and cooling system available and oper-

ates at a cost equivalent to purchasing propane at 37 cents a gallon or fuel oil at 43 cents a gallon. Even the least efficient electric heating systems are still price competitive when compared to the most efficient fossil fuel furnaces. Those electric heating systems equal propane at \$1.48 a gallon and fuel oil at \$1.72 a gallon.

When asked, I usually suggest to anyone looking for an electric heating system to consider a heat pump. They are the most efficient heating and cooling systems available and they provide air conditioning at no extra cost. And, here's the beauty of electric heat: If a heat pump is not of your choosing, there are so many other electric heating choices, one is bound to be right for you. No matter what electric heating system you choose, you are

going to save money under our Dual Fuel Program.

If you have a question to ask Jackson Electric Cooperative, please submit to our office at P.O. Box 546, Black River Falls, WI 54615 or email cblaken@jackelec.com and put in the subject line "Magazine Question." ■

Alert for Budget Billing Plan Participants

Members on the Budget Billing Plan will receive a bill in May, which is considered the "clean-up" month. Your remaining payment on your budget billing plan is due on or before June 1, 2014.

To find out what your remaining balance is, please contact our office.



You're Invited to Attend Member Heating Forum

Tuesday, April 8
1:30 or 7:00 p.m.
at Jackson Electric Cooperative

Two one-hour programs are planned to discuss electric heating options and the cooperative's programs and services available to members. Time is planned for a question and answer session.



RSVP to either Pam or Bertina at 715-284-5385 by April 7.



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Outage Only Number:
(855) 222-DARK (3275)

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