



Watt's Going On

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October marks National Co-op Month. More than 29,000 cooperatives in the United States will take a few moments to ensure their employees, members, and the public truly understand the value of the cooperative business they own.

Cooperatives, including Jackson Electric Cooperative, operate according to the same core principles and values adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). These principles can be traced back as far as 1844.

Jackson Electric Cooperative has served its members for 77 years and continues to operate according to the cooperative principles. Members vote for directors to represent them on the nine-member board; members receive capital credits based on their patronage; cooperative meetings are held to educate members about services available from the cooperative; and cooperatives, locally, regionally, and nationally, work together for the betterment of their members.

Throughout the years, our industry has been challenged with adversity and change, but Jackson Electric Cooperative has always been able to rely on its members for support. Thank you!

Rail Delivery

As you've seen on the local news stations, our power supplier, Dairyland Power, has been dealing with rail delivery issues for quite some time now. During last winter's record cold, Dairyland was actually forced to reduce hours of operation at plants to conserve dwindling coal supplies. With the winter over, it was hoped shipments could replenish supplies. Unfortunately, Dairyland continues to see reduced levels of shipments.

This past summer, there was a special level of concern over the Genoa plant. The Genoa plant receives 100 percent of its coal by barge, but it begins the trip here on rail lines out of the Powder River Basin. Because of rail delivery issues, Dairyland is way below target on coal on the ground at Genoa, and the barge shipment season typically ends by October 31. The shipment schedule to Dairyland meant Dairyland would likely run out of coal in January, which would force Dairyland into depending on the volatile day-to-day energy markets.

Dairyland contacted elected officials to ask them to contact the Surface Transportation Board in Washington and the railroads themselves to ask for help to avoid shortfalls at Genoa. Fortunately, it appears the appeals worked, as the Burlington Northern has promised to expand shipments.

Jackson Electric is appreciative of Congressman Ron Kind, Senators Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin, and Governor Scott Walker, all of whom went to bat for us in asking for relief for Dairyland. We have a good working relationship with our elected officials and we thank them for supporting our power supplier.

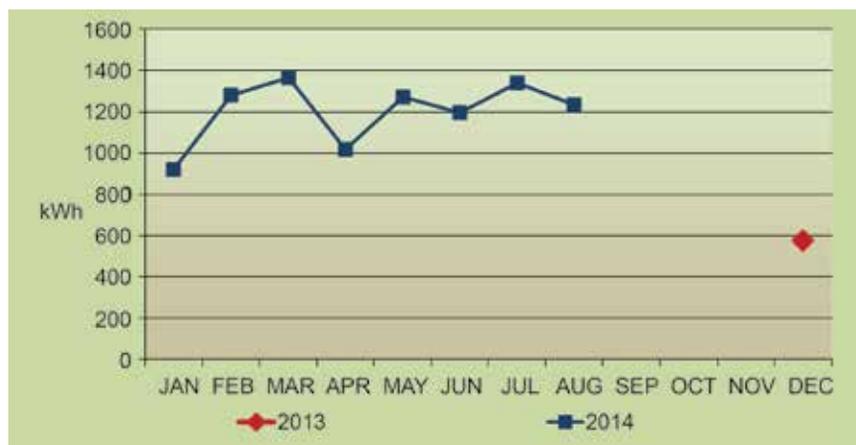
Safety always. ■

Jackson Electric Cooperative's Solar Array Output

Total output, January 2014 –
August 31, 2014:
9,621.65 kilowatt-hours (kWhs)

The average residential consumer on Jackson Electric Cooperative's system uses 1,021 kWhs per month. Individual usage varies according to house size, number of people, and how electrical devices are used.

To view real-time output, go to www.jackelec.com and click on the Solar Array Output tab.



It's a Matter of Principles

Cooperatives across the country, including Jackson Electric Cooperative, are celebrating National Co-op Month. Every October, co-ops are recognized for the qualities that make the business model unique.

You may be surprised by the number of cooperatives you do business with during the day. To begin with, you brighten your home with lights powered by electricity distributed by your local electric cooperative. On your way to work, you may stop by your local cooperative to grab a cup of coffee or gas for your vehicle. You may do your grocery shopping at your local food cooperative. What about the products you buy? Did you know that Ocean Spray, Florida's Natural, Blue Diamond, and Land O'Lakes, to name a few, are all cooperatives?



On your way home, you stop to make a deposit at your local credit union. Don't forget, you're planning a home improvement project for the weekend. You stop by your local supply cooperative to purchase supplies. A day of doing business with cooperatives is not out of the ordinary.

In 1844, a group of weavers in the town of Roch-

Did You Know...

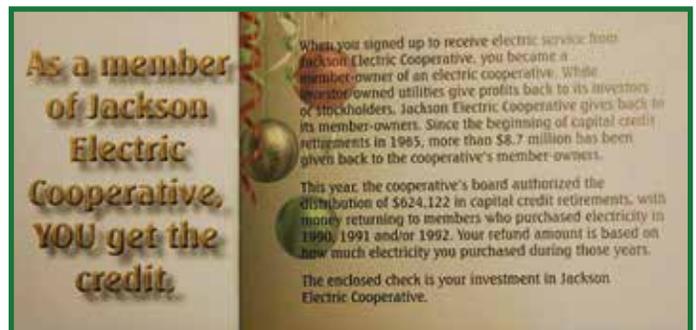
The first recognized cooperative business in the United States was a mutual fire insurance company, founded in 1752 by Benjamin Franklin. This insurance company is still operational today.

dale, England, joined to cooperatively purchase food and materials they could not otherwise afford. This group established a list of principles that guided their cooperative. Cooperatives throughout the United States are guided by those same principles that reflect individuality, democracy, equality, honesty, and social responsibility.

According to the Cooperative Principles, a cooperative must be open to anyone who is able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership. Every member retains one voice, one vote. Meetings are held where representatives are elected by the membership to set policies and make decisions. For Jackson Electric, district meetings are typically held in January, and the 2015 annual meeting will be held March 10.



There are economic benefits to becoming a member. Members of an electric cooperative receive money back based on electric usage, called capital credits, when the cooperative is in good financial condition. To date, more than \$8 million has been given back to Jackson Electric Cooperative members in the form of capital credits since the beginning of returns in 1965.



Education is important. Jackson Electric Cooperative invests time and money in electrical safety education, energy efficiency tips to make electric bills more afford-

(Continued on page 28 ►)

Get Grounded With GFCIs

Having played a role in reducing the number of electrocutions in half since the 1970s, the installation of ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets could further lessen the number of electrocutions and electrical burns and shock injuries occurring in the home each year.

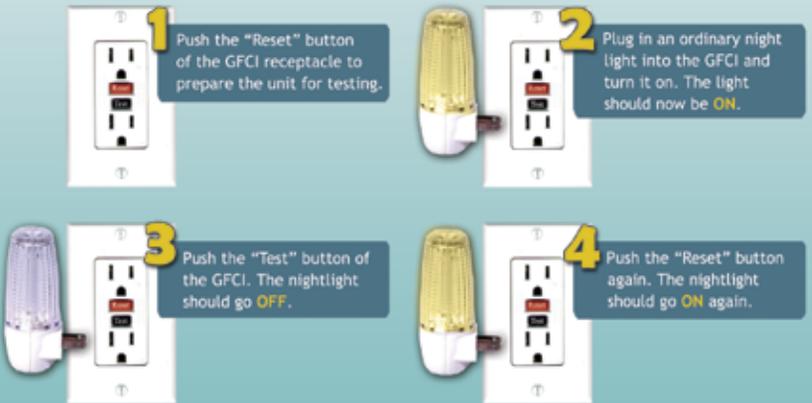
GFCIs are the most efficient outlet in protecting from electrical shock. If the outlet senses a loss of current, it switches off power to that circuit. The hole at the bottom of the outlet is known as the “ground” slot, and it monitors electrical currents that flow through the left “neutral” slot and the right “hot” slot on each outlet. A GFCI can react faster than a blink of an eye to any imbalance of power by immediately shutting off the electrical current.

GFCI outlets are now required in all places where water could potentially come into contact with electrical products, such as bathrooms, garages, outdoors, and kitchens. If you don't have GFCI outlets in your home, consider a GFCI outlet upgrade. ■

How to test electrical outlets

Since the 1970s ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) have saved thousands of lives, helping cut the number of home electrocutions in half. The safety devices prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs from the amount returning. The safety devices should be used in any indoor or outdoor area where water may come into contact with electrical products.

GFCIs should be tested once a month to make sure they're working properly. To test a device, follow these four steps:



Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International

Principles

(Continued from page 5)

able, and making sure elected officials and opinion leaders know about the cooperative business model. Cooperatives tend to stick together when tackling regional and national issues.



Jackson Electric recently donated \$1,000 to each of the area fire departments.

Cooperatives are most importantly independent and community-minded. Co-ops drive economic development, fund youth and adult scholarships, support local charities and organizations, and work to improve the quality of life in the community.



Learn more about your local cooperatives by visiting them during October, National Co-op Month. ■



You Commented. We're Responding.

Reminder

Frost Charges

If you plan to have Jackson Electric install electric service on your property after November 1, an additional charge will be applied if the conventional method of electric service installation is not feasible due to frost.

Member Comment: "They have their meetings when the working person can't come and have a voice in the meetings."

Our Response: We do our best to arrange meeting times that will fit the majority of our members' schedules. For example, when we have an educational forum, such as the heating forum held in April 2014, we held two sessions—one in the afternoon, the other during the early evening. It is our hope that those members who work during the day will be able to attend the evening meeting.

The annual meeting is held in March during the evening hours. The meeting begins promptly at 7 p.m. and typically lasts one hour. Our goal with the 7 p.m. start time is to allow enough time for members to get to the meeting and back home safely before it gets too dark outside. We try to plan the annual meeting date around high school athletics and other extracurricular activities.

Meeting dates and times are always at the top of the priority list. We try our best to plan meetings so that all members feel included.

Of course, we don't want you to feel that meetings are the only time you can bring your concerns to the cooperative. If you have a question or concern regarding your cooperative, please feel free to contact us by phone or e-mail. ■

Ask Your Cooperative

Steve Meyer, Member Services Director



Q: What is vampire power?

A: Vampire power, commonly referred to as a phantom load, is the power used when an electrical device is in the off mode. When a charger for a cell phone or other wireless communication device is plugged in, but not charging, that is also considered vampire power. Just about every electronic device and appliance draws a small amount of current even when it's off.

Although the amount of vampire power of any one device is small, when you start adding up all of the electric devices in a typical home, the loads add up. Televisions, computers, and chargers lead the list. The amount of electrical energy this amounts to on a national basis is staggering, and there are federal standards in place now that limit the maximum allowable vampire power.

We suggest that any electrical

devices you have that are not used on a regular basis should be unplugged. The use of power strips with on/off switches makes it easy to unplug multiple devices with one switch. Smart strips enable you to switch off entertainment centers with your remote. Although the vampire power that shows up on your electric bill is not the largest portion of your bill, reducing vampire power should save the average family several dollars per month.

If you're seeking a general idea of how much electricity your appliances and devices are consuming, please request from our office the "Use Energy Wisely" guide. ■

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."



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